

HARER

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

No. 4

March 1969

Contents

THE WORLDWIDE RADICALIZATION OF THE YOUTH
AND THE TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

[Draft Resolution for the Third World Congress
Since Reunification (Ninth World Congress)]

(Published as a fraternal
courtesy to the United Sec-
retariat of the Fourth In-
ternational)

20 cents

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

6
1969

Page 2 :

was blank in the
original bulletin

- Marty Feb 2014

Draft Resolution

THE WORLDWIDE RADICALIZATION OF THE YOUTH
AND THE TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

I.

Root Causes and Common Features of the
Worldwide Radicalization of the Youth

A fresh generation of revolutionary youth has come upon the world scene and is playing an ever more important part in its politics. The growing combativity and revolutionary élan of this new generation have been proved many times over, in all three of the basic sectors of the world revolution.

The new wave of radicalization began during the late fifties in response to the upsurge of the colonial revolution, the new rise in the Afro-American struggle in the U.S., and in reaction to the Khrushchev revelations of Stalin's crimes and Moscow's suppression of the Hungarian uprising in 1956. It was furthered by the Algerian revolution and given decisive impetus by the revolutionary victory in Cuba.

It entered a higher stage when U.S. imperialism escalated the Vietnam war, making Vietnam the focal point of the international class struggle, and millions of young people around the world rallied to the defense of the Vietnamese people. The May-June 1968 events in France provided a graphic demonstration of its tremendous potential in the centers of capitalism.

Over the past decade, the movement has grown from symptomatic indications of a mood of rebellion among the youth against a series of rotted institutions into a powerful revolt of youth on a global scale. This political phenomenon is of crucial importance to the Fourth International and its sympathizing organizations. It poses a major challenge to the entire world Trotskyist movement -- how to provide leadership for it and win the best of the new generation to the banner of the Fourth International. To recognize and carry out this task is central to the work and orientation of the International in the next period.

The political character of the radicalization of the new generation of youth is rooted in the crisis of imperialism on the one hand and in the correlative crises of Stalinism and the Social Democracy -- the historically bankrupt major tendencies in the workers movement -- on the other. The new generation is achieving political understanding during the most intense period of social convulsion in this century. In Vietnam it has seen modern imperialist war in all its brutality. In a few brief years it has witnessed big revolutionary

upheavals and counterrevolutionary bloodbaths. Current history consists of a succession of upheavals, and not even the United States is immune, as the ghetto uprisings and campus revolts bear witness.

The economic contradictions of imperialism are the underlying source of the social explosiveness of our era. Even while there has been a prodigious expansion of the productive capacities of the advanced capitalist countries in the past two decades, the gap between the rich and the poor nations has steadily widened. Successful revolutions in China, Cuba, North Korea and North Vietnam, along with the destruction of capitalist relations in Eastern Europe, have removed vast areas from the sphere of direct imperialist exploitation. Political instability and the threat of revolutions in one colonial country after another have inhibited capitalist investment in these sectors. At the same time competition between the major industrial powers for a larger share of the world market steadily intensifies.

These economic contradictions are intertwined with the necessity felt by imperialism to halt any further advances of the world revolution. The efforts of the imperialists to maintain their exploitation and oppression and crush revolutionary movements have been the prime factor in radicalizing the youth in both the advanced capitalist countries and the colonial countries. While the example set by the insurgent youth in their challenge to capitalism has affected the youth in the workers states, the dissidence in these areas has been engendered primarily by the efforts of the bureaucratic caste to maintain their privileged positions and totalitarian rule.

The continuing crisis of world Stalinism has been a powerful factor in radicalizing the youth in both the Soviet bloc and the capitalist countries. The prestige and authority of the Kremlin have considerably diminished since 1956. The Sino-Soviet conflict, the Cuban revolution, the Vietnam war, and finally the invasion of Czechoslovakia have all contributed to the disintegration of Stalinist monolithism. The counterrevolutionary implications of the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence" and the "parliamentary road" to socialism, and the grotesque distortions created by the absence of workers democracy and the abuses committed by a privileged bureaucratic caste, have become increasingly obvious to growing numbers of the radical youth.

The Social Democracy is equally dis-

qualified in the eyes of the new radical generation. The Social Democrats have become so thoroughly identified as guardians of capitalist rule that they have no attraction for the youth. Their youth organizations, with rare exceptions, are, like the Communist party youth organizations, empty shells with few active members or followers.

tion under pressure from the scientific, technological and industrial advances involved in the "third industrial revolution." These developments call for a more highly educated and technically qualified type of personnel which is capable of innovating, developing, and operating the most complex, up-to-date means of production and destruction.

use

MAP

The new generation has come into politics under the impetus of a succession of victories. The Chinese, Algerian, Cuban, and Vietnamese revolutions, and the advancing Afro-American liberation movement, have been key rallying points and sources of inspiration and emulation. The new generation has seen defeats, some of them bitter and tragic, as in the case of Indonesia. But it has not undergone the numbing experience of such terrible and enduring catastrophes as the rise of Stalinism, fascism, and Hitlerism before the second world war and the betrayals by the Communist leaderships in Western Europe following that war. Most of them were too young to have had direct experience with even the witch-hunt atmosphere of the cold war. Many recall the victory of the Cuban revolution as their initiation into political life.

