Boston busing crisis, 1974: Against the liberals, Spartacists raised communist program to fight against segregation. Inset: 1963 document of Revolutionary Tendency, precursor of SL, attacked Socialist Workers Party’s refusal to fight for leadership of black struggle.

Editors

The following is an edited version of the report by SL/U.S. National Chairman Erica Jones on the black question, given at the 16th National Conference of the SL/U.S.

The title of this presentation is “For Black Trotskyism (II).” Thanks, Donau, for the suggestion.

I thought it would be good to begin this report by talking about a discussion I had earlier this week with the International Executive Committee delegation and a number of comrades on the current slate proposal. It came off a discussion I had about Black Lives Matter (BLM) and the Revolutionary Blackout Network (RBIN). I argued that I didn’t think that RBIN was a black nationalist organization because they don’t argue like hardened “down with whitey” nationalists. And, yeah, they may be an all-black group, but that doesn’t mean they are nationalists. What’s wrong with an all-black organization; we call for black transitional organizations! This was completely wrong!

First, I was being totally soft on RBIN. They are not calling to build an integrated party, they are calling for a black-led group with “allies,” not dissimilar to the Panthers, and we have to argue how that is counterposed to what’s necessary to win black liberation, that is, building a multiracial Leninist vanguard party.

Second, our call for a transitional organization of the black struggle is based on its standing as a connecting link between the party and the broader masses. It is an application of our fight for revolutionary internationalism. Its purpose is to facilitate winning black Trotskyists—and not just black Trotskyists, but white Trotskyists, too—to our party. It’s about cutting through the racial divide and building unity in the class based on a revolutionary program to fight black oppression. As we continued on page 7

In this period of growing turmoil, many have been driven to action, but despite their efforts, everything just keeps getting worse. After nearly a decade of BLM protests, not a damn thing has changed for black people, with the vicious and deadly beating of Tyre Nichols being but the latest reminder.

Although millions were mobilized by the Sanders presidential campaign, health care remains a miserable joke for the masses, who lack access and coverage and are plagued by colossal costs. Access to abortion continues to evaporate despite widespread protest sparked by the overturn of Roe v. Wade, and the status of women has only declined since many were thrown out of work and forced back into the home during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Union organizing efforts at Amazon, Starbucks and elsewhere are all caught in an endless web of legal battles, and Biden spiked the rail strike with the flick of a pen. For all the anger against the Trump regime and the state of society, the only outcome of the “resistance” was the installment of yet another bourgeois overseer.

Why haven’t conditions improved, but have only worsened for black people, workers, women and youth? The heart of the matter is leadership. The current disastrous situation is the result of the bankrupt strategy of the treacherous union bureaucracy and the fake socialists. At every step, they have betrayed the aspirations of workers and the oppressed by building trans-class alliances, searching for saviors among the political representatives of the class enemy, relying on the repressive apparatus of its state and always staying within the bounds of the capitalists’ social and economic system. Any and all such alliances with liberal bourgeois forces are guaranteed to bury struggle in defeat.

Enough of these sham, dead-end solutions! There is a way forward. This seminal issue of Workers Vanguard provides the answers and the way out of this impasse. It is the product of the recent SL/U.S. conference, which crucially reaffirmed the need to provide revolutionary leadership of today’s struggles against the SL/U.S.’s previous abdication of this duty. To meet even the most
basic urgent needs of the workers and the oppressed, an independent workers' party must be waged in opposition to the cap-
italists and their state, which defends their rule. All the liberal bourgeoisie's roadblocks must be cleared, because they hamper the struggle, pull its punches, mis-
lead, disorganize and undermine. A non-
revolutionary leadership will only disarm any movement in the face of its inevitable clash with the forces of resistance taken in by the promises of the bosses—
ly fight for power and an end to capitalist wage slavery and oppression.

For a Communist Opposition to the Popular Front

The main conference document “The Leninist Vanguard Party vs. the Anti-Trump Popular Front” (see page 3) powerfully reasserts that only a communist leadership can advance the major struggles facing the workers and oppressed—the struggle for black liberation, the trade-union struggle, the struggle for women's emancipation, the struggle for health care—by exposing how the Liberal, Democratic, and Green parties in the United States of America in the recent years of economic ruin of the working class under Democratic Party rule paved the way for the election of the overtly reactionary Trump. Layers of white workers and the petty bourgeoisie were taken in by his usual promises to rebuild the economy.

The Democrats pushed at a fever pitch and still push today, the false polarization that society is divided between “progres-
sives” and “reactionaries.” To abdu-
themselves, Democrats put the blame for the bourgeois crisis and the other ills of capitalism on Trump and his supporters. The document shows how the movement’s activists used hypocris-
ical moral outrage over real fears of Trump to win back support: “because Trump is a reactionist, a capitalist, a(Camera)

The bourgeoisie is incomplete, is neither undivided nor guaranteed. But the bourgeoisie

cannot but strive for liberty and legality, since without these the domination of

the masses in the hands of the liberals. The Bolsheviks, who opposed the

Lenin’s Bolsheviks had decisively

utopia is harmful not only because it is a utopia, but also because it corrupts

This is the decisive question for the success of the American bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie keeps black people forcibly segregated at the bottom in order to keep society divided along race lines. This is the core of its rule. The struggle for black freedom requires going up against fundamental capitalist contradictions. The bourgeoisie cannot be defeated under the leadership of the liberals who defended the capitalist order. A prime exam-
ple is this year’s Democratic National Convention, which appeals to capitalist politicians to recognize that “black lives matter” The whole basis of BLM’s program is a cop reform, which leads black people to defeat because it involves them in the machinery of the state. All BLM’s programs attempt to suppress the movement. The presentation explains how anti-

racist liberalism, which was pervasive in the 1960s, is dead. The rise of BLM’s program, is the Democratic Par-

ty’s preferred method of divide-and-rule. The American workers do not see the activism to seek alliance with the suppos-

eless betrayal the working class because seeking to reconcile the irreconcilable interests of the exploited and the explo-

ors party, it never said, “Don’t vote for

and Sanders, and his main campaign slogan “Medi-
cal Care For All” was so popular among many workers and youth angry at the lack of access to and the poor quality of hea

enjoyed by the Working Vanguards who have been behind the program. 

Black Liberation Requires Communist Leadership

The conference presentation “For Black Liberation” (see page 6) is not only a multiracial Leninist vanguard party can

advocate the struggle for black equality and achieve radical restructuring of the working class across racial lines. This is the

corollary of the demand for workers to have their safety against the bosses, who made the workers bear the burden of the crisis and locked everyone at home as a cheap and reactionary way to stave off the collapse of their completely decr
technological health care system. This conflict of class interests is an inner-class conflict, not a popular one. By allowing the BLM, Sanders and the treacherous tendencies pushing a non-revolutionary class-collaborationist approach, the leaders of the working class were forced workers to submit and sacri-

fice, or support the bourgeoisie’s reactionary leadership.

