

**Basic Documents of the
Revolutionary Workers League of the United States
Number 3**

THE SPECIALLY OPPRESSED AND THE PROLETARIAN VANGUARD

(Basic Organizational Documents, Number 2)

First Edition Adopted 13 April 1981

Second Edition, Revised, 5 October 1987

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First Printing, October 1987
Scanned & Reformatted, July 2009

THE SPECIALLY OPPRESSED AND THE PROLETARIAN VANGUARD

1. The Specially Oppressed and Class Society

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One of the central tasks of the revolutionary organization is to link the struggles of the specially oppressed with the struggle of the working class for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. The strategic alliance of the workers and oppressed is essential to the victory of the proletarian revolution. And this victory is the historical prerequisite for the creation of the material basis for the complete elimination of all forms of special social oppression: an economy with so great an abundance of goods that no divisive struggle over scarce necessities takes place and the material possibility for the full and free development of every individual is secured.

(2)

However, the cogency and the inspiring character of this Marxist vision of joint struggle culminating in joint emancipation are not sufficient to forge this crucial alliance of the oppressed and the working class. In capitalist reality, both the organized working class and the oppressed groups find themselves politically and socially divided from each other and among themselves, even though the working class itself is made up in large part of the specially oppressed and even though the majority of the specially oppressed are workers (proletarian or semiproletarian, exploited toilers).

All class societies require and therefore foster and elaborate antagonistic social divisions, beyond the basic economic class divisions. To begin with – to put it in the most basic terms – many kinds of differences among people exist. As long as the level of development of the forces of production is too low to produce an abundance of necessities for all, antagonistic struggle over relatively scarce necessities prevails – the case throughout the history of class society. Inevitably certain of the differences among people lead to competitive divisions among different groups. Moreover, to secure their control of the economic surplus and the benefits flowing from that control, ruling classes and political elites require divisions among the exploited lower classes. Sexual and familial relations provide bases for hierarchical social divisions and the promotion of authoritarian and submissive psychology and ideology. Ethnic, geographical, linguistic, religious, and other differences offer further possibilities for antagonistic divisions.

Capitalism therefore inevitably arose in a world already full of antagonistic social divisions, supported by ignorance and irrational ideological prejudices and psychological attitudes. Some of these were essentially economic in origin, the product of precapitalist forms of class society. Others originated in the multiplicity of natural and cultural differences among people, elaborated irrationally as social antagonisms among discrete groups of people. Whether economic or noneconomic in origin and basis, the fundamental condition for the existence of all these social antagonisms was the limitations and contradictions of a given precapitalist economy. Most survived and flourished because they reinforced the established structures of economic and political power, especially those antagonisms which divided the exploited and oppressed or otherwise weakened their capacity for resistance against oppression. The limitations and contradictions of the given economy shaped the exact form of each set of antagonisms and determined its overall course of development.

Some of these divisions capitalism overthrew – primarily feudal and other economic relations which tended to block capitalist economic development. But throughout its history, capitalism has also effectively seized on the human diversity of society in general and the working class in particular precisely in order to *foster and fortify* hierarchical stratification and antagonistic divisiveness where the logic of shared exploitation and oppression would otherwise have created united struggle against the capitalists. For just as the victory of the struggle against the capitalists hinges on the unity of workers and oppressed, so the continuation of capitalist domination has required of the capitalists not only class solidarity among themselves but also a brutal genius for dividing their victims.

Further, alongside their more or less conscious efforts at disuniting the potential agents of their overthrow, the capitalists' economic system automatically atomizes social individuals and throws every person struggling for the means of existence into the war of all against all which is the heart of capitalist market relations. The bourgeois forces and values which dismember families and friendships readily turn group against group throughout bourgeois society.

(3)

So it is that where the comradely bonds of trust and solidarity should have sprung up through the course of joint struggle, distrust, bigotry, and hatred divide class sisters and brothers among themselves and cut them off from other suffering sisters and brothers. These divisions are among the ugliest and politically most important forms of spontaneous backwardness which its immersion in bourgeois society inevitably inflicts on the working class.

Moreover, in the period following World War II, in the United States and other advanced capitalist countries, these tragic divisions have gained particular importance in the context of the postwar restabilization of world capitalism. In a handful of the most advanced capitalist nations, the majority of workers experienced small but significant gains in their real standard of living, while trade and profits reached historic highs.

Under these conditions, the limits of capitalist development manifested themselves most acutely and most apparently in the inability of the capitalist system to provide equally real and meaningful gains for the most oppressed strata of the laboring population and in the continuing resistance of bourgeois society to rational and humane solutions to a number of fundamental social and personal problems. These chronic problems in the advanced capitalist countries paralleled the chronic problems of the neocolonial backward countries as decisive evidence of the inability of capitalist imperialism, even in the period of its greatest, albeit temporary, successes, to construct a rational world economic order which could actually create the material conditions for the all-around development of all of humanity.

In the United States, these conditions produced a period of relative reconciliation to capitalism on the part of most workers, but of sharp and massive militance on the part of blacks and other specially oppressed groups who found themselves still the victims of social, political, and legal discrimination, condemned overall to the worst positions in the economy, including the bottom strata of the working class. Similarly the continuing atomization and dehumanization of bourgeois personal relations and the oppressiveness and hypocrisy of bourgeois norms of family and sexual relations produced both private and public rebellions, especially on the part of the young, women, and homosexuals. Progressive student youth, vocationally and personally estranged from bourgeois morality and ambitions, joined their own issues to support for the struggles of blacks and other oppressed groups.

These groups and the more or less organized left composed the bulk of the American New Left of the 1960s and early 1970s, which came to combine struggles against various forms of special oppression in the US with militant, massive opposition to the American imperialist war in Indochina. But even as

this highly heterogeneous mass movement was successfully impairing the conduct of this war, it was decomposing into its component sectors and strata and succumbing to its chronic isolation from the working class.

That struggles against special oppression and anti-imperialist struggles, rather than mass labor struggles, characterized the 1950s and 1960s meant that these struggles could achieve only severely limited gains. The overall isolation of these struggles from the working class guaranteed not only the limited character of their gains but the unstable and temporary character of the diffuse New Left itself.

When major labor struggles broke out in the US in the latter part of 1969, the New Left was virtually caught unawares. In particular, the urgent necessity of linking the power of the organized labor movement to the black and antiwar struggles was rarely even recognized as an abstract question, let alone as *the* critical strategic and tactical problem.

Rather, illusions about the potential of isolated sectoralist struggles were rampant, often wrapped in or reinforced by illusions in the Stalinist and petty-bourgeois leaderships of anti-imperialist struggles in the neocolonies. While in its highest flights of fancy the American New Left substituted itself for the working class, its ultimate fate made clear the historic penalty for isolation from the working class: imprisonment within the confines of the capitalist system.

The crop of small, ostensibly Leninist groups which grew out of the demise of the New Left either dressed up sectoralist illusions in pseudo-Marxist rhetoric, treated the working class itself as yet another specially oppressed group to be mindlessly idealized and uncritically capitulated to, or reacted with sectarian stupidity against the struggles of the specially oppressed. Not infrequently organizations combined these different mistaken orientations in their positions and work. The 1970s became the period of the overall failure of the American left to overcome the negative heritage of the 1950s and 1960s: organized labor and the specially oppressed remained largely divided from each other's struggles, as a stagnant US and world capitalism sighed with relief.

Under these conditions, the divisions among the oppressed and between the oppressed and the working class *are not merely important problems* of the proletarian revolution in the US and other advanced capitalist countries. The militance of the specially oppressed masses is crucial to the arousal of the labor movement to sustained, mass, militant struggle. Only a labor movement capable of reaching out to and linking up with the struggles of the specially oppressed can conceivably press its struggle to final victory over capitalism. And only a working class fighting for all the oppressed in its own country can link up with the struggles of the oppressed nations to create a new world based on the revolutionary equality of all peoples.

In the face of these realities, *the division of the specially oppressed from the working class poses a decisive strategic problem inseparable from the problem of winning the working class to the road of socialist revolution.* The vanguard party must overcome this historic irrationality through the course of its struggle for the revolutionary leadership of the working class, or the historic mission of both class and party must end in tragic failure.

2. The Proletarian Vanguard and the Specially Oppressed

(4)

The vanguard's struggle to unite the workers and the oppressed has at all times three basic aspects.

First, the proletarian vanguard must militantly champion the cause of the oppressed in its program and throughout its work. The model for the revolutionary Marxist must:

...not be the trade union secretary but *the tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. (Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*, III, E; 1902)

Second, the vanguard must build concrete, organizational ties to the oppressed through the process of fighting alongside the oppressed and providing proletarian leadership and direction for their struggles. This requires a fight for united-front work and the building of transitional organizations, both between the vanguard organization and the specially oppressed and between the organized labor movement and the specially oppressed.

Third, the vanguard organization must win to its own ranks the most politically conscious elements from among the oppressed, both to represent the oppressed within the vanguard organization and to build up the revolutionary leadership of the oppressed.

Only through this three-part struggle can an *actual* strategic alliance of the working class and the specially oppressed be achieved.

(5)

Of these three aspects, the third is clearly the most important. The fullest alliance of the working class and the specially oppressed can only be attained in the disciplined unity of the most conscious members of the working class and the specially oppressed groups. By definition, this alliance within the vanguard organization must be decisive for the solution of the problem of revolutionary leadership for the working class and its allies from among the oppressed groups.

But this alliance *within* the vanguard organization is utterly dependent on and bound up with the other two aspects of the struggle to unite the workers and the oppressed. The logic of both the recruitment of the specially oppressed and of internal policies and practices concerning members from the specially oppressed groups *flows from the overall effort to unite the workers and the oppressed in a single struggle to overthrow capitalism* – a struggle which must be led by the proletariat.

(6)

What is required of the overall alliance between the working class and the oppressed is required in a heightened and exemplary form in the relations between members of the vanguard organization from the specially oppressed groups and the organization as a whole – and in particular between those members and the organization's leadership and with regard to those members and the processes of building

leadership. Only such an approach can lead to the forging of the core of the strategic alliance between workers and oppressed within the heart of the revolutionary vanguard itself.

(7)

The proletariat and its vanguard's relations with the specially oppressed must be characterized by the methods of *workers' democracy* and the *transitional approach*. Through patient, persistent explanation and the raising of concrete transitional and revolutionary demands in the interests of the oppressed in the context of real struggles, the working class, over time, wins the oppressed to its banner. Arrogance and compulsion have no place in this process. At the same time, the working class and its revolutionary vanguard must offer genuine, aggressive leadership to the struggles of the oppressed and forcefully and effectively put forward a proletarian, revolutionary, and socialist orientation. In all these ways, the proletariat's methods in winning the leadership of the oppressed are analogous to the revolutionary vanguard's methods in winning the leadership of the working class.

For the proletariat to gain the leadership of the struggles of the oppressed, it must overcome its own divisions between relatively privileged and specially oppressed groups and strata. And it must break through the barriers – including its own ignorance and bigotry – which capitalist society and the workers' misleaders have created between the proletariat (especially its more privileged sectors) and the nonproletarian and semiproletarian oppressed groups. And the specially oppressed groups must overcome their own divisions and the reformist and individualistic illusions and antiproletarian and anticommunist prejudices foisted on them by bourgeois society and their own misleaders.

For any of this to happen, the revolutionary vanguard must champion the cause of the oppressed *with and within the proletariat* in order to lead the working class into the struggle against “every manifestation of tyranny and oppression.” And it must, through practical struggle, win the oppressed to recognize the ultimate dependency on the organized working class of their own struggles for full emancipation.

The vanguard must *fight against the counterposition* of the interests of the workers and the oppressed, *fighting rather for their dynamic and militant unity in struggle*. Therefore it must fight against notions of working-class unity which lead to the suppression of the interests of oppressed minorities beneath the protection of the majority's privileges. And it must also fight against any political capitulation to the chauvinist illusions and prejudices of the specially oppressed – against any efforts to tie the specially oppressed workers and poor to capitalism through “unity” with their own bourgeoisified elements.

This practical struggle against dangerously false notions of unity requires a firm theoretical struggle against those ideologies which support reactionary forms of sectoralism and separatism or other positions which weaken the struggle of the oppressed, whether by undercutting boldness and militance or by isolating the oppressed from the working class. But this theoretical struggle must recognize that such reactionary positions result both from the conditions of the specially oppressed groups within bourgeois society and from the past failures of the working class to make the struggles of the specially oppressed its own struggles.