The dissident youth in the workers states have grown up during the erosion of the power and influence of Stalinism and are obliged to come to grips with all the problems involved in the antibureaucratic struggle.

we

While the bourgeoisie and their echoes in working-class circles decry the "conflict of generations" and the "generation gap," the issues posed by the youth in revolt are not due primarily to age differences. They clearly reflect the major class conflicts of our time. The fundamental significance of the unprecedented radicalization of the youth is the emergence of new forces, ready, willing and able to enter the arena of class struggle on the side of the colonial peoples and the working class and to give battle to world imperialism and its accomplices, who falsely claim to speak in the name of the working class and its allies.

While the interlocked crises of imperialism and of the historically superseded leaderships of the working class have shaped the basic political development of the student radicalization, they do not suffice to explain the social weight of the current student movements. Students have often engaged in forays in the past without causing much concern to the capitalist rulers or the bureaucratic regimes of the Soviet bloc.

The enhanced social weight and political impact of the student movement derive from the fundamental changes that have taken place in the sphere of educa-

These economic conditions require larger numbers of better educated people not only among the administrators and superintendents of the productive processes but also in the work force at all levels of industry and trade. Higher educational and cultural standards flow from higher levels of productivity and greater "capital intensity." The steady rise in the norms of qualification all along the line has greatly altered the character and structure of higher education, particularly, in the more advanced countries, over the past twenty years.

On a world scale, and in most individual countries, the facilities for higher education and the size of the student body are undergoing explosive expansion. According to the latest UNESCO figures, between 1950 and 1963-64 the student population in the world's colleges and universities more than doubled. In France it multiplied by 3.3; in West Germany by 2.8; the U.S., 2.2; Italy, 1.3; Czechoslovakia, 3.2; the USSR, 3; East Germany, 2.8. The high-school population has increased even more during the past fifteen years.

2/5

This turbulent growth has created more problems than it has solved. On the one hand, the educational setup has not been reshaped quickly enough or thoroughly enough to suit the requirements of the ruling class in the capitalist countries and the experts entrusted with looking after its interests. On the other hand, the demands imposed upon the university in transition from the old ways to the new have generated great dissatisfaction among the student body and sections of the faculty. This has led to confrontations and sharp collisions with both the academic administrators and the authorities behind and above them. The university has consequently been plunged into a severe and permanent state of crisis which cannot be overcome short of a revolutionary transformation of the social order.

In view of the rapid turnover of college "generations," these clashes touch layer upon layer of students in a relatively short period of time. They find that the university is often not equipped to train them in the skills they need to find employment or that it insists upon molding them according to the crassest needs of big business or the bureaucratic regime. In any case, the university is not designed to impart the most elementary truths about

* - direction of belt is reversing

living society. In complicity with the established authorities, it tries to hide or to distort these truths and even to insist on falsifications. The insistent demands of the students for freedom of political inquiry and activity and control over the universities they attend bring on the now familiar head-on confrontations with the academic officials and the ruling class or bureaucratic caste which stands behind them.

While the specific issues, whether on or off the campus, which incite or rally the students to action vary considerably from one country to another, and even from one university to another, their movements are strikingly similar in pattern. The rebellious students find themselves arrayed against the powers that be and confronted with a showdown struggle.

Thus the sitdown occupation of the Belgrade university in June 1968 precipitated a national political crisis in Yugoslavia, as did the demonstrations of the French students a month earlier. The student demonstrations in West Germany, Japan, Pakistan, Egypt, and California have had powerful political repercussions.

In the last two decades, as it has grown in size, the student population has strikingly altered in complexion in several important ways.

(1) The time spent as a student has appreciably lengthened. Millions of young adults now spend their most productive and energetic years in the university environment. Many family restraints have been left behind, and they are not yet restricted to holding down a job to earn their livelihood. They have access to more information than the ordinary citizen and time to absorb and discuss its implications.

(2) They are concentrated in educational institutions or areas to a degree exceeding the work force in all but the most giant factory complexes.

(3) While the composition of the student body in the capitalist lands is still preponderantly middle class, there has been some influx (a significant one in the United States) from working class backgrounds.

(4) Social distinctions and stratifications within the student body are not so sharply defined as they were twenty or thirty years ago. A college degree no longer means that the holder automatically becomes a government functionary, a small businessman, or a member of the professions. Under today's advanced technology, a college graduate will more likely become a highly paid technician or a skilled worker in the productive apparatus. He has nothing to sell but his more qualified

labor power and no perspective of escaping the essential condition of a wage worker. These circumstances tend to link him more closely to the industrial working class. The attitudes of university students are more and more influenced by this situation so that growing numbers tend to identify with the status awaiting them after graduation rather than with their family origin.