Thesidebar in the left and the left during the COVID-19 pandemic starkly showed that the struggle for communist leadership was not the solution. Workers needed to fight for more health care, better conditions, and control of their safety against the bosses, who made the workers bear the burden of the crisis and locked everyone at home as a cheap and reactionary way to stave off the collapse of their completely decr

technological health care system. This conflict of class interests is an inner-class conflict, not a popular one. By allowing the BLM, Sanders and the treacherous tendencies pushing a non-revolutionary class-collaborationist approach, the leaders of the working class were forced workers to submit and sacri-

fice, or support the bourgeoisie’s reactionary leadership.

Theconference presentation “For Black Liberation” (see page 6) is not only a multiracial Leninist vanguard party can

advocate the struggle for black equality and achieve radical restructuring of the working class across racial lines. This is the

corollary of the demand for workers to have their safety against the bosses, who made the workers bear the burden of the crisis and locked everyone at home as a cheap and reactionary way to stave off the collapse of their completely decr
technological health care system. This conflict of class interests is an inner-class conflict, not a popular one. By allowing the BLM, Sanders and the treacherous tendencies pushing a non-revolutionary class-collaborationist approach, the leaders of the working class were forced workers to submit and sacri-

fice, or support the bourgeoisie’s reactionary leadership.

Theconference presentation “For Black Liberation” (see page 6) is not only a multiracial Leninist vanguard party can

advocate the struggle for black equality and achieve radical restructuring of the working class across racial lines. This is the

corollary of the demand for workers to have their safety against the bosses, who made the workers bear the burden of the crisis and locked everyone at home as a cheap and reactionary way to stave off the collapse of their completely decr
technological health care system. This conflict of class interests is an inner-class conflict, not a popular one. By allowing the BLM, Sanders and the treacherous tendencies pushing a non-revolutionary class-collaborationist approach, the leaders of the working class were forced workers to submit and sacri-

fice, or support the bourgeoisie’s reactionary leadership.

Theconference presentation “For Black Liberation” (see page 6) is not only a multiracial Leninist vanguard party can

advocate the struggle for black equality and achieve radical restructuring of the working class across racial lines. This is the

corollary of the demand for workers to have their safety against the bosses, who made the workers bear the burden of the crisis and locked everyone at home as a cheap and reactionary way to stave off the collapse of their completely decr
technological health care system. This conflict of class interests is an inner-class conflict, not a popular one. By allowing the BLM, Sanders and the treacherous tendencies pushing a non-revolutionary class-collaborationist approach, the leaders of the working class were forced workers to submit and sacri-

fice, or support the bourgeoisie’s reactionary leadership.

Theconference presentation “For Black Liberation” (see page 6) is not only a multiracial Leninist vanguard party can

advocate the struggle for black equality and achieve radical restructuring of the working class across racial lines. This is the

corollary of the demand for workers to have their safety against the bosses, who made the workers bear the burden of the crisis and locked everyone at home as a cheap and reactionary way to stave off the collapse of their completely decr
technological health care system. This conflict of class interests is an inner-class conflict, not a popular one. By allowing the BLM, Sanders and the treacherous tendencies pushing a non-revolutionary class-collaborationist approach, the leaders of the working class were forced workers to submit and sacri-

fice, or support the bourgeoisie’s reactionary leadership.
The following is the main document of the 16th National Conference of the Spartacist League/U.S.

1. The 2016 election of Republican Donald Trump, an overtly reactionary capitalist politician, was a product of intensifying contradictions of decaying U.S. imperialism. His election represented a right-wing backlash against the liberal status quo. Almost a decade of Democratic Party-administered misery, years of foreclosures, the loss of six million industrial jobs since 2000, crushing student and health care debt and general anger at the political dynasties of the bourgeoisie paved the way for Trump. While Obama hailed out the banks, for the working class and oppressed, the 2008 economic crisis was disastrous. Millions who had hoped for change had those hopes dashed, and they turned to the putrid populism of Trump. His anti-globalization posture, anti-immigrant ravings, trade-war threats against China and promises to bring back jobs and “drain the swamp” appealed to a layer of workers and the petty bourgeoisie who were fed up with the lot they had been left in by the previous administration. Trump’s racist bombast offered a scapegoat for the economic anxieties of these layers, and his vulgar indignation toward his political opponents found resonance with those who were devastated by the Democrats and were sick of the suits in Washington.

2. Trump was supported by sections of the capitalists who had benefited the least from the Obama years, like the steel, coal and energy bosses. Another section of the ruling class disagreed with his “America First” protectionism that pulled the U.S. out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and his less hawkish approach toward Russia. Under Trump, the Republicans sought to ratchet up the imperialist rape of Mexico through renegotiating NAFTA, but the Democrats initially thought the cost of renegotiating the existing rape outweighed the benefits. Both parties stand firmly for the militarized border and the degradation, deportation and caging of immigrants—they simply differ on the efficacy of the optics when chanting about a wall and the tone of the anti-immigrant rhetoric. Both parties fully agree that the Chinese deformed workers state must be destroyed—they simply differ on the most efficient method of waging their offensive. While Trump openly gave a wink and a nod to the fascist scum crawling in the crevices of the crumbling economy, the Democrats preside over the same social system that breeds them, and as well hold them in reserve to be unleashed against the workers in times of crisis. They just think benefiting Confederate flags and Klan huts isn’t a good look while they maraud around the world supposedly in the name of “freedom and democracy.” On every fundamental question, the two wings of the bourgeoisie fly together.

The Democrats simply saw Trump’s racist bravado and provocations against NATO allies as an impediment to the pursuit of their imperialist interests and were concerned that Trump might tarnish the image of U.S. imperialism. However, the differences within the bourgeoisie were merely tactical disagreements about how to best carry out the exploitation of the working class and imperialist plunder. The Democrats’ objections to Trump don’t represent the interests of the workers and oppressed, which are counterposed to both bourgeois perspectives.