Most fundamentally, the practical struggle against false counterpositions and false notions of unity requires a firm theoretical struggle against vulgar pseudo-Marxist attempts to reduce the various forms of special oppression to no more than special varieties of capitalist exploitation. Such theories fail to recognize the historical and current sources of special oppression outside the proletarian class struggle which centers on the capitalist productive process. They fail to see the importance to the oppressed of the discrimination, deprivation, abuses, and injustices which they suffer outside the workplace and beyond

the issues of jobs, wages, and working conditions. They therefore fail to appreciate the importance to the oppressed of political, educational, and cultural issues – and of the issue of basic human dignity. They fail to grasp the cross-class character of special oppression and so fail to understand the importance of the communities and special organizations of the oppressed.

The practical result of this theoretical blindness, masquerading as Marxism, is an economist, trade union narrowness which liquidates the struggle to convince the labor movement to reach out to the oppressed communities and organizations. Since such a point of view inevitably reinforces both the separation of organized labor from the struggles of the specially oppressed and the limitation of the working-class struggle to the economic trade union struggle, it is inherently antirevolutionary as well as capitulatory toward the chauvinist prejudices of the relatively privileged sectors of the working class. It abandons the oppressed and the proletarian revolution simultaneously.

...we shall never be able to develop the political consciousness of the workers...by keeping within the framework of the economic struggle, for that framework is too narrow...

Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of *all* classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between *all* classes. For that reason, the reply to the question as to what must be done to bring political knowledge to the workers cannot be merely the answer with which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers, especially those inclined towards Economism, mostly content themselves, namely: “To go among the workers.” To bring political knowledge to the *workers* the Social Democrats must *go among all classes of the population*; they must dispatch units of their army *in all directions*. (Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*, III, E; 1902)

The revolutionary vanguard must avoid the counterposition of the ultimate emancipation of the communist future to the current struggles of the oppressed against immediate injustices and abuses. For only through intervening in a militant fashion in support of the fight of the oppressed against their sufferings today can the working class win leadership of their struggle for ultimate liberation in the future. And only such proletarian support for current struggles can convince the masses of the oppressed of the proletarian and socialist alternative to reformist and chauvinist illusions.

At the same time as it opposes such vulgar pseudo-Marxist and pseudoleft denials of the specificity of the specially oppressed and their struggles, the vanguard must also fight against the common, completely non-Marxist, inside-out versions of these denials, which deny the unique historic role of the working class under the guise of defending the special importance and special interests of the oppressed. These positions tend to substitute the specially oppressed and their current, spontaneous struggles, for the working class and its conscious vanguard and the politically conscious revolutionary struggle of the working class, which is the only road to the full socialist emancipation of humanity.

Finally, the vanguard must avoid counterposing the struggles of the various oppressed groups to each other, while demonstrating its respect for the special character and concerns of each through the development of concrete programs of action for each struggle which can facilitate the unity of all these struggles with the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

(8)

Crucial to this entire process is the leadership of specially oppressed workers within the workers' mass organizations and struggles. The vanguard organization must recognize this in its work,

emphasizing both the tendency for specially oppressed workers to be among the most militant and the potential role of militant working-class leaders of labor organizations and struggles as key links between the labor movement and the specially oppressed communities.

(9)

These concerns in the work of the vanguard organization among workers and the oppressed, suggest key aspects of the method which must determine the organization's practices in recruiting and in building up cadres from among the oppressed. But recruitment and internal work also require a special focus on other key problems – a focus which can, in turn, decisively aid the organization's struggle for the overall alliance of the proletariat and the specially oppressed groups.

(10)

For the same reasons that intellectuals and the more educated strata in general will tend to be won first to revolutionary Marxism and will therefore, initially, have a disproportionately large representation in the vanguard organization, there is a tendency for both the initial membership and leadership of the organization to be drawn disproportionately from both the upper and middle economic strata and the relatively privileged rather than the specially oppressed groups of bourgeois society. The recruitment of workers does not necessarily solve this problem, since the best organized, better educated, more skilled, and relatively privileged workers are often the most easily recruited.

This situation automatically confronts the organization with three basic obstacles to recruiting and building up the leadership of the specially oppressed: 1) the unconscious *prejudices, fears, and irrational guilt* regarding the oppressed often found in *comrades from relatively privileged backgrounds*; 2) the spontaneous *distrust felt by the oppressed* toward both the proletarian vanguard organization and the labor movement; 3) the tendency toward *oppressive hierarchical divisions within the organization* between comrades from relatively privileged and specially oppressed backgrounds.

(11)

The most important condition for overcoming these three obstacles is the militant, relentless struggle of the organization against all forms of bigotry, discrimination, and violence against the specially oppressed in its public work, especially its trade union work and including its programmatic documents, press, and other publications of all kinds.

The vanguard's determined and effective implementation of the Trotskyist approach to the fight against fascism is directly related to this fight, since the Nazis, the Ku Klux Klan, and their ilk organize primarily on the basis of bigotry against the specially oppressed, feature violent attacks against the oppressed in their ongoing activities, and have the genocidal extermination of the oppressed as a central programmatic objective. Similarly the organization must expose and fight against police harassment and violence against the oppressed, using these police attacks to expose the essential nature of the bourgeois state as bigoted and violent. Against fascist and police threats the vanguard must counterpose practical efforts to build alliances of labor and the specially oppressed to defend the oppressed and impose tactical defeats on the fascists and the cops, the hardened and dangerous enemies of all the oppressed and all working people.

The organization's demonstration in action of an uncompromising, intransigent commitment to the struggle against the irrational and hierarchical abuses and violent attacks experienced by the specially

oppressed in bourgeois society, including fascist and cop violence, creates the only context in which the organization can overcome the irrationalities of relatively privileged members toward the specially oppressed, can break through the distrust of the specially oppressed toward the organization, and can eliminate oppressive hierarchical internal divisions between relatively privileged and specially oppressed comrades.

(12)

Internally the key condition for overcoming these obstacles is the commitment of leadership at all levels to the development and implementation of policies which actually achieve the recruitment and building up as organizational leadership of comrades from specially oppressed backgrounds. Just as the organization must be the tribune of all oppressed people in its day-to-day public work, its leadership must function within the organization as the tribune of the specially oppressed comrades. It must know how to respond constructively and concretely to the special concerns of specially oppressed comrades, in particular to concerns regarding recruitment and leadership policies and the capacity of the organization actually to carry out its programmatic commitment to the oppressed.

The leadership must be able to champion the special needs and interests of the specially oppressed within the organization in ways which bind those special concerns together with the special concerns of proletarian members and in ways clearly linked to the revolutionary program and character of the organization. It must avoid artificial counterpositions of these fundamental organizational and political concerns. Where real conflicts arise, it must make maximum attempts at mediation and resolution of conflicts on a principled basis and fight against gratuitous confrontations. But in all situations leadership must be prepared to champion the special needs and interests of the specially oppressed against any misunderstanding, insensitivity, or prejudices of relatively privileged comrades.

(13)

In general, the relationship of specially oppressed to relatively privileged comrades is analogous to the relationship between worker and intellectual comrades. Therefore the special obligations of leadership – and of the central leadership in particular – to working-class members are analogous to the special obligations of leadership to members from specially oppressed backgrounds.

Here, too, then, the possibility of overcoming, *with regard to the organization's overall work*, the inequalities of bourgeois society derives from the revolutionary political purpose of the organization and from its constituent character as an organization *of revolutionaries*. Insofar as members make revolutionary activity their profession, just as “*all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals...must [and can] be effaced*” (*What Is to Be Done?*, IV, C), so the distinctions between members from specially oppressed and relatively privileged backgrounds *must and can be effaced*.

But this can happen only if the organization's leadership demonstrates a commitment to the alliance of the proletariat and the specially oppressed within the organization equal to its commitment to the unity of workers and intellectuals within the organization. The leadership will have demonstrated this commitment adequately only if its consistent policies and practice have won the *specially oppressed members* to “regard that leadership as both the firmest defenders of the organization's revolutionary line and as *their* best advocates, the best and most consistent champions of their special needs and interests within the organization” (RWL/US, thesis 8 in “Proletarian Leadership within the Organization,” section 7 of *On Democratic Centralism: Basic Organizational Documents*, no. 1; 1981).

Such a leadership must include and be constantly building up as leaders members from specially oppressed backgrounds and especially those who are themselves leaders and organizers of the oppressed, “since the internal dialogue between leaders and ranks is aimed at advancing the organization’s revolutionary dialogue with the working class” *and the oppressed (On Democratic Centralism, section 7, thesis 10).*

(14)

At the same time, the membership as a whole must take the organization’s relations with the specially oppressed as seriously as its relations with the proletariat. The entire membership must be prepared to do whatever is necessary to recruit the specially oppressed to the revolutionary program and to support internal policies which promote the building up of specially oppressed members as leaders of the organization. No bigot can be a part of a revolutionary organization.

(15)

The absolute exclusion of conscious bigots from the organization does not eliminate the problems of unconscious prejudices and the fears and “liberal guilt” with regard to the specially oppressed of many comrades from relatively privileged backgrounds. Comrades with these problems often unwittingly arouse or exacerbate the distrust of specially oppressed people and contribute to their alienation from the vanguard organization and even from revolutionary and proletarian politics. The organization must be acutely conscious of such problems, able to recognize their subtlest forms, and capable of struggling firmly and effectively against them. Its policy must aim at the eradication of all distortions of its work by such problems and unrelenting struggle against the irrationalities which cause these distortions.

At the same time, as long as relatively privileged comrades who tend to be disoriented by such irrationalities can acknowledge the problems and are genuinely committed to struggling against them, patience and sensitivity must characterize the organization’s work with them over these problems. While members from specially oppressed backgrounds must not be allowed to be undercut by such problems, the organization must recognize the origin of these irrationalities in the complex of uncontrollable influences in which bourgeois society immerses its relatively privileged members. An approach free of moralism and self-righteousness and consistently constructive and concrete is essential. Leadership must take special responsibility for recognizing these problems, eliminating their external impact, making sure that specially oppressed comrades are not destructively affected by them, and ensuring that each relatively privileged comrade found in need of special struggle receives it.

However, the organization must be prepared to employ administrative measures, up to and including expulsion, to deal with any member who persistently and stubbornly manifests bigoted attitudes in her or his internal functioning or public work, in a manner destructive to the organization’s work, and who refuses to acknowledge these problems and find ways to solve them.

(16)

The distrust felt by many specially oppressed people towards the revolutionary organization is a complex phenomenon, which the organization must be able to assess correctly. In part it expresses anticommunism, individualism, and sectoralist or even separatist reformist illusions. Revolutionaries must struggle against such reactionary views.

But the distrust of the specially oppressed towards the vanguard organization often has other, very different aspects. If the organization's membership or leadership is drawn disproportionately from the relatively privileged, it seems to present itself as just another relatively privileged group, essentially alien to the specially oppressed and likely to be infected with the same prejudices as other relatively privileged groups. The organization's displays of interest in the specially oppressed are automatically suspect: it seems such an alien group could only want to *use* the specially oppressed for its own, essentially alien purposes.

The organization's proletarian politics may add only another dimension of distrust. The overall failure of the American labor movement to champion the cause of the oppressed outside the narrow limits of trade unionism, the grossly inadequate record of most trade unions regarding the trade union issues particularly affecting the specially oppressed, the gross discrimination and bigotry practiced by some unions and many labor bureaucrats – this entire despicable history quite naturally has aroused the disgust of many oppressed people. It is not surprising if many react with amazed skepticism to statements that the organized labor movement is the key to the liberation of the oppressed. It seems more likely that appeals from a communist organization to link their struggles to the struggles of the working class are simply a prescription for a *double* dose of being *used* by alien forces in ways actually irrelevant or destructive to the urgent struggles of the oppressed themselves.

The whole, day-to-day, lifelong experience of most specially oppressed people leads them to expect only outright bigotry and discrimination, camouflaged prejudice and condescension, unreliable and essentially exploitative support, or malign neglect from the relatively privileged. The record of the American labor movement has hardly dented such expectations. While the left has a considerably better record than any other sector of American society – except the specially oppressed themselves – its own deficiencies and mistakes have been serious. In some instances, the left has simply shared or even contributed to widespread bigotry, until changing circumstances *forced* reexamination. On balance, it has more often followed than led the struggles of the oppressed. The left, too, has not really dented the distrust of the oppressed toward the bulk of the rest of society.