(5) The owners and organizers of the economy are far more dependent for the operation of their enterprises upon the qualified personnel coming from the higher educational institutions and are therefore far more concerned about their moods, attitudes, and political orientations.

(6) For all these reasons, students have stronger ties with the rest of their generation in the high schools and factories than previously, making their radicalization a more serious matter for the rulers. This was shown on a massive scale in France in May 1968 when the student revolt catalyzed the biggest general strike in history and precipitated a revolutionary situation. The lesson was not lost on the capitalist ruling class internationally, particularly the lesson of how the students tend to become a transmission belt for revolutionary ideas that find a receptive audience in the working class. In January 1969 the Franco regime, in decreeing a "state of exception," cited the current "student disorders" in Spain and the lesson of the May events in France.

These conditions give the student population impressive social and political significance. The opinions and actions of this social layer have great impact on national life.

Since it emanates from the feverish development and interdependence of the world productive and destructive forces, the student movement is not restricted to any one part of the world but has acquired a global scope. The new features of academic life are most evident in such highly industrialized powers as the United States, Japan, Germany, and the Soviet Union. But, dominated as they are by the dynamism of modern economy, all countries which compete in the world market or the military arena are subjected to their presence and pressures to one degree or another.

The pace of radicalization of the students, the ways in which it is refracted through diverse issues, and the depth of its impact vary considerably in the developed capitalist countries, the workers states, and the colonial lands. The American students know little about Marxism or working-class parties. The East European students reacted to the Vietnam war in a more muted way than youth elsewhere. In the colonial world, the

students have exceptional possibilities of playing a major role in revolutionary struggles for power as was shown in Cuba.

Nonetheless, the intensity of the student demonstrations in Paris and Tokyo, Mexico and Brazil, Egypt and Pakistan, Poland and Czechoslovakia, testify to the universality of the phenomenon. The almost instantaneous world communications network and the degree of international travel play a large role in this continuing universalization. The rebellious students in one area rapidly copy the methods, take up the slogans, and study the political lessons of struggle of students in other areas. The general admiration for heroes such as Che and the common inspiration drawn from the Vietnamese revolution are indices of a surprising degree of homogeneity in the student vanguard the world over. They speak a common language.

II.

Ideology and Politics of the Student Radicals

The student radicals exhibit a broad spectrum of ideological tendencies and political positions. For the most part, they disdain the Stalinism of the Moscow school and the reformism of the Social Democracy.

In their quest for a new ideological basis, they resurrected some of the primitive notions which had been tested and found wanting in earlier periods of socialist and labor history. The emphasis placed by the Cuban leaders on practice and their discounting of theory helped to foster this trend. They neglected scientific theory and a carefully worked-out political program of struggle in favor of pragmatic expedients. These served as a charter for impressionism and opportunism and later as an excuse for adventurism. In place of democratic centralism, "participatory democracy" and decentralization were advanced as nostrums. Under these banners, however, small uncontrolled cliques sometimes manipulated movements in an undemocratic way. They substituted spasmodic actions, "propaganda of the deed," or "revolutionary style," for patient and persistent organization of the revolutionary forces.

Many of the radicalized student currents failed to recognize, or denied, the decisive historic role of the revolutionary vanguard party. On the key question of Stalinism, over which many had begun their course to the left, they were unable to explain its nature. Much of the "New Left" in the USA drew inspiration from the views of C. Wright Mills, Herbert Marcuse, and others, who doubted the capacity of the working class to serve as the prime historical agency for social change, denying that it possessed the revolutionary

potential ascribed to it by Marxist theory.

The result was the paradoxical phenomenon of large numbers of young people moving to the left of the Communist and Social Democratic parties in their temper and activities but remaining highly deficient in their theoretical equipment and organizational concepts.

The "New Left" in the USA has been influenced by the culture and habits of the Hippies. The repulsive aspects of bourgeois society that have started many radical youth in search of collective political solutions induced others, commonly known as the Hippies, to seek an individual means of maintaining personal freedom without overturning capitalism. Some have reached utopian positions, believing that bourgeois society can be transformed through love and unselfishness. The petty-bourgeois escapism and self-indulgence of Hippysim, found on every campus in the United States, are indirectly reflected in the anarchistic philosophy and tactics favored by part of the "New Left."

The basic characteristics of the student radicals -- instability, ultra-leftism and inability to solve the organizational question -- are rooted in the social nature of these currents. The same conditions which enable them to quickly reach a high level of political sensitivity -- more leisure, less job discipline -- make it more difficult for them to understand the need for a permanent organization, long term strategy, and patient and persevering political action.