3. To regain their rule, the Democrats rallied their disenfranchised constituencies with maudlin moral outrage at Trump’s indecency. Because Trump is a misogynist, vote for Democrats…who support the Hyde Amendment, whose program is responsible for the erosion of abortion access, and who represent the class that maintains women’s oppression. Because Trump is a racist, vote for Democrats…who preside over the wanton police murder, mass incarceration and forcible segregation of the black masses in almost every major city, who deported record numbers of immigrants during the Obama administration, destroyed busing and welfare in the 1980s and ’90s, and require racial oppression for the stability of their rule. Because Trump didn’t pay his taxes, vote for Democrats…whose policies have led only to economic ruin and immiseration for the masses. The Democrats’ supposed “fight” against Trump was nothing but a cynical media circus around Russiagate, tawdry tabloid scandals and empty speculating about the sanctity of American democracy. Neither their parades nor their righteous proclamations did a damn thing to defend the workers and oppressed against Trump’s attacks. Their only purpose was to lure the electorate back to their side and reclaim the imperial presidency so they could administer their brutal class dictatorship with the demeanor they desire. The AFL-CIO bureaucracy and the rest of labor officialdom were instrumental in lining up workers for this goal.

4. Throughout this period, and today, there is polarization within the Democratic Party between the “progressive” and “establishment” wings. The “progressive” wing only represents a tactical difference over how to most effectively seduce the support of those they subjugate. Their program to “fight Trump” was to make a better electoral case for the Democratic Party. The “establishment” Democrats had a losing strategy in the election in 2016. Hillary Clinton’s campaign wasn’t even compelled to offer crumbs to the masses who had been crushed under years of her party’s rule, instead declaring that America was “already great” and denouncing her detractors as “deplorables.” Sanders and “the Squad” found the stodgy strategy of screaming about Trump being Putin’s puppet less than sufficient. Instead, they believed the masses would be better baited with bombast against the “billionaire class” and promises of health care and debt relief. But these “progressives” have no intention of even waging so much as a scuffle within their party to fulfill the promises they make on the campaign trail. They dutifully abide by the discipline of their party, lawgiving for the likes of the less popular Pelosi and Biden and serving the interests of the ruling class. Both wings agree on all fundamental questions of administering capitalist rule. Despite this, liberals and the left were lovestruck by the song and dance of these “progressives,” who try to give the program of their imperialist party more pizzazz.

5. It was a criminal betrayal that those who claim to be “socialists” and say they stand for “class independence” supported the liberals’ “resistance,” explicitly or implicitly. Bound by the glue of “anybody continued on page 4
Leninist Party... (continued from page 3)

but Trump” and “lesser-evilism,” they tied the workers and oppressed to a wing of the bourgeoisie and its predatory rule. From sanctuaries cities to Bernie-mania, the Women’s Marches and #MeToo, to the “fight against fascism,” Black Lives Matter (BLM) and national unity in the pandemic, nearly every single left group served as foot soldiers for nearly every single iteration of the anti-Trump popular front, eagerly following the leadership of the liberals and betraying the interests of workers and the oppressed. The largest ostensibly socialist group, the Interna-
tional Socialist Organization (ISO), self- destructed and dissolved into the Demo-
cratic Party DSA. Some, like Socialist Alternative, pretended to maintain some
nominal claim to independence while
fully supporting Sanders by pleading with
the Senator, now serving his 32nd year in Congress for the imperiasts, to form a
third party. The Revolutionary Commu-
nist Party even went so far as to mobilize
rallies protesting Trump’s firing of the
FBI director. These traitors to socialism
spent four years backing up to the liberals
and begging them to build a “mass move-
ment in the streets.” Their efforts accom-
plished absolutely nothing for workers
and the oppressed and moreover ensured
that there would be no actual fight against
Trump. Their program of class collabora-
tion paralyzed the fight and their hyste-
rical hustling herded voting cattle for the
Democrats.

6. Centrist organizations like Left Voice, the Internationalist Group (IG) and the Socialist League/U.S., put on a slightly more convincing act by serv-
ing as left critics of the various crops in the apparatus of the anti-Trump popular
front, which was nothing but a cover for
it. While they all screamed about revo-
ution and breaking with the Democrats, they sought to build the labor component of
the popular front and push movements
like BLM to the left by criticizing their
leadership. These centrists did everything but mobilize workers and youth on a
counterposed communist pro-
movement that was mobilizing the masses
with the more openly reformist outlets, the
result was the same: the leadership of the
masses—many motivated by the mis-
cery created by capitalism and searching
for solutions—was left in the hands of
the liberals, who would lead them not to
salvation but deliver them to defeat and
demoralization. For example:
• The SL/U.S. and the IG had a super-
ficial spat over sanctuaries cities. The IG supported “sanctuary” because it
blacklisted movement that was mobilizing the masses without
tie the oppressed to the capitalist rulers they serve. The power to
the fight for black freedom, for full cit-
izenship rights for all immigrants, for
women’s rights and for the liberation of all the oppressed in the struggle for a
socialist America.”

10. To mobilize the class in its own
interests requires a revolutionary program
different from the dominant liberal-
ism. Anything else is just a cover for
the popular front. To fight for women’s liberation requires a fight against the fem-
nists; to fight for black liberation requires a fight against BLM; to fight for health
care requires a fight against Sanders and his sycophants. Nowhere in the article or
in any other of the next four years does the
SL/U.S. call for breaking with the leaders of these movements and explain that only a communist program that subordinated the interests of the pro-
letariat to that of the liberal bourgeoisie. From this sorry “struggle” under liberal leadership, workers and the oppressed achieved nothing. In fact, the only
out
• The SLP/U.S. and the IG support
for Marxists to liquidate into liberalism.
Thus, the SL/U.S. had concluded that our
purpose today is not to fight for revolu-
tional leadership but to wait until the
period changed. Justifying our abdication
by blaming the low level of class struggle,
we then identify it as the main pressure
on us.

7. The SLP/U.S. had responded to the
liberal popular front. To fight for women’s
rights requires a revolutionary program
that subordinated the interests of the pro-
letariat to that of the liberal bourgeoisie.
From this sorry “struggle” under liberal leadership, workers and the oppressed
achieved nothing. In fact, the only
out
• The SLP/U.S. and the IG support
for Marxists to liquidate into liberalism.
Thus, the SL/U.S. had concluded that our
purpose today is not to fight for revolu-
tional leadership but to wait until the
period changed. Justifying our abdication
by blaming the low level of class struggle,
we then identify it as the main pressure
on us.

8. Thus, the SLP/U.S. had concluded that our
purpose today is not to fight for revolu-
tional leadership but to wait until the
period changed. Justifying our abdication
by blaming the low level of class struggle,
we then identify it as the main pressure
on us.