The revolutionary organization can overcome this distrust *only through accepting the necessity of proving* its commitment to the oppressed and patiently winning the oppressed to unite with the revolutionary proletariat. Revolutionaries must be prepared patiently and persistently *to meet explicit and implicit tests* of their seriousness and sincerity, in order to gain a hearing for revolutionary politics from the oppressed. They must *demonstrate* their seriousness through relentless struggle against bigotry and discrimination and deeply respectful attention to the views of the oppressed themselves. They must struggle alongside the oppressed with revolutionary unselfishness, candor, dedication, and courage.

Even within the organization, a certain amount of distrust will often be felt by specially oppressed comrades toward their relatively privileged comrades and the organization as a whole. A determined implementation of effective policies to root out prejudices and build up the leadership of the specially oppressed is essential to overcome this distrust. Within the organization as in its public work, the alliance of the workers and the oppressed can be achieved only through the avoidance of all false counterpositions and false notions of unity.

Like all comrades, specially oppressed comrades must recognize that the organization and its leadership have only limited resources to devote to even the most important tasks. Patience and the *responsible* use of the right to criticize and fight for internal changes is necessary even here, if destructive divisiveness is to be avoided. But the organization and the leadership must *earn this patience* through the actual and successful implementation of recruitment, leadership, and other policies which bind together the workers and oppressed within the proletarian vanguard and through the militance and relentlessness of its fight for the specially oppressed throughout society.

If it fails to *win the trust* of its own comrades drawn from the specially oppressed, the vanguard will surely fail in its struggle for the revolutionary strategic alliance of the working class and the oppressed. The ability in particular of the leadership of the organization to achieve this alliance within the organization is therefore crucial to the possibility of the proletariat's gaining leadership of the oppressed. The proletarian revolution itself depends on the organization's ability to accomplish these internal tasks.

(17)

The organization tends spontaneously to develop a hierarchical division between relatively privileged and specially oppressed comrades, analogous to and partially overlapping with the division between intellectual and worker comrades. Intellectuals, men, whites, and heterosexuals tend to carry into the organization many of the same advantages which they have or are led to believe they have in bourgeois society, over nonintellectuals, women, blacks, Latinos, homosexuals, and members of other oppressed groups. These relatively advantaged comrades tend to enter the organization with attitudes and behaviors which reinforce their own commitment to their real or imagined advantages and undercut the development of relatively disadvantaged comrades.

The organization needs the strength of all its comrades. It has an obligation to facilitate the political development of all its members. Therefore it cannot tolerate attitudes and patterns of behavior on the part of some of its comrades which seriously impair the political development of other comrades. The relentless struggle against the tendencies of relatively privileged comrades which undercut the specially oppressed comrades is an integral part of the struggle to build up the leadership of the specially oppressed.

The relentlessness of this struggle does not mean that its methods are brutal. Quite the contrary. To be effective, it must be patient and sensitive to the past histories and special needs of the relatively privileged comrades, too, as well as firm, persistent, and concretely demanding. It must keep faith with their political development also, so the organization can make use of their strengths and maximize their capacity for creativity. *Its aim is to make better revolutionaries of the relatively privileged while removing obstacles to the full development as revolutionaries of the specially oppressed.*

In general, the struggle against an oppressive hierarchical division between specially oppressed and relatively privileged comrades should parallel, complement, and be reinforced by the struggle against an oppressive hierarchical division between worker and intellectual comrades.

(18)

Like everyone else, the specially oppressed encounter the organization not only as groups but as individual contacts and comrades. Many problems can be overcome by the ability of relatively privileged members simply to recognize and act on this elementary fact.

Unconscious prejudices, fears, guilt, and other irrational overreactions can be most easily overcome through normal, personal interactions with contacts and members who come from specially oppressed backgrounds – through the basic human relations of friends and comrades.

Similarly, the sheer ability of relatively privileged members to relate to specially oppressed contacts and members in relaxed personal ways can help enormously in overcoming distrust. The ability, to express *genuine* interest in people as people is important to all contact work but is especially important in overcoming the fears of *being used* felt by many specially oppressed people.

Hierarchical relations are also more easily fought against where comrades from different backgrounds have built up habits of easy communication and bonds of friendship through social intercourse and personal relations. Candid criticism of unwittingly oppressive behavior can be much easier for the specially oppressed to make and for relatively privileged members to accept under these circumstances.

All in all, the simple ability of the organization and its members to recognize and relate to the individual diversity of its specially oppressed contacts and members is necessary as part of the fight against group stereotypes, which form so large a part of the ideology and psychology of both conscious bigotry and unconscious prejudices against the specially oppressed.

(19)

As individuals, the specially oppressed come to the organization with the same diversity of background and personal history as the relatively privileged. In reality, the typical comrade or contact – like the typical person in capitalist society – is specially oppressed in some ways, relatively privileged in others. All are oppressed and keenly responsive to oppression, or they would not approach the revolutionary organization in the first place.

A specially oppressed comrade may come from a relatively privileged class background and still feel sharply the burden of special oppression. In fact, specially oppressed comrades with certain class and educational advantages can be particularly important as highly articulate spokespersons for less advantaged comrades and contacts from the same specially oppressed group. Yet special kinds of elitism can also be found in such situations. The organization must not ignore the realities of oppression beneath a surface of cultural advantages, nor should it deny specially oppressed comrades the precious benefits of criticism when their attitudes and behavior interfere with their work as revolutionaries, especially by undercutting other comrades.

A single individual very often combines more than one background of special oppression. And special oppression is always accompanied by other disadvantages and forms of suffering. Black and female, working-class and Latino, poor and gay – the victims of class society are always rich in their oppression. And each has an individual burden of familial suffering and psychological pain.

For all these reasons, the organization must ultimately win contacts and build cadres as individuals – yet individuals all of whom share backgrounds, however diverse, of suffering, oppression, and the will to resist. And all must look to a politically aroused and conscious working class to lead the way to the end of oppression, in all its anguished diversity.

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Just as the organization must be able to *learn from the working class* in order to win the working class to its revolutionary program, it must be able to *learn from the specially oppressed* in order to win the oppressed to the revolutionary alliance with the proletariat. The ability to *listen and learn* is a constant requirement of revolutionary leadership with special importance for relations with the specially oppressed. Similarly the ability of the organization, and especially of its leadership, to learn from

comrades drawn from specially oppressed backgrounds, is critical to its ability to build up the leadership of the specially oppressed and forge the alliance of the workers and oppressed within the organization.

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The organization must recognize and be able to deal with the special concerns and problems of each of the specially oppressed groups which it encounters in its revolutionary work. In the United States, especially high priority must be given to work with blacks, Latinos, women, and gays. But American capitalist society is perversely rich in the extent and variety of the special oppression it sustains. The American revolutionary vanguard must be able to confront all these forms of special oppression.

3. Native Americans and Immigrants

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US capitalism rose and spread through the genocidal conquest of the native American population, the so-called American Indians. Its relations with these diverse peoples remain to this day a trail of repression, broken promises, discrimination, ghettoization, and desperate poverty.

Wave after wave of immigrants, especially the non-English-speaking and nonwhite, has faced bigotry and discrimination. If most white European ethnic groups have ultimately found roads to assimilation, nonwhites rarely have. Japanese-Americans were arbitrarily thrown into concentration camps during World War II and still face, along with Chinese-Americans and other Americans from East Asian backgrounds, both crude and subtle forms of racist abuse. Today emigrants and the descendants of emigrants from the Pacific Islands, Asia, and the Middle East – including in particular the Philippines, Korea, Indochina, India, Iran, and the Arab countries – as well as from Portugal, Greece, and other parts of Europe, continue to cast their destinies into the tangled net of American ethnic competition, resentments, prejudices, and discrimination.

The aged, the physically disabled, prisoners and ex-prisoners – these and countless other groups must fight cruel oppression, discrimination, and deprivation. Children all too often suffer oppression and victimization with little opportunity or ability to fight back.

Neither its opposition to Zionism nor the middle-class status of many American Jews should be allowed to delude the revolutionary vanguard into ignoring the terrible potential power of anti-Semitism in American society. The diversion of petty-bourgeois rage against the capitalists to the genocidal scapegoating of Jews remains fundamental to fascist strategy. Communists must fight to stamp out the “Christian” disease of anti-Semitism or risk uniting the oppressed only in the ashes of the American Auschwitz.

The revolutionary vanguard must be prepared to oppose every act of injustice capitalism inflicts on any group and to fight against every prejudice which divides the workers and the oppressed or in other ways weakens their struggle. All its organizing, recruitment, and internal leadership and other policies must be developed in the light of this commitment.

4. Blacks

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Every ten Negroes who gather around the flag of revolution – and unite to form a group for practical work among the Negroes – are worth a hundred times more than dozens of the resolutions establishing principles, so generously passed by the Second International. A Communist Party confining itself to mere platonic resolutions in this matter, without exerting its utmost energies towards winning the largest possible number of enlightened Negroes for its ideas, within the shortest possible time, would not be worthy of the name of Communist Party. (Trotsky, A Letter to Comrade Claude McKay, 1923)

When ten intellectuals, whether in Paris, Berlin, or New York, who have already been members of various organizations, address themselves to us with a request to be taken into our midst, I would offer the following advice: put them through a series of tests on all the programmatic questions; wet them in the rain, dry them in the sun, and then after a new and careful examination accept maybe one or two.

The case is radically altered when ten workers connected with the masses turn to us. The difference in our attitude to a petty-bourgeois group and to the proletarian group does not require any explanation. But if a proletarian group functions in an area where there are workers of different races and, in spite of this, remains composed solely of workers of a privileged nationality, then I am inclined to view them with suspicion. Are we not dealing perhaps with the labor aristocracy? Isn't the group infected with slaveholding prejudices, active or passive?

It is an entirely different matter when we are approached by a group of Negro workers. Here I am prepared to take it for granted in advance that we shall achieve agreement with them, even if such an agreement is not yet evident, because the Negro workers, by virtue of their whole position, do not and cannot strive to degrade anybody, oppress anybody, or deprive anybody of his rights. They do not seek privileges and cannot rise to the top except on the road of the international revolution.

We can and we must find a way to the consciousness of the Negro workers, the Chinese workers, the Indian workers, and all the oppressed in the human ocean of the colored races to whom belongs the decisive word in the development of mankind. (Trotsky, "Closer To the Proletarians of the 'Colored' Races!," 13 June 1932)

We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class. What serves as the brake on the higher strata? It is the privileges, the comforts that hinder them from becoming revolutionists. It does not exist for the Negroes. What can transform a certain stratum, make it more capable of courage and sacrifice? It is the concentrated in the Negroes. If it happens that we in the SWP are not able to find the road to this stratum, then we are not worthy at all. The permanent revolution and all the rest would be only a lie. (Trotsky, Transcript of Discussion at Coyoacan, 11 April 1939)

Achieving the alliance of the oppressed black masses and the organized working class is the great strategic problem peculiar to the American proletarian revolution. This fact dictates the priority the organization must give black work, black recruitment, and the building of black leadership. No work can have a higher priority than the struggle to link the tremendous potential power of the labor movement to the explosive militance and undying hatred of oppression of the black communities.

Racism so thoroughly infects American society that no black can escape the impact of discrimination, no white the influence of bigotry. An unyielding fight against racism is therefore central to the organization's work. Its members must know how to oppose racism, in large ways and small, in political work and personal relations, on and off the job, in all arenas in which they intervene.

Communists must never capitulate to white racism – in particular, the racism of the mass of white workers. White revolutionaries in the unions must not only oppose racism at work and within their unions. They must find ways to break the color bar which all too often rises at the plant gate and the union-hall door, as an integrated workforce or union membership returns to a segregated society, separating into white and black social groups on the way home to white and black neighborhoods.

The black and white working class can only be united with the leadership of black and white communists standing shoulder to shoulder with militant black workers, through the course of struggle against shared exploitation and oppression.

The whole long tragic history of race relations in the United States gives blacks abundant reasons to distrust whites. The determination of revolutionaries to cross the racial lines which segregate blacks in the lowest economic and social positions can only partially overcome this distrust. The fear of being “*used,*” *exploited, manipulated* by white leftists has a sad basis in all too much of the past history of relations between blacks and mainly white liberal and left-wing groups.