However, the political outlook of the radical students has not remained static. It has begun to evolve quite rapidly in the past two years. These currents have been exposed to all the contending schools of thought in the radical milieu, have gone through intense internal disputes and sometimes bitter factional alignments, and started to regroup. Maoism, neo-anarchism, spontaneism, "state capitalism," Castroism, Trotskyism have all won adherents and left their marks on the eclectic and elitist "New Left" theorists, activists, and their organizations.

The march of events and more experience in struggle have compelled many of them to define and further clarify their positions. Thus the German SDS leaders sought to link up with the workers. The May-June events in France led the anarchistically inclined elements in the American SDS to identify with the Cohn-Bendit tendency while the same events persuaded an opposing segment of the organization of the need for an orientation toward organizing workers.

Their defects and limitations, which

go without maps - exploring territory already explored / universality

are reminiscent of the immature phases of youth movements in the past, do not outweigh the significant strengths of the new radicals.

(1) By and large, national and international politics absorbs them. Unacquainted with extensive mass mobilizations in their own living experience, most of them have had to arrive at revolutionary conclusions through independent critical thought, and have had to work out solutions on their own to important and complex problems.

(2) The days of Communist and Socialist youth organizations, largely concerned with yé-yé, social activities, sports contests, colorful uniforms, and similar distractions, are gone. The best of today's radical youth are attracted to the revolutionary youth groups and join them because of the militant actions they initiate or take part in around the most burning political issues of the day, because of their political programs, their international perspectives, their seriousness toward theory.

(3) Above all, the current radicalization of the youth is characterized by the rebirth of an authentic internationalism, the kind of solidarity that is the complete opposite of the narrow bureaucratic nationalism of the Stalinist movement. The greatest impetus to this development has been given by the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions. The courage of the Vietnamese in resisting the aggression of American imperialism helped bring into being a worldwide effort on their behalf. The Cubans contributed to this revival by setting an example in their own appeals, by Che's call for "two, three, many Vietnams," and by their insistence that the best way to defend a revolution under attack from imperialism is to spread it to other countries.

The new radical generation is aware that it confronts a common enemy in imperialism, the capitalist ruling class of the United States in the first place. It has already shared a series of common political experiences in the struggle against imperialism (Cuba, Vietnam). International campaigns are readily geared together and joint actions rendered more effective by the ease of communication and travel in the world today.

(4) One of the most promising characteristics of the student radicalism is its anti-authoritarian bent, its lack of respect for tradition and its readiness to challenge and question most of the hallowed norms, rules, and regulations of the past. In its search for answers to problems which it did not create, the new generation is willing to consider with an open mind precisely those solutions which have been regarded as heretical and taboo.

In fact, whatever is opposed by the state, school, parents, church, employer, or bureaucracy is thereby recommended to the rebels.

(5) Many young radicals are groping toward a revolutionary Marxist understanding of national and world politics. Leaving aside those who reject Marxism and Leninism out of prejudice, without seriously studying and testing them, most of them are earnestly striving to make their way in a confused, experimental fashion through the fog of lies and distortions spread by the capitalist agencies as well as the falsifiers of Marxism. They may be temporarily diverted in the blind alleys of Maoism, neo-anarchism, or ultraleftism, but bit by bit they are rediscovering the truths of Marxism and learning how they apply to contemporary reality.

III.

Strategy of the "Red University"

Radical student circles are hotly debating the central question of orientation. What should be the direction and objectives of the student struggle? What kind of relationship should the student movement seek with the broader struggle of the working masses and oppressed nationalities? What sort of program should the revolutionary vanguard put forward for the student movement?

The reformist tendency maintains that students should concern themselves with nothing but narrowly defined student issues -- grades, courses, the quality of education, living conditions, narrow campus politics.

At the opposite end of the spectrum stand the ultralefts. They propose to turn the energies of the student body away from the academic milieu altogether, taking the student activists under their wing and sending them to the factory gates, or into the "community," to distribute leaflets proclaiming the need for revolution.

Both of these orientations should be rejected as one-sided and sterile. The revolutionary youth vanguard keeps in mind the long-range interests of their generation as a whole. The college, high school, minority and working-class youth should be brought together onto a common ground of struggle for their own demands against the established order. The aim should be to unite all these into a single powerful fighting force and thereby win the best representatives of all these categories to revolutionary positions and the revolutionary party.

Many politically advanced students come to comprehend the need to gain control over their education and educational

as RED VIBORG DISTRICT (of Petrograd) +
"red factories", etc

institutions and to recognize that this goal can be fully satisfied only with the revolutionary transformation of society. But they puzzle over a way of formulating the objective so as to tie it in with the current struggle in society as a whole. How can the battles over prevailing educational conditions be linked with the desired goal of completely transforming society? It is difficult for them to see how their fight as students fits into the general fight against capitalism. This is a source of frustration and of searches for shortcuts to the revolution which in turn breed opportunism and ultraleftism.

olutionist in the school arena.