9. The first Workers Vanguard arti-
cle in response to Trump’s election was
already an example of the SL/U.S.’s cen-
trist, social-democratic aspirations. Along
with the jargon-filled journalism and the
focus of liberalism from a “class-struggles”
point of view, the SLP/U.S. had found the programmatic core of what the
SLP/U.S. had to offer: “It is high time that some genuine class hatred be mobilized against the politi-
cal militarism of the Republicans and Democrats, whatever their race or sex, and the cap-
italist rulers they serve. The political re-
 sist the depredations of capitalism lies in
the hands of the men and women of the
black, white and immigrant—whose labor keeps the wheels of production turning and produces the capital wealth. We need a multiracial revolu-
tionary workers party that champions

Lenin and the Vanguard Party
First published in 1978, this pamphlet provides a detailed historical and theoretical account of Lenin’s struggle for a vanguard party.

$2 (56 pages)

Order from make checks payable to:
Spartacist Publishing Co.,
Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116

Los Angeles, May 2017: RCP’s Refusalism defends head of FBI, capitalist instrument of murder, black labor and leftist militleader. Banner reads: “Prolong the strike of F.B.I. Director James Comey... An End to Racism... Towards Fascism.”
For Revolutionary Defeatism in Ukraine

We print below, edited for publication, a contribution submitted by comrade Ed Jarvis as part of Conference discussion.

Primarily as a result of a discussion I had with members of the delegation from the International Secretariat (I.S.), I have adopted the majority position of defeatism in the Ukraine war. I was triggered into writing this document by an SL/U.S. comrade who urged me to seek, as comrade Jim Robertson used to say, in the direction of their guns.

There were certain key conceptions about the military defeatism position that I had discussed with Jim last year, and I have honestly presented these concerns to the International Executive Committee (IEC). As a result, members of the IEC had discussed these concerns with me.

My initial concern with our line was, as I expressed in my document addressed to the IEC:

“Our line, as I understand it, is that we still defend the democratic rights of the Donbass in spite of the Russian military incursion. However, our statement has also declared that this question has been subordinated to the reactionary aims of Russian capitalism. This is the contradiction that I am having a hard time reconciling with Russian defeatism.”

I interpreted this to mean that the struggle for national liberation was no longer to be supported. In other words, if the International Communist League had sections in Ukraine and Russia, we would be calling for the workers and soldiers military councils to stop all activity and reverse the direction of their guns.

The I.S. comrades made it clear that this is what this formulation actually means. It doesn’t literally mean that struggle for self-determination of the Donbass is to be halted. Rather, means that the liberation of the Donbas will require waging not simply a struggle against Nazi-led Ukrainian troops but also those Russian forces engaged in the national oppression of non-Russian Ukrainians.

Such a perspective is essential for rebuilding Russian and Ukrainian working-class unity, as well as providing the foundation for the national freedom of all Ukrainian nationalities. This, of course, can only be the result of the revolutionary conquest of power that results in the emergence of workers republics and voluntary socialist federations.

The other major concern that I had was the question of recognizing the legitimacy of Russia acting in self-defense against the longstanding encroachment by NATO toward the border of Russia. I thought that having a military wing of the Trotskyists with a knife in the throat of Russia was a legitimate reason to act in self-defense.

Viewing the question in this way, however, is a mistake. There must be no reliance on a capitalist-led Russian military to defend Russia against U.S. imperialism and NATO’s military extension. Under the leadership of a reforged Fourth International, it is the job of the international working class to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism and NATO.

Making these points more explicit in our propaganda on the war in Ukraine we would win support for our position and help defeat our opponents, such as the Internationalist Group, and a free pass. As comrades can undoubtedly observe, our approach has already had formidable results in the SL/U.S. and in the International. The proceedings of the next two days must confirm this.

In this spirit I want to quote the following from Trotsky’s “A Fresh Lesson” (1938): “Absolutely not a few ‘remnants’ had gathered around me, including myself, the mover and shaker, the bunder of the Fourth International. But the monstrous work of deeducating, de-re-educating, and the immense efforts on the part of a small heroic group to contribute anything to the building of a revolutionary International!”

This, too, I believe, is the correct way. The conference is not taking place in a vacuum but in a rapidly changing world. In fact, it is becoming the most rapidly changing world that this conference is taking place.

The period of relative stability which has marked the last 30 years has come to an end. We are no longer talking about the occasional outbreak of a world crisis but of a confluence of crises, each reinforcing the other. The pandemic, the Ukraine War, inflation, economic crisis, climate catastrophes, social upheavals. We are likely only at the beginning of this cycle, which can all be tied back to the gradual weakening and breakdown of the post-Soviet order.

This political and social turmoil has particular relevance for the SL/U.S. Although the U.S. has not so far been in the eye of the storm to the extent Europe has, it is becoming the most rapidly changing world that this conference is taking place.

The presence of a Leninist vanguard party in the United States will be the qualitative factor that will determine which of these outcomes prevails.

When it comes to forging such a party, we are looking at a historical moment. This last year was tested by the course of world events and was shattered to pieces. Now we are being tested by the course of world events and were shattered to pieces. Now we are facing a much steeper road once again, facing a much steeper road ahead. Catastrophes, social upheavals. We are weakening and breakdown of the post-Soviet order.

The tasks facing the SL/U.S. are not different or separate from those facing the International as a whole. Analogous to the impact the U.S. will have in the world, the fate of the SL/U.S. will have a disproportionate impact on the fate of our International. If this conference is a success, we will come out of it with a greatly reinforced international cadre. If it fails or if we waver, we will be thrown backward once again, facing a much steeper road ahead. Catastrophes, social upheavals. We are likely only at the beginning of this cycle, which can all be tied back to the gradual weakening and breakdown of the post-Soviet order.

The historical importance and numerical weight of the SL/U.S. explains in large part why the I.S. has devoted so much of its attention to the SL/U.S. in the last six months. It is self-interest on our part: we expect SL/U.S. cadre to return many times over our efforts by joining us in rebuilding the International. Toward this, we have proceeded along the lines outlined in my report to the IEC [International Executive Committee] two years ago. On the one hand, programmatic firmness. We have made our political stance clear and

Free download: icl-fi.org/english/esp/67/
When Biden won the primary, Sanders immediately began to back-peddal and toe the corporate line, a prerequisite for his need for health care reform to getting the Democrats in office.

The Democratic Party has been campaigning on health care reform for over a century, using the issue to win elections while the health care system has decayed and become increasingly parastic. Sanders’s campaign just repeated the same one over and over more time. It did nothing to make health care better for the population. What it did achieve was to spread deep anger over the U.S. medical system into the dead end of bourgeois electoral politics.