All too often even the best intentioned comrades can *confirm* this distrust with ignorance or insensitivity to black concerns or with a kind of liberal guilt – an impotent self-flagellation which substitutes camouflaged self-pity for the practical steps needed to deal with the impact of racism on their own attitudes and behavior. Irrational overreactions by white comrades can produce patronizing and pseudo-black behavior, at best amusing to black contacts and comrades. Or an explicit or implicit view can be adopted by white comrades that “only blacks can organize blacks” – as a cover for flight from the hard but *possible* tasks of reaching black workers and intellectuals with revolutionary politics.

Above all, in order to recruit black workers – the most militant sector of the American working class – comrades must display unending patience and persistence, meeting test after test, to overcome distrust and break through all barriers to communication. If today the organization must fight a protracted battle to win black workers to revolutionary politics, tomorrow black workers will provide the organization with profound and indispensable lessons in practical struggle and unselfish heroism.

Once the organization’s active fight against racism and its overall political and trade union work have created the essential context for winning blacks to its program, effective contact work becomes the most important part of the process of recruiting blacks, as of recruitment generally. Despite the special need for patience and persistence and the special frequency and painfulness to organizers of setbacks – especially with black workers – over the long run organizers must realize that the most important “skill” they need is the “skill” which characterizes the best of all contact work. Organizers must be able to reach out to people as people as they communicate revolutionary politics to them, in a way which undermines fears of being “used” or manipulated, which implies the organizer’s own sense of the real connection between the struggle for socialist liberation and the real sufferings and joys of the human condition – in this person’s life, in this time and this place.

Despite inevitable frustrations, over time white organizers must learn that work with blacks does not require special poses or overreactions or elaborate maneuvers, but scrupulous honesty, straightforward respect, and real eagerness to listen and learn. Such white organizers can be certain that, however much they feel frustration and rejection in the beginning, they will soon come mainly to feel the profound patience, generosity, and even indulgence of most black people toward whites who hate bigotry and who say what they mean and mean what they say.

In this process, the organization must develop a range of special skills and sensitivities concerning a number of complex situations arising from the special oppression of blacks. These include the importance of black culture, the history of relative educational disadvantages of many blacks, the different experiences of northern and southern and urban and rural blacks, and the struggle of some poor, young blacks between working-class and lumpen identifications.

Within the organization the fight for equality between black and white comrades must never stop. No racist can be a part of a revolutionary organization. Special structures must be created, as needed, to guarantee the political development of black worker comrades. Special attention must be paid to building the leadership of black comrades within the organization, paralleling the special attention paid to building

the leadership of worker comrades and comrades from other specially oppressed groups – but with the added emphasis required by the strategic importance of the alliance of blacks with the working class.

Special studies and other structures geared to political education must be created, not only to secure the political education of black worker comrades but also to make sure that the membership as a whole receives a systematic education, over time, in black history and the character and development of the oppression of blacks, including African history and the history of slavery in the US as well as more recent history.

Throughout the internal life of the organization, including its leadership structures and studies, black and white comrades must be involved together. Any explicit or implicit racial hierarchies and other racial lines in the work and internal life of the organization must be broken down and broken through. Leadership must stand with black comrades suffering from the misunderstanding or insensitivity of white comrades.

Throughout all these processes black comrades and contacts will remain the real experts on their special concerns. White comrades must listen. And all must recognize that, like all members, black comrades want and must receive both the support and criticism which are essential to every revolutionary's development.

With such policies and methods an integrated vanguard can and must be created. Only a fully united black and white vanguard can make possible the uniting of the black and white working class and the alliance of organized labor and the oppressed black masses. This process of revolutionary, integration forges the great strategic alliance of the American revolution in the heat of struggle led by the conscious vanguard. Within this alliance, as the revolution unfolds, black workers will inevitably take up leading roles, emancipating themselves at last in the very act of leading the American working class to power.

5. Latinos

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Just as the Latin American sections of the Fourth International must popularize in their press and agitation the struggles of the American labor and revolutionary movements against the common enemy, so the section in the US must devote more time and energy in its agitational and propaganda work to acquaint the proletariat of the US with the position and struggles of the Latin American countries and their working-class movements. Every act of American imperialism must be exposed in the press and at meetings, and on indicated occasions the section in the US must seek to organize mass movements of protest against specific activities of Yankee imperialism. In addition, the section in the US, by utilizing the Spanish-language literature of the Fourth International, must seek to organize, on however modest a scale to begin with, the militant revolutionary forces among the doubly exploited millions of Filipinos, Mexicans, Caribbeans, and Central and South American workers now resident in the US, not only for the purpose of linking them with the labor movement in the US, but also for the purpose of strengthening the ties with the labor and revolutionary movements in the countries from which these workers originally came. (Fourth International, Founding Conference, "Thesis on the World Role of American Imperialism," 1938)

Latinos constitute a very large and rapidly growing specially oppressed ethnic group in the United States. In large regions and key urban and rural areas of the country, Latinos suffer poverty and discrimination as brutal as that suffered by blacks and constitute as strategically important a sector of the population. Latinos are an especially important component of the agricultural working class, including migrant farmworkers, who live and work all too often in the most inhuman conditions US capitalists inflict on their American victims. Chicanos have been crucial in the valiant campaign to organize farmworkers, posing dramatically the need for the unity of urban and rural workers in the US. Among the highly diverse

Latino communities, Puerto Rican- (Boricuan-) Americans and Chicanos (Mexican-Americans) in particular make up large, angry, and militant sectors of the working class and poor in many urban areas crucial to the development of the American revolution.

But the importance of Latinos to the American revolutionary process goes beyond even these facts. Latinos raise within the United States many of the issues of American imperialist oppression of Latin America and the rest of the relatively backward capitalist world.

The revolutionary vanguard must fight against the oppression of Latinos and win the politically advanced Latino workers, poor, and intellectuals to the revolutionary banner, not only as an important part of building the alliance of workers and the oppressed in the US, but also as an aspect of the struggle against US imperialism. Work with Latinos in the US is a test of the organizations commitment to internationalism, a test of its capacity to link the revolutionary struggle of the American working class with the revolutionary struggles of oppressed peoples around the globe.

Despite the great diversity among and within Latino communities, Latinos overall share a history rooted in the Spanish and Portuguese conquests of the Caribbean islands and the Latin American land mass, including the destruction of great Indian civilizations and the subjugation of the native Indian peoples. Hispanic and Indian heritages combine in different ways in the different Latino cultures, often interacting with black or non-Hispanic European influences.

The domination of recent Latin American history by American imperialism gives oppressed Latinos in the US an objective link with the struggles against imperialism of the Latin American workers and peasants. Key problems of the special oppression of Latinos inevitably transcend the boundaries of the American nation-state.

The persecution of undocumented Chicano workers (“illegal aliens”) faces millions of Mexican-Americans with the irrationality of national borders and the racist chauvinism of the US government and legal system.

The most recent attempt to make some sort of bourgeois legal rationality out of the barbarities of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the Simpson-Rodino law, in its essence merely perpetuates and reinforces this irrationality and racism. It provides a grudging and paltry “amnesty” primarily for undocumented workers the capitalists cannot afford to get rid of anyway. But even this is merely a humane fig leaf for its central aim: greater control by the Yankee bosses over “their” cheap Mexican labor force. In turning every employer into a collaborator with the thugs of the INS, the American capitalist class as a whole hopes to retain the ability to superexploit Mexican workers in the US by preventing the integration of all but a few Mexican workers into the higher-paid American labor force – in other words, by preserving at all times the ability to send “their” underpaid Mexican workers back to the poverty of Mexican barrios and villages.

The long, painful history of Puerto Rican migration raises analogous issues for Puerto Rican-Americans, necessarily linking their experience of oppression in the US with US imperialism’s “special relationship” with Puerto Rico. Trotskyists must recognize the inseparable link between the fight for full equality for Puerto Rican-Americans in the US and the fight to free Puerto Rico from US colonial oppression.

Other Latinos, too, must suffer and struggle against the endless hypocrisy and cruelty of US imperialism. For years refugees from the Duvaliers’ reign of blood in Haiti were told to go back: they were “economic” not “political” (that is, anticommunist) refugees. Refugees from the death squads of the Salvadoran and other Central American despotisms are now told they must return: the death squads are “democratic” now.

The vanguard of the American working class must have no country. It must fight all the abuses of the American capitalists against Latino workers and, in order to carry this struggle forward, recruit Latino revolutionists, without regard for the bourgeois legalities of national citizenship, to the banner of the Fourth International. Only in this way can it link the oppressed Latino masses' powerful potential for revolutionary consciousness and struggle with the proletarian class struggle in the US.

The organization must intervene in and help organize struggles of special concern to Latinos, must fight for the backing of organized labor for Latino causes, must fight to unite Latino and non-Latino workers, and must also fight to unite Latino struggles with the struggles of blacks and other specially oppressed people. And it must recruit the politically advanced Latino workers and intellectuals and build up Latino cadres as organizational leadership.

The organization's policies in achieving these objectives will be in most respects the same as those pursued in its work among blacks and in winning and building up black cadres. Many of the obstacles which it must overcome in reaching out to and building the leadership of Latinos are fundamentally similar to the obstacles in its work among blacks. But certain special issues must be taken account of.

The organization must learn to speak Spanish wherever this is necessary to make its Latino work completely effective. All major documents, study materials, and as much of its press as possible must exist in Spanish. The more bilingual the organization can become, the easier its communication with Latino communities, the clearer its commitment to the Latino cause. The development of its capacity to communicate in Spanish also enables the organization to forge real links between its work among Latinos in the US and the struggles of the Latin American masses.

Revolutionary Marxists must oppose all expressions of English-language chauvinism, in particular in the American working class itself. 'English-only' sentiments and movements to make English the official language in the US must be exposed for what they are: manifestations of anti-Hispanic bigotry and American imperialist national narrowness and arrogance. Trotskyists must fight to defend *and expand* Hispanic-English bilingualism and biculturalism in the US – in particular in education and in all matters pertaining to the exercise of political and legal rights – both as part of the struggle against anti-Hispanic bigotry and as part of the struggle for the internationalist political consciousness of the American working class. The effectiveness of the organization's fight for Hispanic-English bilingualism in American society will be determined to a great extent by its own ability to present its revolutionary politics in both Spanish and English.

Special attention in internal and external education must be paid not only to the history and ongoing struggles of Latinos in the US but also to the history and ongoing struggles of the Latin American nations. While this is especially important in areas where Latinos are concentrated, the organization as a whole must know the essentials of this history and understand the significance of these struggles. All comrades can learn crucial lessons from the rich experience of the tumultuous struggles of the workers and peasants of Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and the other countries of Latin America.

Special sensitivity to the differences among Latino communities is important not only to effective work with each different Latino group but to the struggle to overcome the divisions among oppressed Latinos themselves. Respect for the rich diversity of Latino culture and recognition of the importance of Latino communities to the resistance and dignity of Latinos in the face of poverty and racist discrimination and victimization, are basic conditions of effective struggle against the reactionary familial, religious, and separatist ideologies which weaken the Latino struggle and divide it from its natural allies among the non-Latino workers and oppressed. Special attention and care must be paid to

the struggle against the sexism prevalent in many traditional Latino family values and norms of social behavior. Special priority must be given to the recruitment of Latina women.

The tragic division too often prevailing between oppressed Latinos and oppressed blacks must be overcome, in the organization's public work and among its cadres, if the workers and oppressed are to forge their revolutionary alliance. The organization must learn how to fight effectively the efforts of Latino chauvinist and reformist, petty-bourgeois and bourgeois misleaders to pit the Latino workers and poor against other oppressed groups and against the labor movement.

The revolutionary vanguard must speak not only Spanish but the language of heroic struggle if it is to win Latinos to the revolutionary alliance and to its own banner. It must fight American chauvinism in its public work and among its ranks. And it must recognize and put forward in the boldest terms the historic justice and political necessity of the Latino role in the American socialist revolution: the emancipation of Latinos through their own conscious and courageous participation in the overthrow of American imperialism.

6. Women

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...it is the part of the working woman to make common cause with the male members of her class and of her lot in the struggle for a radical transformation of society, looking to the establishment of such conditions as may make possible the real economic and spiritual independence of both sexes, by means of social institutions that afford to all a full share in the enjoyment of all the conquests of civilization made by mankind.