The "red university" slogan, as it has appeared on the campus up to this point, is a big advance over the slogans which refer to the narrower goal of student-faculty control over the university. The struggle for autonomy and self-administration is only one aspect of a rounded program aimed at helping students to understand the role of the university under capitalist domination, to educate them to the need for a socialist revolution, and to enlist them in the movement to bring the broadest layers of their generation into the struggle for that revolution.

"RED U!"

During the massive student protests in Yugoslavia in June 1968, the Belgrade students summarized their demands in the slogan, "For a Red University!" This striking formulation was extremely apt in the situation. The students meant that Yugoslavia is supposed to have a socialist educational system but that actually it has been shaped in conformity with the interests of the ruling bureaucracy. Consequently the Yugoslav students face problems that are quite comparable to those faced by students in the capitalist countries. To solve these problems, they demanded that the Yugoslav educational system be transformed to what it ought to be -- let the bureaucratic university give way to a "red" university.

The university as an instrument in the class struggle -- a "red university" -- is opposed to the liberal view of the university as a sanctuary of a privileged minority, holding aloof from the social and political controversies in the rest of society. The resources of the university should be made available to the exploited, the poor, and the oppressed. Students and faculty should have an absolute right to invite anyone they please to address them on any subjects they wish. They should be free to establish close ties with working-class organizations and parties, the minorities and the popular masses and become a source of information and enlightenment for them.

Who shall the University serve?

The slogan was also advanced by radical students in some of the capitalist countries, and adapted to their situations. It may well gain wide popularity on the campuses.

The concept of the "red university" has special application in reference to oppressed national minorities. The need for one or more leading centers of higher education has been felt at some stage by every powerful movement of an oppressed people for self-determination. In the struggle for national freedom in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism, a university shaped for the special needs of an oppressed nation serves as a symbol and an agency for developing national consciousness and national culture in a way most conducive to overcoming narrow nationalist limitations and giving the struggle an international perspective. For both democratic and socialist reasons, the demand for the establishment, extension, and improvement of such facilities under nationalist control must be fought for by the revolutionary vanguard.

NG

"For a University that Serves the Working People -- for a Red University!" With this slogan, these radical students seek to answer the questions: "What kind of education shall students get? Toward what ends should this education be directed? Who shall control the educational facilities? What layers in society should the educational institutions serve?"

By the slogan, "For a Red University!" or "student power" in some countries they mean that the university ought to be transformed from a factory, producing robots, into an organizing center for anticapitalist activities, a powerhouse for revolutionary education, an arena for mobilizing youth in a struggle for the complete transformation of society.

In the United States, owing to the rise of black nationalism as an increasingly strong force among the Afro-Americans, the "red university" slogan appeared in the variation, "For a Black University!"

"BLACK U!"

The slogan epitomizes a program that transcends the campus in its goal, but at the same time includes it; that connects student demands with the broader demands of the class struggle on a national and international scale, that shows students how their own demands relate to these bigger struggles, are an integral part of them, and can help to advance them. The slogan facilitates tying together the long-range perspective and daily work of a rev-

The insistence of black students upon greater access to higher education, upon control over the curricula, finances, and professors in independent facilities where they can study their own culture and history, and upon the inclusion of courses of particular interest to Afro-Americans in the general curriculum has led to uni-

versity and high-school battles from one end of the country to the other. The efforts to force the school authorities to meet the demands of the students from national minorities, the "Third World" students, which have been backed up by direct actions involving both black and white students and faculty members, have exposed the determination of the white supremacist rulers to maintain control over their educational factories. These efforts have also awakened many students to the revolutionary implications of black nationalism and the lengths to which the capitalist class will go to oppose the Afro-American struggle for liberation.

AMP!

As is shown by its origin, the slogan, "For a Red University!" is similarly applicable to student struggles in the Soviet bloc. The universities in the workers states have acted as prime centers for expressing grievances of the populace against the bureaucratic regimes. In their recent struggles, the Polish, Yugoslav, and Czechoslovak students have advanced concrete demands stemming not only from their own particular problems but also from those facing the entire working class and its allies. Prominent among these have been the call for political freedom, workers control of production, and an end to social inequalities.

In the colonial and semicolonial countries the concept of the "red university" could readily be linked with the traditions of radicalism and the struggle to establish or to preserve university autonomy. There the students are now playing, as they have often done in the past, a role of first-rate importance in the struggle for revolutionary goals. They have undertaken actions that soon brought them into conflict with antidemocratic regimes, that soon involved issues going beyond the universities and leading to the mobilization of popular support among the workers, peasants, and other oppressed sectors of the people.

The battles engaged in by the radical students of Mexico, Brazil, Bolivia, Pakistan, Egypt, and a number of comparable countries show how universal this pattern is.

IV.