The U.S. doesn’t have any kind of national health system because the bourgeoisie has been so successful at using racial oppression to divide the working class and weaken it. But what’s the conclusion? Black and white workers can’t be united on the basis of a reformist program, which either pits white workers against black workers in competition over a few crumbs from the bourgeoisie or has nothing special to offer black people except remain- ing in the stranglehold of the bourgeois youth and in the working class, and the oppressed will continue to be subordinated to the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Health care is not just a question of the means of production and the aspect of society, from ghettoized, rat-infested housing to dangerous working conditions to sleep deprivation and stress. To improve the health conditions of the working population requires a struggle against the bourgeoisie, including union control over safety and a reduced workweek at no loss in pay; public ownership of health facilities; and a reduced workweek at the bottom of society. To unite the working class and all the working people except remain- ing from the bourgeoisie or has nothing special to offer black people except remain- ing in the stranglehold of the bourgeois youth and in the working class, and the oppressed will continue to be subordinated to the interests of the bourgeoisie.

When Biden won the primary, Sanders immediately began to back-peddal and toe the corporate line, a prerequisite for his need for health care reform to getting the Democrats in office.

The Democratic Party has been campaigning on health care reform for over a century, using the issue to win elections while the health care system has decayed and become increasingly parastic. Sanders’s campaign just repeated the same one over and over more time. It did nothing to make health care better for the population. What it did achieve was to spread deep anger over the U.S. medical system into the dead end of bourgeois electoral politics.

The U.S. doesn’t have any kind of national health system because the bourgeoisie has been so successful at using racial oppression to divide the working class and weaken it. But what’s the conclusion? Black and white workers can’t be united on the basis of a reformist program, which either pits white workers against black workers in competition over a few crumbs from the bourgeoisie or has nothing special to offer black people except remain- ing in the stranglehold of the bourgeois youth and in the working class, and the oppressed will continue to be subordinated to the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Health care is not just a question of the means of production and the aspect of society, from ghettoized, rat-infested housing to dangerous working conditions to sleep deprivation and stress. To improve the health conditions of the working population requires a struggle against the bourgeoisie, including union control over safety and a reduced workweek at no loss in pay; public ownership of health facilities; and a reduced workweek at the bottom of society. To unite the working class and all the working people except remain- ing from the bourgeoisie or has nothing special to offer black people except remain- ing in the stranglehold of the bourgeois youth and in the working class, and the oppressed will continue to be subordinated to the interests of the bourgeoisie.
Black Trotskyism... (continued from page 1)

further explain in “For Black Trotskyism” (1963): “What is involved in working from a revolutionary standpoint is to seek neither a substitute to nor an opponent of the van-

guard party, but a united front of the largest or exclusively Negro members of the party together with the largest number of other minorities willing to fight for the same goal as the any Marxist program dealing with the Negro question.” (Bold emphasis added). I adapted to the pervasive social pres-

sure that exists in the black population, that you are not gonna be able to win white people to the fight for black libera-

tion. It’s an expression of liberalism and defeat, coming from a different place than most of you in this room. It is, nonetheless, liberalism, destructive and counterposed to fighting for revolutionary integration. It was hard for me to recognize that I was capitulating to this pressure. But once I did, I couldn’t stand it, which is why I’m able to give this report right now. It’s not just to break the liberal shackles from myself, but from everyone in the SL/U.S. and especially those in this room, to win you to the importance of and need to fight to build a Leninist party. In order to win white workers to the fight for black liberation, to the understand-

ing that there is a shared interest in fighting black oppression, you have to win them to communism. It’s the same for comrades to win our white brothers and sisters. In order to defend the interests of black people and fight for black liberation, comrades, you have to win them to a communist party. You have to fight to build a Leninist party to lead the struggles of the oppressed. Now, I think a lot of the social pressure for white comrades in the party has been guilty white liberalism. Black people who join a communist organization usually do so with a healthy dose of pure hatred for patronizing, guilty white liberalism. And it’s reflected everywhere in the U.S. from schools and the workplace to every what-it’s reflected everywhere in the U.S., from

patronizing, guilty white liberalism. Black people who are striving to meet a quota; which is what our political interventions, not because we be taken seriously based on the content of our program can lead them to liberation. That’s what this conference is about: Liberalism is nothing but the liberal bourgeoisie’s way to further the racial divide. The fight for revolutionary inte-

gration is the way to cut through it. To underscore this point, I want to talk about black oppression and how it divides the working class.

How Black Oppression Divides the Working Class

For over 150 years, the U.S. bourgeoisie has been able to prevent their wage slaves from revolting against them through the special oppression of the black popula-

tion. While the Civil War emancipated black people from chattel slavery, black people are in no way free from capital-

ism. That’s why we have to fight for black liberation. We fight for black equality inside the organization, “precious” delicate little flowers. We fight for black equality inside the organization, too. That includes the equal right for black black people to vote, to run for office, to be represented in Congress, not because if we have some quota to fill, but because if we as a party fight against the other and obscure who the real enemy responsible for their exploitation and oppression in search of an alternative. The Obama administration paved the way for Trump’s victory, which was a right-wing reaction to their existing conditions. The housing crisis, the bailout of Wall Street, the attacks on pensions, health benefits and problems that black people face as a result of the special oppression, linking these struggles to the fight for the free-

dom of the proletariat as a whole from capitalist exploitation. The struggle of the entire working class for its emancipation from capitalist wage slavery is impossible without fighting against the racial segregation and special oppression of black people. It means that black oppression cannot be reduced to an economic or trade-union question. It is necessary to have a communist program that concretely addresses the special needs and circumstances of black people as a result of their special oppression, linking these struggles to the fight for the free-

dom of the proletariat as a whole from capitalist exploitation.

Black McKay reports on black question in U.S. at Fourth Congress of the Communist International. Moscow, July 1920. The CI stressed that fight for black liberation is key to American revolution. Here’s something to consider: If you wage a really hard and uncompromising fight against liberalism, like the Interna-
tional Secretariat did with us, put a dagger through the “do-good” bleeding heart of liberalism and show how it’s not the road to liberation and why only Trotskyism, we would have a better chance of winning the oppressed layers in this society—you know, women, black people, immigrants and other oppressed minorities—to a communist program. And we would have an even better chance of winning white workers to fight for black liberation.

Now, I am not saying all this for you personally to feel guilty liberal but to under-

stand this core point. It’s not a moral ques-
tion, but a question of on what program you are gonna fight against the oppression and racist segregation of black people. One that leads to the slaughterhouse or on one based on communism, the only program that can lead them to liberation. That’s what this conference is about: Liberalism is nothing but the liberal bourgeoisie’s way to further the racial divide. The fight for revolutionary inte-

gration is the way to cut through it. To underscore this point, I want to talk about black oppression and how it divides the working class.

Claude McKay reports on black question for the Ameri-

can revolution. This is exactly what the SL/U.S. has rejected. The task during the Trump years was to fight against every form of liberalism and social-democratic opportu-

nism as a precondition for build-

ing the kind of Leninist party necessary to lead the struggle to revolutionary integration and to win black and white workers to communism. So, I want to emphasize the importance of maintaining white workers to the fight for revolution-

ary integrationism, including those that pull the party to the Republican Party.