The goal, accordingly, is not merely the realization of the equal rights of woman with man within present society, as is aimed at by the bourgeois woman emancipationists. It lies beyond – the removal of all impediments that make man dependent upon man; and, consequently, one sex upon the other. Accordingly, this solution of the woman question coincides completely with the solution of the social question. It follows that he who aims at the solution of the woman question to its full extent, is necessarily bound to go hand in hand with those who have inscribed upon their banner the solution of the social question as a question of civilization for the whole human race....

...There can be no emancipation of humanity without the social independence and equality of the sexes. (Bebel, *Woman and Socialism*, Introduction, 33rd ed. [German text as updated through about 1894; 1st ed, 1883]; English translation by Daniel De Leon, 1903)

The Congress of the Communist International states that the success of all the tasks it has set itself, as well as the final victory of the world proletariat and the final abolition of the capitalist system, can be ensured only through the common joint struggle of working men and women....

The dictatorship of the proletariat can be achieved and maintained only with the energetic and active participation of working women. (Comintern, First Congress, "Resolution on the Role of Working Women"; introduced by Kollontai; March 1919)

It is obvious that the struggle of the proletariat must be greatly hindered by the lack of equality between the two halves of which it is composed. Without the aid of the women of the proletariat, it is idle to dream of a general victory, it is idle to dream of the "freeing of labor." For this reason, it is greatly to the interest of the working class that there should be complete fighting comradeship between the female and the male portions of the proletariat, and that this comradeship should be strengthened by equality. (Preobrazhensky and Bukharin, *The ABC of Communism*, section 50; 1919)

The Third Congress of the Communist International maintains that without the active participation of the broad masses of the female proletariat and the semiproletarian women, the proletariat can neither seize power nor realize communism.

At the same time, the Congress once again draws the attention of all women to the fact that without Communist Party support for all the projects leading to the liberation of women, the recognition of women's rights as equal human beings and their real emancipation cannot in practice be won. (Comintern, Third Congress, "Methods and Forms of Work among Communist Party Women: Theses," thesis 1; July 1921)

Opportunist organizations by their very nature concentrate their chief attention on the top layers of the working class and therefore ignore both the youth and the woman worker. The decay of capitalism, however, deals its heaviest blows to the woman as a wage earner and as a housewife. The sections of the Fourth International should seek bases of support among the most exploited layers of the working class, consequently among the women workers. (Trotsky, "Open the Road to the Woman Worker! Open the Road to the Youth!," in "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" ["The Transitional Program"]; 1938)

The general strategic importance of women to the revolutionary workers' struggle and the decisive importance of the proletarian socialist revolution to the emancipation of women have been recognized by the Marxist movement since its earliest days. Marx intervened in the First International to promote special efforts to bring women workers into the sections of the International. Engels and Bebel wrote major works dealing systematically with the woman question. The Bolshevik Party and the revolutionary Third and Fourth Internationals drew special attention to work among women in major programmatic documents and in the creation of special organizational structures and the holding of various congresses devoted to work among women.

In general, Marxism has recognized the special oppression of women as one of the small number of *absolutely fundamental* social problems of class society and has understood that this oppression has roots which extend beyond the strictly economic processes and structures of human society to specifically sexual and familial relations.

Historically, then, revolutionary Marxists have viewed the status of women as a crucial indicator of the actual cultural level of any society. Marxists have insisted that the minimal condition for the genuine liberation of women is the emancipation of women from economic dependence on men and confinement to household and maternal labor, which can be achieved only through the overthrow of capitalist property relations and the construction of a socialist economy. And at the same time, Marxists have recognized that the complete elimination of the special oppression of women also depends on the development of new, healthier sexual and personal relations which secure the practical equality of the sexes in all aspects of everyday life.

Both the militance and the limitations of the most recent phase of the women's movement – the developments of the late 1960s and 1970s – have underscored the correctness of the essentials of the Marxist view of the woman question. The importance of linking the labor movement with the struggle against the oppression of women and the impossibility of the full liberation of women under capitalism have been driven home by both the achievements and the failures of the latest generation of women's-liberationists.

On the other hand, this recent women's movement also posed two serious challenges to the Marxist workers' movement – challenges which its previous history had not equipped it to answer adequately.

The first of these challenges was theoretical: it questioned whether Marxist science appreciated the actual extent to which the roots of the special oppression of women lie in relations and processes independent of strictly economic factors.

But the more fundamental challenge was practical. Whatever Marxism's official positions on the woman question, ostensibly Marxist organizations had, throughout their history, only exceptionally given serious and systematic attention to women's issues or the recruitment of women. Virtually all left-wing groups were male-dominated and characterized by hierarchical sexual relations which left little room for the development of women members' creativity and capacities for leadership. Female militants demanded that the ostensibly Marxist left explain how it could function as "tribune of the people," as champion of the specially oppressed, when it had displayed relatively little concern in practice to organize women and when its internal life differed little, where equality between the sexes was concerned, from any bourgeois institution.

To a very great extent, this challenge was employed to justify a position of feminist separatism, both over against the established left and over against the working class. This feminist separatism, in turn, more often than not ended up as simply the latest version of *bourgeois feminism* – the drawing of a "sex line" (*rather than* the class line) in the interest of the struggle of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois women for better jobs and less oppressive lifestyles *within capitalist society*. For working-class and poor women and all women genuinely committed to the overthrow of capitalism, such feminism means *unity with the capitalist class* (with bourgeois women) and betrayal of the working class and the struggle for socialism. At its worst, such bourgeois "feminism" substituted hatred of men for hatred of capitalist exploitation and the whole network of oppression which it rests on and sustains.

While for the feminists the achievement of equal rights with men in the framework of the contemporary capitalist world represents a sufficiently concrete end in itself, equal rights at the present time are, for the proletarian women, only a means of advancing the struggle against the economic slavery of the working class. The feminists see men as the main enemy, for men have unjustly seized all rights and privileges for themselves, leaving women only chains and duties. For them a victory is won when a prerogative previously enjoyed exclusively by the male sex is conceded to the "fair sex." Proletarian women have a different attitude. They do not see men as the enemy and the oppressor; on the contrary, they think of men as their comrades, who share with them the drudgery of the daily round and fight with them for a better future. The woman and her male comrade are enslaved by the same social conditions; the same hated chains of capitalism oppress their will and deprive them of the joys and charms of life. It is true that several specific aspects of the contemporary system lie with double weight upon women, as it is also true that the conditions of hired labor sometimes turn working women into competitors and rivals to men. But in these unfavorable situations, the working class knows who is guilty....

The woman worker, no less than her brother in misfortune, hates that insatiable monster with its gilded maw which, concerned only to drain all the sap from its victims and to grow at the expense of millions of human lives, throws itself with equal greed at man, woman, and child. Thousands of threads bring the working man close....

The proletarian women's final aim does not, of course, prevent them from desiring to improve their status even within the framework of the current bourgeois system, but the realization of these desires is constantly hindered by obstacles that derive from the very nature of capitalism. A woman can possess equal rights and be truly free only in a world of socialized labor, of harmony and justice. The feminists are unwilling and incapable of understanding this....

Where, then, is that general "woman question"? Where is that unity of tasks and aspirations about which the feminists have so much to say? A sober glance at reality shows that such unity does not and cannot exist. (Kollontai, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question*, 1909)

Despite the feminist-separatist and bourgeois-feminist directions in which much of the recent women's movement has gone, its practical challenge to the left is inescapable. In the United States in the post-World War II period, greater numbers of women than ever before have attended colleges and entered the intelligentsia. Over the 1960s and 1970s, a remarkable increase in the number of women employed in working-class jobs occurred. These simple numerical facts and the greatly increased militance of both women workers and radical women entering the intelligentsia with regard to their special oppression as women, require a radical break with past deficiencies on the part of any revolutionary organization which is to have a serious chance of leading the American proletarian revolution.

Most of the left has dealt with this challenge either through opportunist capitulation to bourgeois feminism and feminist separatism or through dogged assertions of an essentially economist, sterile pseudo-orthodoxy. A revolutionary organization which is to succeed in linking women's-liberation struggles to the proletarian class struggle, in recruiting women cadres, and in building the leadership of women must begin by rejecting, in its theoretical and practical work, both capitulation to separatist and bourgeois feminism and obtuse repetitions of pseudo-orthodox economism.

In its theoretical and educational work, the revolutionary organization must begin with a *fully Marxist*, nonreductionist approach to the woman question, grounded in the path-breaking work of Morgan, Marx, and Engels, and open to every subsequent serious, scientific contribution to the subject, especially in the areas of anthropology, psychology, and materialist approaches to the history of the family. The organization must give special attention to the woman question in its studies, documents, journalism, and agitational materials.

The revolutionary vanguard must not counterpose the fact that the full liberation of women is possible only in communist society to the necessity of supporting struggles for reforms in the interest of women workers under capitalism. Nor should the revolutionary proletariat confine its active support to those women's struggles, critically important though they are, which take place in the trade union arena alone, around issues of job discrimination and so forth.

While being especially militant in fighting against every variety of discrimination and abuse suffered by women on the job and in the unions, the vanguard must also support the general social and legal struggles of women for equality and greater freedom and independence, including struggles for ERA, abortion rights, daycare centers, and full legal equality with men contractually and financially. In particular, in the US today, the proletarian vanguard must be militant in fighting to build mass working-class action to reverse the right-wing defeat of ERA and the ruthless assault on abortion rights being waged by every reactionary force in the country – an assault directed especially against the rights of poor working-class, black, and Latina women. And the vanguard must support principled struggles against sexist stereotyping in childraising, education, and the public media, which must be seen as particularly opposed to the fighting spirit of working-class and poor women.

The organization must aim at having both membership and leadership composed equally of women and men. But equality in numbers must never be seen as enough. The organization, having recruited women comrades and recognized women cadres as leadership in equal numbers with men, is faced with *its own absolute need* for the full and equal development of women comrades as revolutionaries. Achieving both these objectives is essential if the organization is to realize the “complete fighting comradeship” of its women and male members and be effective in the struggle for the “complete fighting comradeship between the female and the male portions of the proletariat.” “Complete fighting comradeship” *requires* real equality between comrades.

Achievement of these goals should not require artificial quotas, male-exclusionist caucuses, ultrademocratic follies, or the distortion of the organization's overall work. Rather, in all its work the organization must display a special sensitivity to the special concerns and needs of women contacts and comrades and wage an effective fight against those formal and informal organizational structures and those patterns of behavior on the part of cadres which tend to discourage women revolutionaries from joining its ranks and developing fully as members and leaders.

Since the special oppression of women is fundamental to class society, sexist ideology and attitudes pervade bourgeois culture and personal relations. The sexism of male comrades – and, in particular, of male intellectuals – will tend to complicate the recruitment of women and undercut the development of women cadres. Both working-class and intellectual male comrades often show problems in accepting the leadership of women. Whether in crude or subtle forms, male-chauvinist arrogance will

tend to ignore or belittle the contributions of women and neglect or deny women's potential for development. Working-class women and women from specially oppressed groups will tend to face double and triple versions of such prejudices.

Left to themselves, such attitudes will grossly reinforce, within the revolutionary organization itself, the sexual channeling of bourgeois society. Any number of hierarchical tendencies will flourish, all leading to the relative domination of men over the theoretical and policy-making leadership of the organization at all levels. And these hierarchies will perversely maintain themselves with the implicit encouragement of the brutal, central sexual stereotype imposed on women: the role of passive, submissive, acquiescent victim.

The organization's leadership must fight relentlessly against these tendencies. Men and women leaders must work together to create an environment within the organization which discourages the sexist undercutting of women and encourages the struggles of women against sexism and for their own development. This requires on the part of leadership neither a patronizing nor an uncritical approach toward women comrades, but rather a combination of practical receptiveness to the criticisms and struggles of women comrades regarding internal sexist patterns and tendencies and highly conscious, concrete, and careful struggle against the destructive sexist patterns of male comrades, especially male intellectuals.

Attention must be paid, in general, to the overcoming, with regard to the organization's revolutionary work, of the stereotypical inequalities between women and men in bourgeois society and, in particular, to the development of women comrades' abilities in theoretical and policy-making tasks. These efforts must be combined with full recognition of and respect for the ongoing contributions of women to the organization's work.

Such concern with the destructive effects of sexism must be reflected in recruitment policies and practices. Leadership must make sure that sexist attitudes or behaviors are not distorting recruitment practices in ways unfavorable to the recruitment of women. The organization must give special attention to the recruitment of women militants, especially working-class women and women from additional specially oppressed backgrounds. And it must struggle with bigoted attitudes toward women in men being recruited, always making clear the complete equality of women and men within the organization and the necessity that all members and sympathizers be able to accept the leadership of women.