A Program of Democratic and Transitional Demands

The universities and high schools are all the more important because of the size of the forces involved. their mood of combativity, the actual struggles they themselves initiate, their location in the big cities where the greatest potential forces for revolution are assembled, and their readiness to include issues going far beyond the immediate campus issues. In addition to all this, experience has repeatedly shown how valuable the universi-

ties and high schools are, both as testing grounds for the education and development of the first contingents of young radicals and as sources of recruitment to the revolutionary party.

An impressive example of the possibilities opened up by a correct policy is provided by the international campaign in support of the struggle against American imperialism by the South Vietnam National Liberation Front which was organized by student militants in a number of key countries. To launch the solidarity campaign, international connections in university circles were utilized. Through the agitation and actions around this key issue, hundreds of thousands of students became politicalized and radicalized. The attempts to organize large numbers of students in demonstrations on behalf of the Vietnamese revolution frequently posed the right of the students to use university facilities for ends that outraged the authorities, bringing the students into collision with them. Political issues were thus brought to the fore in sharp form. These confrontations in turn mobilized more students in the defense of their democratic rights and further intensified the struggle.

First international ties forged on Vietnam Day.

The validity of the political approach outlined in the founding document of the world Trotskyist movement, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International, has received a striking confirmation in the struggles involving the students. What is now required is to apply this approach in a better planned and more thorough way, working out a set of democratic and transitional demands for application in this field as it stands today.

Proceeding from the existing state of development and level of consciousness of the students, these demands should express their most urgent needs and grievances, directing them in the most effective way against the institutions and authorities that have come under fire from the students themselves. In mobilizing around such slogans, young militants can be led to understand the validity of the transitional program as a whole and become educated to the necessity of a fundamental change in the entire system.

The objective is to link the student struggles with the struggles of the workers and national minorities at their present levels of development and orient them toward a combined drive for state power, bringing into the struggle all the forces opposed to the capitalist or bureaucratic regimes.

Because of the decay of the capitalist system and the erosion of democratic conquests, made in some instances almost two centuries ago, many of today's student

and

decent living not possible under capitalism

struggles begin over the most elementary issues, such as the right of free speech. However, they tend to develop beyond this level quite rapidly, going beyond the campus, beyond the framework of democratic freedoms as conceived in the most revolutionary phases of capitalism in its rise, reaching into the economic area and bringing up problems that can actually be solved only under a socialist system. A clear understanding of this logical progression makes it possible to advance a consistent series of interlocking slogans that can readily be adjusted for particular situations. Above all, it facilitates the recognition of suitable slogans of this type originating from the ranks in combat, as in the case of the slogan for a "red university."

professors and administrators to arbitrarily penalize students.

(5) Freedom of political association among students and professors.

(6) The right to utilize university facilities to promote educational and cultural activities of direct interest to organizations of the working class, peasants, oppressed nationalities, and plebian masses.

In the struggle for political freedom on the campus, some of the following slogans have become central issues in major confrontations:

II

(1) University autonomy, either to be won or to be kept inviolate.

(2) Repeal of all laws infringing civil liberties. End the witch-hunt.

(3) The police and all other repressive forces to be strictly banned from entering university grounds and buildings.

(4) Dismiss all government officials responsible for victimizing students, workers, national minorities, political dissidents.

(5) Dissolve the special police forces and secret political police.

(6) Release all the political prisoners.

(7) Abolish the censorship, whether official or "voluntary," of the press, radio, television, and the arts and sciences.

(8) For freedom of the press, freedom of association and organization, freedom of speech, assembly, petition, and travel, and the right to engage in demonstrations.

I FREE EDUCATION & DECENT LIVING

A combined demand for a free education and for a decent standard of living -- to which everyone has a democratic right but which can be provided only in a socialist society that has overcome the limitations of the capitalist system -- is offered in the following series of suggestions for students in orienting their actions:

(1) A university education for everyone who wants one, the full expense to be underwritten by the government.

(2) No maximum age limit on free education; no limitation on the number of years a person may continue in school, or resume school after dropping out, post-graduate studies included.

(3) Decent housing for students.

(4) An annual salary for all students adequate to their needs and safeguarded against inflation by automatic compensating increases.

(5) Guaranteed jobs for students upon graduation.

In the struggle by students for control over their own education, the following list has been advanced to one degree or another in various universities internationally:

(1) Abolition of government-controlled student organizations. Recognize the right of students to organize and govern themselves according to their own free choice.

(2) Hiring and firing of faculty members and administration officials to be placed under joint control of students and faculty.

(3) The students themselves to democratically decide what subjects should be taught.

(4) Abolition of the powers of pro-

In student struggles directly involving the national minorities, the fight for their rights comes sharply and specifically to the fore, as has been dramatically shown in the United States in relation to the struggle for black liberation. The issues arise most often around violations of democratic rights, or battles to establish them. They are not confined to the university level but extend throughout the educational system to the primary grades. Consequently struggles in this field affect the oppressed communities as a whole to a much greater degree than is the case with majority groups, and the issues are more easily seen as involving much broader questions concerning the perspectives of a national minority in a decaying capitalist society. Because of this, the possibility of student struggles having catalytic effects in the minority communities deserves special attention.