But first let’s look at why white workers supported Trump.

White Workers and Trump

As explained in the conference docu-

ment (see page 3), in response to the dev-

estation carried out by Obama’s liberal capitalist administration, a layer of white workers turned to Trump’s racist popu-

lism in search of an alternative. The Obama administration paved the way for Trump’s victory, which was a right-wing reaction to their existing conditions. The housing crisis, the bailout of Wall Street, the attacks on pensions and the unions in general caused work-

ers to look to Trump. It was in reaction to the crippling conditions that they faced under the Obama administration. Workers voted for Trump saw his
Black Trotskyism...
(contd from page 7)

"anti-establishment" and populist rhetoric as an appealing alternative to what was offered by the so-called reformist Democrat Hillary Clinton. Extensive deindustrialization and offshoring have been happening with both Democratic and Republican administrations going back decades. Now, why wasn't it in the interest of white workers to fight for Trump?

At an LA longtime local earlier this year, I tried to sell to a white worker, and he said, "I hate the liberals and the Demo-

crats," I laughed, and said: "Well, I do, too, but we're probably coming from two different places. Let me tell you why I hate the Democrats." I only had the election leaflet to give him, because for the past nearly three years we haven't been able to put out a paper that draws a class line against liberalism, but now we will. Now, I'm sure he was a Trump supporter and no doubt a part of the white segregated local. But think about what we would have had to say to him four years ago: "Stay in the segregated local because black people are better off without you" or that he was a reactionary, white-supremacist racist yahoo, part of Trump's base. Door slammed shut.

We needed to explain how Trump wasn't the answer! Supporting one wing of your capitalist oppressors against the other will only cause housing to worsen and improve your quality of life. Capitalist rule is always for the benefit of the capitalists, at the expense of the working class, which is forced to sell its labor power in exchange for the minimum of wages in order to survive. It is against capitalist interests to improve working conditions and wages. They are driven to keep their wages low just fit enough to amass the maximum possible profits off their backs.

Workers who looked to Trump found only that his policies were the fulfillment of the degradation that occurred under Obama, culminating in lockdowns, layoffs, wage cuts and death during the pandemic. Under Biden, the conditions of the working class have only further deteriorated under the pressures of inflation and U.S. imperial-

ism's role in Ukraine. And just like every capitalist, Biden will make things worse—while he kept blacks firmly in place at the bottom of the economic pyramid and workers pit-
ted against each other. The needs of the black proletariat are diametrically opposite. They go beyond what the capitalist class will ever provide.

Addressing the Social Needs of Workers, Black People

What is actually necessary to address the basic social needs of white work-
ers (and workers in general)? There is a raging war to depress wages and lower the standard of living that is being executed against all workers by the capitalist class. The special oppression of black people at the lowest rungs of the political econ-

omy worsens the standard of living of the whole proletariat, because it keeps the working class weak and divided. White workers have a material interest in mak-
ing the struggle for black liberation their struggle, too, because it is the only way that they will make any advancements for their own emancipation from wage slavery.

Addressing the social needs of the work-
ing class for better housing and health care, and to combat unemployment and poverty, requires a revolutionary class-struggle fight against the bosses and the capitalist state. You can't wage that battle if the workers are divided by racial divi-
sions. What's necessary is a program that makes clear to all workers that the struggle against racial oppression benefits all workers and has an integral relationship to the advancement of the liberation of the whole working class.

For example, because of the apprehen-
sion of many white workers, it is neces-
sary to combine demands for equal rights and opportunities for black workers with demands aimed at assuring white workers that the benefits accruing to blacks will not be won at their expense. Therefore, in demanding that more black workers be admitted into skilled jobs, we should also raise demands aimed at increasing total employment, such as a shorter workweek with no loss in pay (30 for 40). As mentioned earlier, special demands that speak to the felt needs of black work-
ers are a crucial component of the fight for revolutionary integrationism. Against the segregation of black people in the worst neighborhoods, workers' clubs and other capitalist interests in order to integrate society. Mas-

sive public works projects are required, such as the construction of low-rent, qual-

ity integrated housing, quality integrated schools and state-of-the-art health care facili-
ties. None of the aspects of the spe-
cial oppression of the black population can be solved within the confines of U.S. capitalist rule, because they all require confronting the interests of the bourgeoisie. This means that the road to freedom for black workers lies through struggle with white workers and the rest of the class to abolish capitalism and establish a socialist society.

You can't fight the bourgeoisie if you are in bed with it, which is why the work-
ning class will never win any of the above demands under the current liberal mis-
leadership of their unions. For example, fights for union control of hiring to com-
bat racial discrimination by the bosses, for full employment and for organization of the unorganized must start in the trade unions, led by communist fractions in opposition to the reformist sellout bureaucracies. It requires fighting for leadership of the working class and splitting work-
ers away from the political agents of the bourgeoisie who run the unions and sub-
ordinate the interests of the workers to the bosses and foster racial divisions within the class. The prerequisite for meeting the demands of workers and the oppressed is breaking the working class from the grip of both the Democratic and Republican parties. Without that basic revolution against racial oppression benefits all workers and has an integral relationship to the advancement of the liberation of the whole working class. To wage class war against the bourgeoisie.

SL/U.S. Capitulated to Liberalism

Now, I want to talk about how the lib-

eral reaction to Trump further polarized society along racial lines and how the SL/U.S. capitulated to the liberal bourgeoisie.

In the Trump years, one of the main ways that the Democratic Party and liber-

tal leadership of the black struggle was by mobilizing anti-racists against the "reactionary" white workers who voted for Trump in order to increase the electoral strength of the bourgeois "anti-

racist" in the White House. This meant building an alliance of anti-racists, liberal capitalists and Democratic Party enforcers of segregation and writing off the white working class. This program was also pushed by the left, including the SL/U.S., which published the same concept of Trump's base, placing the blame for black oppression on the racism of white workers rather than the ruling class. This is fundamentally counterposed to advancing the fight for black liberation and for class unity on the basis of white workers' objective interest in combating black oppression.