Both in the recruitment of women and in building women cadres as leadership, the organization inevitably encounters sexism as a destructive force outside the realm of strictly organizational relations, in the familial, sexual, and other essentially personal relationships of women contacts and cadres to men. Every trade union organizer soon meets a woman contact whose husband "will not let" her become active in union and political affairs. Among students as among workers, revolutionary politics often leads to painful conflicts between members of couples, when one member is "moving politically" while the other "lags behind." Sexism often plays a complicated destructive role in such situations.

Typically women contacts and comrades need special support in their struggles with "less political" men. Male contacts and comrades involved with "less political" women often *retard* the political development of their wives or lovers by simultaneously underestimating their political potential and overprotecting them against "threatening" contact with or pressures from the organization. Male comrades' attempts at politically "building up" women comrades with whom they are involved usually become counterproductive rather quickly.

The organization's attempts to deal with such situations, in which the personal and organizational realms unavoidably intersect, require the utmost sensitivity and caution. The organization's concern is

with *its work* and with the *political development* of its cadres and contacts, whose rights to personal privacy it must respect.

A proletarian organization must include working women and men with the responsibility to raise and care for children. The organization must be sensitive to the special situation of its comrades with children, especially young children. The woman question will arise in most of these situations, either in the form of the tendency for women parents to end up with disproportionately heavy responsibility for childraising in comparison with their male companions or in the form of the extra burdens imposed on mothers raising children by themselves. The organization must not encourage a sexist division of labor between parents, and it must respect the special problems of single-parent families, in particular where the sole active parent is the mother. Especially in an America in which the number of single women with children constantly grows and these families constantly fall deeper and deeper into poverty, the organization must accept *as an organizational responsibility* the obligation to ensure the childcare necessary for all its mothers to be politically active.

In all such situations the organization must recognize the independent concerns and interests of the children, whom it should view as potential members of a future generation of comrades.

The struggle of male leaders against the sexism of male rank-and-file comrades – and especially of younger, particularly talented male rank-and-file comrades – can be a cover for attempts of an entrenched male leadership to protect itself against threats to its authority, including legitimate criticism and recognition of the need for the promotion of younger leaders and even the removal of less gifted leaders. Such struggle will, of course, not actually promote the equality of women and male comrades but merely entrench mediocrity and discourage critical thinking and creativity within the membership as a whole, male *and* female.

The avoidance of moralism, the maintenance of comradeliness and scrupulous fairness, patience, and continued commitment to the full development of male comrades, over the course of any struggles against the sexism of these comrades, are essential to the creation and preservation of an internal environment in which both women and male comrades will feel free to question, criticize, learn, and develop. Such struggles must be shaped by the recognition of the interest which male comrades themselves have in the struggle against their own sexism, to enable them to be better revolutionaries.

Nevertheless, the pervasiveness and depth of sexism in bourgeois society impose a special responsibility on male leaders at all levels to be receptive to and to champion the special concerns and criticisms of women comrades and to promote the leadership of women. The failure of male leaders to accept this responsibility inevitably tends to create a sexual split in the organization, putting critical women comrades in the doubly disadvantageous position of having to oppose the established leadership in order to make real gains against sexist tendencies in the organization's work, procedures, structures, policies, or positions.

Throughout the organization's relentless struggle against sexism, rank-and-file members and leaders must keep in mind that the organization is not a utopia whose internal life can somehow be completely protected from the sexism of bourgeois society, culture, and personal relations. In some situations, equality of women and men will only be achieved concretely through processes involving male comrades' teaching women comrades skills or information which relatively privileged backgrounds have afforded them. Patience must govern the organization's attempts to overcome the most stubborn effects of sexism on both women and male comrades. And no one should expect personal relationships, even among the most conscious of comrades, to be completely free of the distortions of sexism.

Rather, the organization's objective must be the achievement, over time, of the complete equality of women and male comrades, as revolutionaries, with regard to the organization's revolutionary work.

In the context of its relentless struggle against the oppression of women in bourgeois society at large, this internal struggle can enable the revolutionary vanguard to link the struggle for the emancipation of women to the struggle for the emancipation of labor from capitalist exploitation. Thus alone can the working class and its conscious vanguard set in motion the two great processes which can liberate humanity from its ultimate tyrannies: the tyranny of economic and political oppression, subjecting laborers to owners and rulers, and the tyranny of age and size and sex, subjecting children to parents and women to men.

How man enslaved woman, how the exploiter subjected them both, how the toilers have attempted at the price of blood to free themselves from slavery and have only exchanged one chain for another – history tells us much about all this. In essence, it tells us nothing else. But how in reality to free the child, the woman, and the human being? For that we have as yet no reliable models. All past historical experience, wholly negative, demands of the toilers at least and first of all an implacable distrust of all privileged and uncontrolled guardians. (Trotsky, “Thermidor in the Family,” section 1 of chapter 7, *The Revolution Betrayed*; 1936)

7. Lesbians and Gay Men

(26)

During antiquity homosexual love was tolerated. But if the great men and women of Greece returned today they would all be burned alive. Solon, Lycurgus, Agesilaus, Epaminondas, Sappho, Julius Caesar, and Severus would be put to the stake for pederasty or lesbianism. These very people, the great of antiquity, had nothing but scorn for commerce and deceit, which are now honored; and they criticized bankruptcy and speculation, which have become practices as innocent as homosexual love was once thought to be. There is something for the ancients and the moderns to quarrel about! (Charles Fourier, “Amorous Anarchy,” 1818)

The forces of production and social relationships – the two different sides of the development of the social individual – appear to capital merely as means, and are merely means for it to produce on its own limited foundation. But in fact they are the material conditions to blow this foundation up. (Marx, “Contradiction between the Foundation of Bourgeois Production (Value as Measure) and Its Development, Machinery, etc.,” in *Grundrisse*, “The Chapter on Capital,” section 2 [“The Circulation Process of Capital”]; 1857-1858 [our translation, from German original in *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, n.d., pp. 593-594])

According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a twofold character: on the one side, the production of the means of existence, of food, clothing, and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species. The social organization under which the people of a particular historical epoch and a particular country live is determined by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labor on the one hand and of the family on the other. (Engels, Preface to the First Edition of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*; 1884)

Vladimir Ilyich taught us to value the working-class parties according to their attitude, in particular and in general, toward the oppressed nations, toward the colonies. Why? Because if you take, say, the English worker, it is much easier to arouse in him the feeling of solidarity with his whole class – he will take part in strikes and will even arrive at revolution – but to make him raise himself to solidarity with a yellow-skinned Chinese coolie, to treat him as a brother in exploitation, will prove much more difficult, since here it is necessary to break through a shell of national arrogance which has been built up over centuries.

And just so, comrades, has the shell of family prejudices, in the attitudes of the head of the family toward woman and child – and woman is the coolie of the family – this shell has been laid down over millennia, and not centuries. And thus you are – you must be – the moral battering ram which will break through this shell of

conservatism, rooted in our old Asiatic nature, in slavery, in serfdom, in bourgeois prejudices, and in the prejudices of the workers themselves, which have arisen from the worst aspects of peasant traditions. Inasmuch as you will be destroying this shell, like a battering ram in the hands of the socialist society that is being built, every conscious revolutionary, every Communist, every progressive worker and peasant is obliged to support you with all his might. (Trotsky, "The Protection of Motherhood and the Struggle for Culture," 1925)

a. The Nuclear Family

At the very center of the network of social oppression which capitalist exploitation rests on and sustains is the nuclear family.

While class society gradually overthrows the old organization of society on the basis of real and conventional systems of kinship (clans, tribes), it retains and develops the family unit (through most of its history in the form of the extended family), because this is economically the least costly and socially the safest structure in which to meet certain basic human needs which must be met outside the processes of economic production.

These needs center on the reproduction of the species and include the sexual and emotional needs associated with it for both adults and children. These needs also include children's needs for care and training in a whole series of essential skills. And they include a broad range of emotional needs not tied to sexual reproduction which human individuals, as social beings, can normally meet only in the course of interpersonal relationships. The satisfaction of these needs and so certain processes and relations through which they can be satisfied are inescapable conditions of the survival of the human species and of the capacity of human individuals to labor productively and function cooperatively and rationally in a human economy and society. In class society the family, as a separate group of individuals bound together in a given set of sexual, reproductive, and childraising relationships, meets these basic needs through its internal relations and the tasks of household labor necessary to feed, clothe, house, and otherwise care for family members.

Having retained and developed the family as its chief means of meeting these basic needs, class society subordinates all familial and other personal relations to the hierarchical economic divisions of its new social order and the repressive political authority of the new, state apparatus developed to protect the power and privileges of the dominant, owning and exploiting strata. Crucial to this process of subordination is the use of the family unit itself to reproduce, from generation to generation, the ideology and psychology required by class society in each of its classes and strata.

Capitalism, then, must also retain the family unit and make use of it for its own purposes. Capitalism carries to the furthest extent possible the subordination of familial and personal relations to economic relations, characteristic of the entire development of class society. The capitalist extension of market relations, especially the creation of a labor market, completes the atomization of economic and social life begun with the rise of class society. The mobility required of commodities in the course of competition and exchange with other commodities comes more and more to be required of individuals, too, as they compete as sellers and buyers, as laborers and consumers in the capitalist marketplace. Such mobility demands of each individual a maximum of relative freedom from noneconomic ties which might inhibit the individual's ability to behave like a freely competing commodity. Inevitably such pressures tend toward the ultimate atomization of the family unit: its reduction to the bare parent-child nucleus of two biological parents and their offspring.

This nuclear family becomes, as capitalism develops, the most essential noneconomic social unit of capitalist society. The atomization of bourgeois economy and society constantly tends to decompose

the nuclear family itself into its isolated individual components. But this constant process of atomization and decomposition of the nuclear family must constantly be resisted by bourgeois society. Each new phase in the decomposition of the nuclear family meets with a new wave of efforts to shore it up and salvage it.

Given that capitalism cannot dispense with the sexual reproduction of the species, the raising of children, and even the meeting of certain minimal sexual and emotional needs on the part of its human agents, the nuclear family provides these unavoidable conditions of capitalist production at a minimum of economic cost to the capitalists. And the nuclear family provides these conditions while *maximizing the social isolation and economic vulnerability of each individual in bourgeois society*.

Further, the nuclear family presupposes heterosexual monogamy as the norm of human sexual relations and definite, oppressive hierarchies of sex and age relations within each family unit. And more than any other form of family, the nuclear family intensifies the oppressiveness of the sexual and personal limitations of heterosexual monogamy, especially for women, and the sense of dependency and vulnerability of children in relation to parental authorities.

The norm of heterosexual monogamy (“bourgeois marriage”) arises from the necessity of making sexual partners economically responsible for any offspring – and from the pressure of a given society on women to have children, in order to maintain or increase the population. From these concerns derives a view of human sexuality as acceptable – in particular for women – only if directed towards the having of children and the construction of a household around childraising and the meeting of the truly indispensable, minimal biological and personal needs of family members.

Inevitably some form or other of repressive moralism with regard to human sexual feelings and behavior results from this view. This moralism persists as a major factor deforming people’s lives even after important breakthroughs in psychological theory and contraception, the decline of religious ideology, the increasing participation of women in the workforce, and other scientific and social developments have made the irrationality of sexual moralism common knowledge. Heterosexual monogamy requires the justification and support of some such moralism, and capitalism requires heterosexual monogamy as the institutional norm of sexual relations.

Heterosexual monogamy and repressive sexual moralism deform peoples’ lives not only through the frustration and constrictive channeling of sexual needs and the narrow delimitation of the arena of intimate personal relationships, but also through the suppression of the individual’s sense of having the ability or the right to achieve sexual fulfillment and personal happiness at all.

Bourgeois society poses both the embattled realities and the idealized myth of the satisfactions of heterosexual romance and married life as compensations not only for the frustrations it imposes on personal life but also for the oppressiveness and lack of satisfaction in their work and the economic insecurity and deprivation and social injustice experienced by most people – especially by working-class and poor people. In reality, for most people, the bourgeois economic and social order conflicts at every turn with the achievement of genuine personal happiness. Heterosexual monogamy and the sexual moralism which supports it function admirably to keep strivings for sexual and personal happiness within the limitations required by capitalist exploitation. The explosive potential for rebelliousness and creativity contained in human sexuality, especially for the young, is curbed and constrained within generally safe limits, tied firmly to the problems of making a living under capitalism. Certain basic needs met, certain real or imagined personal compensations accepted, the individual victim of capitalist society is taught to submit to economic and political oppression along with sexual and personal frustration.