MINORITY RIGHTS

The slogans in this field can be summarized in the following categories:

(1) Recognition of the right of the oppressed national minority communities to control their own public affairs, including education from kindergarten up.

(2) Representation of national minorities on all policy-making or policy-implementing bodies of the schools.

(3) To combat racism and great-power chauvinism, truthful teaching of the history and culture of oppressed national minorities in all schools, with periodic review by educational committees elected by the oppressed national minorities.

(4) Unlimited government financed educational training through post-graduate study for oppressed national minorities.

(5) Establishment of adequately financed, independent, university level educational facilities under the control of national minorities.

A special area of concern to students is the relationship between the school administration and the giant corporations and their government. For big business and the military, the university constitutes an indispensable recruiting ground. Linked with this is the role of the universities in highly questionable research projects undertaken in the "public interest." In connection with antiwar campaigns, where a natural connection is easily seen, important struggles have been initiated in this area. Typical slogans fall into the following sequence:

(1) End the ties between the university and the military.

(2) Abolish secret research by the university for the government.

(3) Abolish secret subversion by government agencies of student organizations.

(4) Expose the ties between university officials and big business by publishing all investments, holdings, and contracted projects of the university and of all directors, trustees, and administration.

(5) Abolish research of special interest to big business.

(6) No recruiting of personnel on the campus by the big corporations.

(7) Lower the voting age and the age limit on holding public office. Old enough to fight, old enough to vote, and to have a voice in deciding public affairs.

In countries suffering totalitarian

regimes as in Spain, South Africa and elsewhere, the universities have repeatedly demonstrated their importance as incubating centers of organized revolt. The experience in Spain is now particularly rich in showing how the efforts of students to break the grip of government-sponsored student organizations and to organize along independent lines parallels similar efforts by the working class and interlocks with them.

Here the campus struggle centers around a single broad demand: "For university autonomy!"

As already indicated, this can readily be formulated in particular slogans that grade into slogans transcending the struggle on the campus and connecting up with broader issues involving the workers, peasants, and plebian masses in the cities.

The situation is symmetrical to this in most of the workers states. Here the student struggle naturally follows the orientation of pointing up the contrast between the official socialist ideology and propaganda and the lack of anything resembling the socialist democracy which Lenin stood for and explained in State and Revolution. As shown in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union itself, the sequence of demands tends to go as follows:

(1) Freedom of discussion on philosophical, cultural, and scientific questions. The right to express a critical viewpoint.

(2) Freedom to discuss historical questions. Let the truth come out!

(3) Freedom to discuss current political issues.

(4) Abolish the censorship.

(5) For the right to organize and demonstrate.

(6) No political persecution. Let the public, including foreign observers, be admitted to all trials.

(7) Freedom of travel.

(8) Eliminate the large degree of self-perpetuating social inequality and the special privileges of the bureaucracy.

(9) Return to revolutionary internationalism.

(10) Solidarity with the struggles of the oppressed in other lands.

Youth radicalism is not restricted to college and university levels. It has widely permeated the high schools and in

some places even the upper primary grades. High-school students in numerous countries have turned out by the thousands in the mobilizations against the Vietnam war and been among their most enthusiastic and energetic supporters. The high-school students organized in CAL (Comites d'Action Lyceen) played a major role in the actions before, during and following the May-June 1968 events in France.

revolutionary activity Membership in the revolutionary-socialist youth organization enables young radicals to decide their own policies, organize their own actions, make their own mistakes, and learn their own lessons.

This form of organization also has many advantages for the revolutionary party itself. It provides a reservoir for recruitment to the party. It helps prevent the party from acting as a youth organization and from lowering the norms of a Bolshevik organization on discipline, political maturity, and level of theoretical understanding to the less demanding levels of an organization agreeable to the youth.

At a certain point in the development of every revolutionary youth organization, its ability to organize, lead and win over decisive layers of high-school youth becomes a key test. Revolutionary socialist youth organizations must take the lead in organizing the secondary-school youth, fighting with them for their rights, and coordinating their activities with other sections of the anti-capitalist struggle. These young activists constitute an important element of the new revolutionary generation, for tomorrow they will enter the higher institutions of learning or go in large numbers into the factories where they will provide an invaluable ferment of militancy and socialist consciousness.

To put forward and fight for such slogans and goals effectively, to advance them in a way to take full advantage of openings and opportunities, requires a Marxist leadership that is politically alert, tactically flexible, and able to avoid falling into either opportunistic adaptation to the student environment or into ultraleft sectarianism.

V.

The Revolutionary Youth Organization and the Party

The experience of the world Trotskyist movement during the past few years has shown that its work among the youth can most effectively be carried forward through revolutionary-socialist youth organizations fraternally associated with the sections of the Fourth International but organizationally independent of them. Participation in other youth formations must be viewed as a phase toward the construction of such organizations.