Initially, WV embraced the liberal con-

cept of Trump's base, stating: "Like the roundups and detentions at the Mexican border, Trump's ban plays to his white-

supremacist base, including border guards and other law-and-order forces, whipping them up for further acts of racist violence" (emphasis added). Here WV (No. 1137, July 2018) was saying that Trump, the Republican president of U.S. imperialist rule, "plays to" the tune of his "base" of voters. This was a lie and nothing but a cover for the brutal dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, which is, in fact, responsi-

ble for racist repression. WV admitted to "the liberal bourgeoisie's alliance and its policies. WV's embrace of "Trump's base" also abided the logic of the liberal bourgeoisie and the Democratic Party in enforcing racial oppression and was a blatant capitulation to the liberal bourgeoisie's pushing responsi-

bility for black oppression onto the "back-

ward" white masses. WV produced a corrected, which in centrist fashion repu-

dated the use of the term "Trump's base" but didn't draw the unscientific conclusion that the task of communists was to fight against this poison to the working class.

What the SL/U.S. Should Have Done

What was necessary for the SL/U.S. to have done? It was the duty of the SL/U.S. to wage an uncompromising battle against liberalism. It is impossible to wage the working class on a revolutionary basis with lines like "Trump's base." It was an unprincipled rejection of the need to win white workers to the revolutionary party and to the fight for black liberation.

The SL/U.S. should have fought for the liberal leadership of the black struggle in the Trump years by advancing class unity against both the working class and the ruling class, which betray the fight for black liberation. While there are certainly racist attitudes in the work-

ing class, to blame racial oppression on those pervasive racist attitudes is a reac-
tionary strategy of the "anti-racist" in the White House. This is "plays to" the tune of his "base" of "anti-racist" white workers who voted for Trump in order to increase liberal legitimacy for black oppression onto the "back-

ward" white masses. Later, "Trump's base" also abided the logic of the liberal bourgeoisie who waves the BLM flag, directly benefits from racial division and enflames racial divisions to maintain the brutal exploitation of Amazon workers. A white Amazon worker has a much greater interest with Bezos, but every interest in common with fellow black workers.

The working class must be fought on a liberal basis but on the basis that it weakens the ability of the ruling class to divide workers against the capitalists and the ability of the black workers to combat their double oppression. Liberals who blame "Trump's base" also abided the role of the liberal bourgeoisie in enforcing racial oppression and intentionally enflames racial divisions to maintain the brutal exploitation of Amazon workers. A white Amazon worker has a much greater interest with Bezos, but every interest in common with fellow black workers.

Black Lives Matter

Lastly, I want to discuss another sig-

nificant moment during the Trump years—namely the moment associated with the call to racist police killings that saw millions of multiracial youth, workers and leftists (and many others) take to the streets in response to the cop murder of George Floyd. It was a pretty big deal, one of the largest outpour-

ings of protest in the U.S. since the civil rights movement. BLM is a popular-front movement based on a coalition that in-

cludes Democratic Party politicians, lib-

eral activists, union bureaucrats and fake socialist organizations.

For BLM to be a popular-front movement to appeal to the racist white ruling class and its politicians to recognize that "black lives matter" but to build conditions of black people is fundamentally against the interest of the capitalist rul-

ing class and the working class. There was an enormous swell of anger against the brutal exploitation of Amazon workers. A white Amazon worker has a much greater interest with Bezos, but every interest in common with fellow black workers.

The whole basis of BLM's program was to reform, which inherently collab-

orationist. They put forward a vari-

ty of either reactionary utopian or useless reform schemes to appease the racist cop ter-

tor. To call to reform the police means collaborating with the capitalist class in the defense of their class and state. It is the very role of the state is to defend capital-

ist rule, to enforce black oppression and racist segregation and to suppress workers.
**Perpault:** Well, what just happened? I’ll try to explain a little bit what happened. One Step Forward, Two Steps Back. Comrades should all go and read that after the conference. So, in the course of the first day and a half, we pretty convincingly defeated the right wing, politically crushed it. Some still held out and tried to talk, but I think they were pretty exposed by the proceedings of the two days. What this did, it compressed the center and put extreme pressure on both the right wing and the left. This is what it did. It was posed very decisively in this last point. The whole course of the conference culminated in this last point, which is also the question of the American revolution: the black question. And it posed very clearly the battle: a qualitative line—between reform and revolution. In this case, it was posed as a qualitative break with liberalism.

This process has been difficult, this conference and the period leading up to this conference have been extremely intense. High heat. Met- tles were tested. Some broke. But we need a leadership that is going to hold the line under pressure. That’s the difference between the fulls and the als on this side of the party. Many of you who can prove that they can hold the line under the most difficult circumstances and sustain that pressure. I go back to One Step Forward, Two Steps Back. I’ll explain a little bit for the comrades who are not familiar and maybe a bit younger. This book by Lenin describes the course of the 1903 conference of the RSDLP [Russian Social Democratic Labour Party], after where years of struggle the Bolshevik faction won on the program. They defeated the Economists at this conference and really waged a fight to draw a line against liberalism inside the party. We will accept unity with those who accept this qualitative break. We need the center; it is necessary to rally the center and to win the right, even. We will keep struggling.

Revolution. Cop reform is a deadly and suicidal program that keeps black people tied to the 19th century. Many protesters were met with massive state repression. Meanwhile, the BLM program leads the opposition to the racist liberal ideology and becomes a left wing force to manage the racist white ruling class and sustain that pressure. The SL/U.S. adapted to the prevailing bourgeois forces and the RSDLP agreed on a program. But then when it was posed to the line on the leadership question, the center wavered, and there was a rotten bloc. The Bolshevnik-Menshevik split—what was it? Against the Bolsheviks, it was a bloc between the center and the right who did not want to draw the conclusions of the hard, programmatic lines that had been fought for years. Now, that’s what we want to avoid.

We don’t want that split, but that is the danger comrades have to keep in mind. I’ve been warning about things during the whole proceedings of this conference. This one, really think about it. This is the main danger. The main danger is that you all have a right wing that is defeated, that is waiting in the aisles for a champion, a champion from the center, a Martov, who’s going to break with Lenin, who’s going to break with the Bolsheviks. I implore you comrades, do not do that! But as I’ve been saying lots of times during this whole process, you don’t learn from other people’s mistakes. So true! So, we will really accept unity on the basis of a qualitative break with liberalism. We will accept unity with those who accept this qualitative break. We need the center; it is necessary to rally the center and to win the right, even. We will keep struggling.

Just a little soft on the comrade who passed on this question, you didn’t do it. And it’s interesting because this qualitative line—between reform and revolution—is the key question for the U.S. It’s the black question, it’s the question of revolution, and it’s the question of leadership. And in regards to the proposed leadership that we had, in particular the fulls on the slate, the majority—when it came to testing in the fight to make a break with liberalism, to fight against liberalism in the party, the purpose of this conference—you flinched.

It’s the duty of American communists to take a stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question and to stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question, which is the key qualitative break that we need a leadership that is going to really go to bat inside the party and outside the party. This is not kind; it’s brutal. Brutal on the side of the party over this question. And like I said, I think for different reasons some of you may not have fully understood some of the questions that were involved to draw the line. And I think others just flinched.