The hierarchies of sex and age within the nuclear family are based in part on the economic and personal dependency of some family members on others. But the ultimately oppressive and hierarchical

character of these dependencies is determined by the inevitable interaction of the nuclear family with the overall capitalist society in which it is immersed. Capitalist society, with its complex network of oppressive hierarchical economic and social divisions and stratifications and its economic and political authoritarianism, must use the family to reproduce not just new generations but new generations suited to these hierarchical divisions. The laboring masses must know how to submit, the exploiters and their allies how to rule. The nuclear family helps reproduce not merely human beings but the class divisions of capitalist society.

Since “the world-historic defeat of the female sex” (Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, II: 3; 1891) at the dawn of class society, each form of class society has tended to sustain and elaborate the economic dependency of women on men. Starting from the base of this economic dependency as it has developed under capitalism, the nuclear family produces and reproduces the social inequality of the sexes – that is, the social inferiority and oppression of women – through both a hierarchical relationship between husband and wife and through childraising practices and ideological notions which tend to suppress the aggressiveness of girls and the tenderness and imaginative playfulness of boys. In combination with similar practices in schooling and sexual discrimination in jobs and income, the nuclear family helps generate sets of rigid sex roles and rigid sexual stereotypes, elaborately subordinating women to men throughout capitalist economy and society.

The sexual hierarchy of relatively owning and economically independent men versus relatively nonowning and dependent women mirrors the bourgeois social hierarchy of the owning and ruling class versus the nonowning exploited and oppressed class. Both the realities and the illusions of relative power and vulnerability which flow from this sexual hierarchy tend to divide working women and men and weaken the proletarian class struggle as a whole. The self-alienation from crucial human capacities which results from rigid sex roles and sexual stereotypes makes overt criticism, effective rebelliousness, and practical creativity painfully difficult for both women and men. The sexes find their attempts to share their general sense of oppression blocked by false walls of “feminine” unassertiveness and “masculine” coldness.

Not only, then, does the domination of men accompany the domination of owning classes. The whole system of irrational sexual divisions which flows from this elemental hierarchy weakens the capacity of the workers and oppressed of both sexes to resist their shared victimization by the exploiters. The sexual hierarchy of the nuclear family not only mirrors the hierarchy of capitalist oppressors and exploited workers – it supports and sustains it.

The world-historic defeat imposed on women by the rise of class society brought with it a world-historic defeat of children. At the bottom of the family hierarchy, children find themselves utterly dependent on and vulnerable to their parental providers and guardians. In class society these parental authorities must inculcate the appropriately acquiescent and submissive beliefs and attitudes in the children of the lower orders, the will to rule in the children of the privileged and powerful. This means that in most families the domination of men over women is accompanied by the authoritarian rule of parents – and especially of fathers – over children.

The nuclear family automatically intensifies the dependency of each child on its two biological parents. Given the extreme dependency of all human children, especially in the earliest years, and the emphasis atomized bourgeois society places on individual self-reliance, this concentration and intensification of children’s dependency on their parents in the nuclear family creates a particularly intense and conflicted relationship between children and parental authorities.

Especially in families of workers and the poor, childraising practices and ideological notions which emphasize the obedience of children to parents exploit this intensified dependency to teach acceptance of the repressiveness and frustrations of bourgeois society through demanding the submission

of children to repression by their parents in the home. Parents can often find it easy to compensate for the abuses they submit to on the job and receive from each other by asserting their authority through abusing their children. The concentration of emotional relationships within the parent-child nucleus intensifies competition among children for parental love and approval and competition between children and each parent for the other parent's attention and affection. Relations of trust and love are constantly distorted with fear and resentment and jealousy. Each show of parental tenderness carries a hidden threat of terror. The authoritarian parent presents the image and likeness of bourgeois economic and political authority to the inevitably suppliant child.

Along with this burden of submissiveness, competitiveness, and fear, the nuclear family brings the child intensified ambivalence toward authority-figures accompanied by the especially deep and extensive internalization of parental authority and the intensification of a sense of guilt. The human creature who emerges as an adult from such a childhood is only too likely to trust no one but her- or himself, to be ready to compete in a dog-eat-dog world, and to obey authority whether anyone is watching or not.

All these tendencies are combined with the bourgeois myths of individual self-reliance and responsibility and the economic and social atomization and isolation of bourgeois society to create the very model of the perfect citizen of the capitalist world – the perfect victim of capitalist exploitation. And so we meet the ideal product of the nuclear family: an atomized and lonely individual, conflicted over sexuality, inclined to behave submissively toward authority and abusively toward subordinates, intensely competitive with peers who ought to be friends and comrades, and cut off from criticism, creativity, and effective rebellion by self-suppression of aggressiveness or imagination and delusions of self-sufficiency. And this poor soul will even tend to believe she or he is to blame for all these problems, since, according to the bourgeois myth, they could all be solved if only she or he had the gumption.

Of course, this is the model of only one side of things. All oppression, including the oppression of the nuclear family, arouses resentment and resistance. And the nuclear family also tends to instill certain strengths in the workers and oppressed and revolutionary intellectuals which make them especially committed and intransigent fighters, once aroused. But the oppression of the nuclear family is still vital to the survival of capitalist society, weakening the solidarity and combativeness of the workers and oppressed, distorting their perceptions of the class enemy, and disorienting them and distracting them from the road of political struggle.

b. The Challenge of Homosexuality

Homosexuality and homosexual relationships directly challenge the institution and the ideology of the nuclear family.

Centrally and most obviously, the *mere fact* of homosexuality challenges heterosexual monogamy and the sexual moralism which supports heterosexual monogamy. The full *acceptance* of homosexual relationships as perfectly valid relationships providing as much potential for meeting the overall sexual and emotional needs of homosexual partners as heterosexual relationships provide heterosexual partners, *shatters* the ideological foundations of heterosexual monogamy. Homosexuality threatens not only the view of heterosexuality as the exclusive norm of sexual relating but also the deep-seated prejudice that lies behind this view, the prejudice against sexuality outside the sphere of strictly reproductive and familial relations.

Homosexual relationships present in a sharp and unmistakable form the possibility of sexual and personal fulfillment outside any nuclear family unit. They therefore strongly suggest the oppressiveness not only of rigid heterosexuality but of the delimitation of sexuality to family relations. And they therefore open the possibility of other expressions of human sexuality for all human beings.

More than this, homosexual relations inevitably violate the sexual hierarchy and rigid sex roles and sexual stereotypes of the bourgeois social life centered in and around the nuclear family and heterosexual monogamy. This is inevitably the case even though it is also true that homosexual relationships, in bourgeois society, are inevitably affected and even in some cases deformed by these oppressive relations and roles. The homosexual violation of sexual hierarchy and aggressive-male, passive-female sex stereotyping dramatizes the irrationality of the subordination of women to men and the ridiculousness of the paralyzing narrowness for both sexes of the sexual roles and images which arise from the oppression of women. Homosexual relationships, in eliminating the nuclear-family norms of the personal dependency of women on men and the personal domination of men over women, raise implicitly and provocatively the possibility of truly *equal* relationships between the sexes. In violating bourgeois sexual stereotypes and roles, homosexuality points toward the possibility of the social and economic equality of the sexes and the potential and need of all persons for a rich diversity of human behavior and relationships.

The existence of millions of homosexual relationships outside nuclear-family formations implies the general possibility of intimate human relationships separated from the system of economic dependencies which necessitate and shape the nuclear family. Homosexual relationships therefore, implicitly, potentially, or indirectly, challenge the subordination of personal to economic relations within bourgeois society, including the all-pervasive atomization of personal life. Homosexual relationships and the social world of the lesbian/gay communities, present the possibility that adults can lead loving and satisfying lives without as well as with the responsibilities and satisfactions of childraising, free of the bourgeois parent-child relations of domination and dependency. They therefore throw into question the human necessity of the hierarchies of age and size and the intensified dependencies, authoritarianism, and oppressive guilt for both parents and children of the nuclear family.

In general, homosexuality poses a fundamental challenge to the notion that all deeply satisfying personal relations, including sexual relations, must be essentially *familial* relations. It therefore counterposes to bourgeois sexual moralism the actual diversity and complex dynamism of human sexuality. But beyond this, homosexuality opens the way to the recognition of the potential importance of a wide variety of personal relations, including friendships, work relationships, and political relationships. The full acceptance of homosexual relationships and, with this, the recognition of the importance of the homosexual and heterosexual feelings and needs of all people, make possible not only the achievement of important satisfactions in both sexual and nonsexual relationships but the freeing of sexual relationships from the demeaning dependencies of bourgeois marital relations. This recognition makes it possible for each human adult to create a personal life which, because it does not center on the linking of sexual and economic dependencies, can stress the importance and quality of each of a variety of relationships. With this new possibility can come a new norm in personal relations – a norm of equality, mutuality, and openness to growth, a norm of “fighting comradeship” through all the joys and pains of human life.

Bourgeois society, outside the sphere of the social relations of production, consists of an enormous multitude of essentially isolated nuclear-family units, many to some degree interconnected with a handful of others, but even most of these fundamentally divided from each other economically and socially. Within the society whose social life is dominated by this network of atomized relationships, homosexuality combines with the constant tendencies toward the decomposition of the nuclear family and resistance to its oppression, to raise the prospect of the explosion of this network. It counterposes to the oppressive limitations and authoritarian hierarchies of nuclear-family life, the possibility of other, equal

and mutually satisfying, more varied, richer, more rational, more humane, and more creative personal relationships for all.

The persistent and intransigent fact of homosexuality therefore constitutes an implicit critique of bourgeois social life and a threat to its basic structures and the religious and moral ideologies which sustain those structures. Intrinsically homosexuality reveals the possibility of liberation from irrational and superstitious limitations on human sexual and emotional life.

So it is that capitalist society must oppose homosexuality, persecute homosexuals, and make fear and hatred of homosexuality a key to what is acceptable in human sexual life. So it is that capitalism must impose its most irrational repression on the most intimate arena of human relations, the arena of the giving of love.

c. The Organization and Lesbians and Gay Men

The objective interest of lesbians and gay men in the overthrow of capitalism is clear. Socialist revolution is the basic condition for the liberation of human society from the economic, social, and political *necessity* of the nuclear family and the oppressive sexual moralism and prejudices which bourgeois society employs to support the nuclear family. Without socialist revolution, gay people face, at best, merely cycles of greater and lesser degrees of vicious social prejudice, economic discrimination, and persecution, including violent attacks, by police, right-wing thugs, religious crusaders, and assorted sexually and emotionally disturbed individuals. Even more imperatively, gays face the inescapable alternative of socialism or barbarism as the alternative of the possibility of genuine liberation or the inevitability of a society of terror whose sole objective for gays would be bloody extermination. For homosexuals, the complete revolutionary victory of the proletariat is a condition not only of liberation but of survival.

The revolutionary organization's obligation to defend lesbians and gay men and support lesbian/gay struggles against oppression arises simply and directly from its role as tribune of the people, champion of all the oppressed. But a number of special reasons compel special attention to gay struggles and gay issues.

First, the gay question is inextricably linked with the woman question. Any adequate exposure of the oppression of the nuclear family *requires* careful attention to the issues centered around homosexuality and homosexual relationships. The special oppression of gays is rooted in the same conditions as the oppression of women – and vice versa.

Further, a Marxist organization must fight for a *scientific*, a materialist and dialectical approach to all the issues of family, personal, psychological, and sexual life, as part of its overall fight for scientific Marxism as the science of human history and society. This requires a determined theoretical and practical struggle against religious and other superstitious attitudes towards sexual and personal issues, including repressive sexual moralism, and against the legal, economic, and social victimization of gays, which is one of the ugliest and most vicious expressions of these irrationalities.

Moreover, since the late 1960s, a large, militant lesbian/gay movement has developed in the US, which has organized millions of lesbians, gay men, and heterosexuals in a diverse series of struggles against some of the worst forms of persecution and discrimination suffered by gays in American capitalist society. This movement is especially powerful in a number of urban areas where large, politically active

gay communities have created enclaves which provide some measure of temporary protection against persecution, and networks of gay social, cultural, service, and political institutions.