The independent youth organization can attract radicalizing young people, who have not yet made up their minds about joining any political party of the left, and who are not yet committed to the Bolshevik perspective of becoming lifetime revolutionists, but who are willing and ready to participate in a broad range of political actions together with the revolutionary party and its members. It can serve as a valuable training and testing ground for candidates for party cadre status, and make it easier for them to acquire the political and organizational experience and education required for serious

The scope of the current student radicalization presents an unprecedented opening for expanding the influence and cadres of the parties of the Fourth International. Hundreds of thousands of young radicals, no longer intimidated by the poisonous propaganda of Stalinism, are ready to listen with open minds to the views of Trotskyism. Tens of thousands have already accepted large parts of the Trotskyist program. Their aversion to Stalinism and the Social Democracy makes it possible for an honest revolutionary alternative to gain ascendancy among decisive sections of the new radicals. Substantial numbers of them can be recruited fairly rapidly into the ranks of the Fourth International.

VI.

Tasks of the Fourth International among the Youth

Three interrelated tasks are indicated by this analysis of the sweep of the radicalization of the youth. These are:

- (1) To win the leadership of the radical youth in the spheres of both ideology and action.
- (2) To build strong Marxist youth organizations.
- (3) To draw new cadres from the youth to replenish the ranks and supply fresh energy to the leadership of the sections of the Fourth International.

The Trotskyist youth have greater possibilities of leading substantial forces in action than any other tendency of the radical movement. In several countries they have already proved capable of initiating and directing movements of considerable proportions and significance. One example is the world-wide campaign undertaken in defense of the Vietnam revolution. Another is the role played by the Jeunesse Communiste Revolutionnaire in the historic May-June 1968 days in France. A third is the ideological influence of the

Mexico

Fourth Internationalists in the movement led by the National Strike Council of the Mexican students.

No tendency can hope to root itself and become a respected factor among the radical youth that does not fully and audaciously participate in the front ranks of its ongoing struggles, whatever shortcomings they may have. The Trotskyist youth must set the example in practice, as well as in theoretical concepts and political pronouncements.

FRONT LINES

However, there is an abundance of activism, of readiness to struggle and sacrifice among the ranks of youth. What is most lacking in the new generation is theoretical training, political clarity, and a correct line of struggle. This side of the revolutionary socialist youth movement is of decisive importance for its further development. Growing recognition of this will become registered in the widening influence of Trotskyism. The superiority of the Trotskyist movement over its opponents and rivals comes from its sound Marxist foundations, its Bolshevik traditions, its programmatic comprehensiveness and correctness, its adherence to socialist internationalism. These features likewise constitute its chief attraction to radicalizing youth.

While spreading the ideas of Trotskyism among the youth with whom they participate in combat, the Fourth Internationalists must seek to construct a revolutionary Marxist youth organization that will systematically educate its members and followers in the methods, doctrines, and positions of the Trotskyist movement from its origins. All the results of activity among the youth can be jeopardized if the organizational requisite for this educational work is neglected.

Work among the youth is not an end in itself. It reaches fruition in the impetus given to the construction and reinforcement of the revolutionary parties that will be capable of leading the working class to victory. The sections of the Fourth International are as yet too small to lead the masses in their own name and under their own banner in a decisive struggle for power. Their work has a preparatory and predominantly propagandistic character.

Their task now is to win and educate decisive numbers of the radical youth in order to equip them for the greater task

of winning leadership of the revolutionary elements among the working masses. To fulfill that function adequately, the youth recruits must be thoroughly schooled in the organizational concepts of Bolshevism and its methods of constructing politically homogeneous and democratically centralized parties. This is the only means of overcoming the crisis of leadership which is the central contradiction of our epoch.

Government authorities the world over, whether in the advanced capitalist powers, the workers states, or the colonial world, are becoming increasingly concerned over the unrest among their youth which is becoming more and more unmanageable. Their worries are justified. This rising generation has already manifested a tremendous potential for radical activity and a powerful will to change the status quo.

Whoever succeeds in winning the allegiance of the most intelligent and devoted activists among the rebel youth holds the key to the future. For they will play a major role in making history and deciding the destiny of mankind for the rest of the twentieth century.

Insurgent students in a number of countries have already shown how their initiative in confronting the established powers can serve to stimulate struggle in other sectors of society. The young workers will be in the forefront of the movements to break the grip of the bureaucratic machines in the unions and will set an example for the older generation in their militancy and interest in revolutionary politics.

The Fourth International cannot afford to default in what is its central task today -- winning and assimilating the best of the rebel youth. A good start has already been made in a number of countries. It is now imperative to build on these achievements. This requires better coordination of the activities of the youth groups of the different sections and closer collaboration on such projects as antiwar and defense campaigns, and the development of new openings for the movement internationally.

The aim is to enable the Fourth International to become the recognized voice, organizer, and leader of the youth, who are called upon to advance the world revolution.