But these struggles, overwhelmingly reformist and separatist in character, raise the necessity of support from the labor movement more and more urgently, as the crisis of world capitalism deepens and the utter fragility of any gains achieved becomes more and more obvious. The revolutionary vanguard finds in the current limitations of these struggles the potential danger of brutal, reactionary backlash against an organized and fighting but extremely vulnerable minority. But it also must see in the militance of these struggles the explosive potential of an extraordinarily courageous and angry movement pitted objectively against the very fundamentals of bourgeois society.

These two basic aspects of the gay struggle create both the urgent necessity and a practical basis for the revolutionary vanguard to fight for the alliance of gay militance with the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat.

From this follows, as with the other specially oppressed groups, the necessity of the revolutionary vanguard's winning lesbians and gay men to the revolutionary program through struggle and recruiting gays and building up gays as organizational leadership.

To achieve these goals, the organization must recognize and be able to address concretely the distrust felt by many lesbians and gay men toward ostensibly Marxist groups. The historic record of the left with regard to gays is largely a sorry one. Lassalle in the 1860s and Bebel and Bernstein and the German Social Democrats in the period before World War I took brave stands in defense of homosexuals. But their positions were limited to the issues of personal privacy and democratic rights and accompanied by clear expressions of disapproval of homosexuality. While the Bolshevik government led by Lenin and Trotsky passed legislation free of sexual moralism and prohibiting state and social interference in purely sexual matters, the Stalinist betrayal of the October Revolution brought with it the reidealization of the nuclear family and state repression directed against homosexuals.

The American left, prior to the 1970s, by and large capitulated to the moralistic and sexist backwardness of many workers in its dealings with gays and gay issues. Most Stalinist groups have maintained to this day a policy of grotesque and stupid moralism with regard to homosexuality. But ostensibly Trotskyist groups, such as the Socialist Workers Party and the Spartacist League, practiced the cowardly exclusion and expulsion of gays through the 1960s.

To win gay militants to its banner, the revolutionary vanguard must break completely with this history of antihomosexual positions and practices and reverse the past failures of the left to support gay struggles. The revolutionary organization must support gay struggles against oppression aggressively, while fighting to link the struggle against the oppression of lesbians and gay men with the organized labor movement. Given the continuing tendency of many workers toward irrational and reactionary views on homosexuality and the labor bureaucracy's ability to exploit every reactionary sentiment within the working class, the organization's capacity to wage this fight is an important test of its willingness to oppose the labor bureaucracy in action and build a genuinely revolutionary alternative leadership in the unions.

The organization must work to find effective tactics to win the mass of workers, over time, to understand the justice and importance of the gay cause, keeping in mind at all times that the gay issue is a working-class issue, too, since the great majority of lesbians and gay men are workers and poor people. The vanguard must actively oppose every outrage committed against gays and intervene consistently to promote the militance, organization, socialist orientation, and ties to the working class of gay struggles. It must not counterpose the gay struggle to the proletarian class struggle for socialism, whether in the form

of capitulation to gay-separatist or antilabor attitudes or in the form of the opportunist liquidation of gay issues in its trade union work.

Just as the recruitment of lesbians and gay men hinges on the seriousness and militance of the organization's struggle against the oppression of gays, so the building up of the leadership of gay comrades hinges on the organization's seriousness and militance in rooting out the destructive effects of antigay bigotry and sexual stereotypes within the organization.

The organization must recognize that gay comrades not only make its general fight against internal sexual stereotypes and sexual hierarchy even more necessary and important. They also inevitably provide the organization with particularly valuable *opportunities* for waging this fight, in the course of building the leadership of gay women and men, whose simple individual diversity will shatter many lingering prejudices. Since fear and hatred of homosexuality (homophobia), including the homosexual feelings and needs of *all* people, are burned deep into the conscious and unconscious attitudes of most people in American bourgeois society, leaders must accompany militant intransigence in the struggle against all forms of overt antigay bigotry with effective patience in overcoming the destructive effects of the more or less unconscious, irrational fears of homosexuality of some comrades.

The oppression of lesbians and gay men is distinguished from most other forms of special oppression in its focus on the intimate personal lives of its victims. The objective of the oppression of gays is the suppression of homosexual love. Historically, in the US, as in capitalist societies generally, gays have been able to avoid brutal victimization only by concealing their intimate personal relationships and feelings from the nongay world, thereby partially conceding the suppression of love bourgeois society demands of them. Inevitably, then, some gay militants have felt the necessity of taking a public stand against this history of underground personal life, making a public declaration of homosexuality as a more or less consciously political act. For many other lesbians and gay men, accepting and acting on their homosexual feelings and letting gay and nongay people close to them know about their homosexuality involve a painful personal process which requires great integrity and courage. In either kind of "coming out," homosexuals must develop a greater courage, consciousness, and sensitivity around their own personal relationships than most heterosexuals are ever required to have.

The revolutionary organization must oppose utopian illusions that any purely personal acts could achieve the liberation of lesbians and gay men in capitalist society, let alone bring about the overthrow of capitalism. And it must be especially concerned about the elementary security of its gay comrades in a society in which lesbians and gay men must always remain especially vulnerable to violent attacks and reactionary repression. Nevertheless, serious commitment to gay struggles and respect for the experience and special concerns of lesbian and gay-male comrades make it important to deal with the issue of coming out in concrete and tactical terms. The imposition of a blanket "closet rule" on gay comrades in the name of security would be, under the current conditions of bourgeois democracy in the US, a sure sign of bad faith with the gay struggle and a guarantee of hypocrisy and discrimination in the treatment of gay comrades. Rather, the revolutionary vanguard must recognize that *coming out is a political act* – objectively an expression of defiance of bourgeois society's most basic repressive social norms. The organization must therefore fight to develop the countless individual, objectively anticapitalist struggles for lesbian/gay pride focused on coming out, into a fully conscious mass struggle for lesbian/gay liberation through proletarian and socialist revolution.

The fact that most comrades will meet their personal needs through relationships and social activities with other members and sympathizers, can create special problems for lesbian and gay-male comrades functioning in a predominantly heterosexual organization. Misunderstandings and tensions arising from essentially personal issues can affect definite organizational relations and functioning destructively. The organization and especially the leadership must be particularly sensitive to the special concerns and problems of gay comrades in such situations, which can breed "gay-straight" divisions

which can all too easily provide a cover for the redevelopment of antigay prejudice and sexist stereotypes. The organization must understand the special importance of gay communities to gay comrades and deal carefully, sensitively, and concretely with any contradictions which arise for gay comrades whose personal lives tend to be cut off from their political work and relationships.

The organization must be able to deal effectively with the special issues of sexism which can arise between lesbians and gay men. It must balance its overall work with gay women and men, fighting always for their unity in struggle. In its interventions, organizing, and recruitment and leadership policies concerning both lesbians and gay men, the organization must consistently recognize the special connection between the special oppression of women and the oppression of homosexuals.

In particular, the organization must recognize the historic tendency for the special oppression – or even the existence – of gay women to be more hidden and more neglected than the special oppression of gay men. The implicit assumption of the inferiority of women in all sexist ideology and attitudes has meant that lesbians have been marked for especially intense denigration and viewed with especially intense fear by a society both sexist and antigay at its roots. To bourgeois society lesbians are particularly threatening as *women* homosexuals and *homosexual* women. Both in its public work and in its internal functioning the organization must fight for full consciousness of the special character of the oppression and the struggles of lesbians and consistently make clear in word and action its political commitment to the combined lesbian struggle against sexism and antigay bigotry.

The revolutionary vanguard must unfailingly expose the utopianism of all “personal-liberation” schemes and fads, including those centered on homosexuality. But it must never view the personal needs and relationships of its cadres with moralism or disdain.

On the one hand, the organization must always make clear that the network of capitalist oppression can never be overcome in the private arena of personal relationships. Only the political road of proletarian revolution leads to the overthrow of all forms of special oppression, including the oppression of homosexuals. The hard march up this road requires many sacrifices of revolutionaries, including sacrifices in the arena of personal life. On the other hand, no sacrifice should be demanded without real reason. Most comrades will work with more effectiveness and devotion, if they can bring to their work some of the strengths gained from the meeting of personal needs in strong and caring personal relationships. The balance of these two concerns is particularly important in work with gay comrades.

In the 1980s in the US – as in virtually every country in the world – the international AIDS crisis has added a terrible new dimension to the fight of millions of gay men for gay sexuality and gay love. The bigots crawling under all the rocks of bourgeois ideology have seen in AIDS/ARC a golden opportunity for spreading their moralism, their religious superstitions, their prejudice, their lies, and their violence. For gay men AIDS has meant a new wave of stigmatization, discrimination, victimization, panic, and violence – at the very moment in history when the struggle for lesbian/gay liberation had just begun in earnest.

Under these conditions the fight against AIDS and every backward and bigoted social reaction to AIDS must be combined with new militance in the fight for lesbian/gay liberation. The AIDS crisis has dramatized the power of every reactionary element in American social and political life. Yet this crisis is also in many ways intensifying lesbian/gay militance and solidarity and leading to new levels and forms of courageous struggle in the gay communities. And it has also, even if initially in a terrible way, directly linked the future of thousands of gay men and the lesbian/gay communities in the US to the fate of thousands of gay men in other countries and of workers and oppressed people around the world – above all, millions of black Africans in west and central Africa forced to confront AIDS under the conditions imposed by the long history of imperialist oppression and underdevelopment.

The proletarian vanguard must take the lead in building the militant mass struggles, on an international basis, that alone can win the scientific, medical, and other resources required in order to defeat AIDS throughout imperialism's bleeding domain. At every turn the fight against this global pandemic strains against the fundamental limitations of the capitalist law of profits and the irrational divisions of the national borders of the bourgeois nation-state. Recognizing that the medical, political, and economic questions posed by AIDS can be adequately answered only by the global planning of a world socialist economy, Trotskyists must fight to develop the militant struggle to force the imperialists to provide the resources already desperately needed and too long held back, into a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the capitalist system that is itself the greatest obstacle to the conquest of this disease.

AIDS raises to an almost unbearable intensity the issues at stake in the lesbian/gay struggle. The fight to liberate human life and love from irrational restraints now merges over and over with an ongoing battle against a constant threat of death, both immediate and on a mass scale, waged both in the most intimate arenas of human experience and on the plane of mass political struggle.

The revolutionary vanguard must recruit and embrace the bravest fighters in the struggle against AIDS/ARC – among gay men as well as all the other oppressed strata of bourgeois society increasingly affected by the AIDS/ARC epidemic.

Recognizing the full relevance of the international fight against AIDS to the fight for the world proletarian revolution, Trotskyists must work to link the proletarian vanguard with the most heroic leaders in the struggle against AIDS as a vital step in mobilizing the united struggle of an aroused labor movement and all the oppressed people of the planet confronted with AIDS. Only if it can meet the challenge posed by AIDS/ARC today, can the proletarian vanguard demonstrate the reality of its commitment to the lesbian/gay struggle. And even more. The AIDS crisis tests the vanguard's worthiness of the historic task of revolutionary leadership in a peculiarly fundamental, difficult, and inescapable way – by testing its capacity to maintain, in the face of death, the courageous commitment of a true tribune of the people.

In general, the concrete militance and consistency of the organization's commitment to the struggle against the special oppression of gay people, including its commitment to the recruitment and building up as leadership of lesbians and gay men, will serve as a crucial test of the depth of its overall commitment to the fight against all forms of oppression in class society. Its courageous ability to orient itself theoretically and practically in this struggle and the struggle against the special oppression of women, will reveal not only its real capacity to forge the alliance of the working class and the oppressed to achieve the victory of the socialist revolution. This courageous ability – or lack of it – will reveal whether or not the revolutionary vanguard really understands what it is fighting for.

We Marxists say that the value of a social structure is determined by the development of the productive forces. This is indisputable. But it is also possible to approach the problem from the other end. The development of the productive forces is not needed for its own sake. In the last analysis the development of the productive forces is needed because it provides the basis for a new human personality, conscious, without a lord over him on earth, not fearing imaginary lords, born of fear, in the sky – a human personality which absorbs into itself all the best of what was created by the thought and creativity of past ages, which in solidarity with all others goes forward, creates new cultural values, constructs new personal and family attitudes, higher and nobler than those which were born on the basis of class slavery. The development of the productive forces is dear to us, as the material presupposition of a higher human personality, not shut up in itself, but cooperative, associative. (Trotsky, "The Protection of Motherhood and the Struggle for Culture," 1925)