This first part of my last report was to fight against the liberalism in the party on the black question, which is the key question for the U.S. It’s the black question, it’s the question of revolution, and it’s the question of leadership. And in regards to the proposed leadership that we had, in particular the fulls on the slate, the majority—when it came to testing in the fight to make a break with liberalism, the leadership of the party, the purpose of this conference—you flinched.

It’s the duty of American communists to take a stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question and to stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question, which is the key qualitative break that we need a leadership that is going to really go to bat inside the party and outside the party. This is not kind; it’s brutal. Brutal on the side of the party over this question. And like I said, I think for different reasons some of you may not have fully understood some of the questions that were involved to draw the line. And I think others just flinched. ■

**Jones:** The first part of my last report was to fight against the liberalism in the party on the black question, which is the key question for the U.S. It’s the black question, it’s the question of revolution, and it’s the question of leadership. And in regards to the proposed leadership that we had, in particular the fulls on the slate, the majority—when it came to testing in the fight to make a break with liberalism, to fight against liberalism in the party, the purpose of this conference—you flinched.

It’s the duty of American communists to take a stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question and to stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question, which is the key qualitative break that we need a leadership that is going to really go to bat inside the party and outside the party. This is not kind; it’s brutal. Brutal on the side of the party over this question. And like I said, I think for different reasons some of you may not have fully understood some of the questions that were involved to draw the line. And I think others just flinched. ■

**Perrault:** Well, what just happened? I’ll try to explain a little bit what happened. One Step Forward, Two Steps Back. Comrades should all go and read that after the conference. So, in the course of the first day and a half, we pretty convincingly defeated the right wing, politically crushed it. Some still held out and tried to talk, but I think they were pretty exposed by the proceedings of the two days. What this did, it compressed the center and put extreme pressure on both the right wing and the left. This is what it did. It was posed very decisively in this last point. The whole course of the conference culminated in this last point, which is also the question of the American revolution: the black question. And it posed very clearly the battle: a qualitative line—between reform and revolution. In this case, it was posed as a qualitative break with liberalism.

This process has been difficult, this conference and the period leading up to this conference have been extremely intense. High heat. Met- tles were tested. Some broke. But we need a leadership that is going to hold the line under pressure. That’s the difference between the fulls and the als on this side of the party. Many of you who can prove that they can hold the line under the most difficult circumstances and sustain that pressure.

Revolution. Cop reform is a deadly and suicidal program that keeps black people tied to the 19th century. Many protesters were met with massive state repression. Meanwhile, the BLM program leads the opposition to the racist liberal ideology and becomes a left wing force to manage the racist white ruling class and sustain that pressure. The SL/U.S. adapted to the prevailing bourgeois forces and the RSDLP agreed on a program. But then when it was posed to the line on the leadership question, the center wavered, and there was a rotten bloc. The Bolshevnik-Menshevik split—what was it? Against the Bolsheviks, it was a bloc between the center and the right who did not want to draw the conclusions of the hard, programmatic lines that had been fought for years. Now, that’s what we want to avoid.

We don’t want that split, but that is the danger comrades have to keep in mind. I’ve been warning about things during the whole proceedings of this conference. This one, really think about it. This is the main danger. The main danger is that you all have a right wing that is defeated, that is waiting in the aisles for a champion, a champion from the center, a Martov, who’s going to break with Lenin, who’s going to break with the Bolsheviks. I implore you comrades, do not do that! But as I’ve been saying lots of times during this whole process, you don’t learn from other people’s mistakes. So true! So, we will really accept unity on the basis of a qualitative break with liberalism. We will accept unity with those who accept this qualitative break. We need the center; it is necessary to rally the center and to win the right, even. We will keep struggling.

Just a little soft on the comrade who passed on this question, you didn’t do it. And it’s interesting because this qualitative line—between reform and revolution—is the key question for the U.S. It’s the black question, it’s the question of revolution, and it’s the question of leadership. And in regards to the proposed leadership that we had, in particular the fulls on the slate, the majority—when it came to testing in the fight to make a break with liberalism, the leadership of the party, the purpose of this conference—you flinched.

It’s the duty of American communists to take a stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question and to stand in defense of the revolutionary program on the black question, which is the key qualitative break that we need a leadership that is going to really go to bat inside the party and outside the party. This is not kind; it’s brutal. Brutal on the side of the party over this question. And like I said, I think for different reasons some of you may not have fully understood some of the questions that were involved to draw the line. And I think others just flinched. ■
Black Trotskyism...

(continued from page 9)

but refused to break with BLM, a liberal force whose program is to reform capitalism. As opposed to fighting to break workers from the bankruptcy of BLM’s program on a revolutionary class-struggle basis and to win them to the need to build a communist leadership of the unions, W’V’s attempt to build a labor wing of BLM.

The Task of Revolutionaries

What should we have done in response to BLM? W’V’s response should have been to counterpose the Trotskyist program against the black struggle today by making the basic point that rev-

olutionaries must break with BLM as a precondition to waging a fight for black liberation. This is the difference between acting as an independent communist pole versus being a left tail on a liberal movement whose program is to have black people manage the state that carries out their oppression.

This is a Leninist line that is being argued against the BLM popular front, that fights BLM workers from BLM’s liberal program, countering and exposing BLM’s program of struggle against black oppression. And since everyone is all hung up on transitional demands, I’m going to propose one in response to cop terror that Perrault suggested to me: For the cops to open the barrier to Maricopa Mall filet of murder and abuse of black people and the rest of the proletariat!

BLM...

(continued from page 16)

And since black liberation cannot make a single step forward without taking on these interests, a liberal movement like BLM necessarily means putting the struggle for black liberation. Therefore, the sub-

ordination of the black struggle to liberalism and to the black petty bourgeoisie is the central reason for the movement’s current paralysis and impotence.

These liberal shackles must be broken— not as in the ’60s by black nationalism, which is just another dead end—but by a revolutionary working-class program. This raises two interrelated tasks for revolution-

aries: first, to fight for a left-wing working-class break with liberalism; and second, to win activists involved in the BLM move-

tment to Trotskyism, the only program which can bring about black liberation. But where have the so-called revolu-

tionaries been? They have been support-

From Baton Rouge in 2016 (left) to Texas in June 2020 (right), millions outraged by police violence mobilized around BLM’s liberal program, achieving nothing but the election of Biden as a new overseer. We seek to break militants from BLM liberalism and win them to a communist program.

BLM

From the frontlines of the Koja American

aries... — but as in the ’60s by black nationalism, which is just another dead end—but by a revolutionary working-class program. This raises two interrelated tasks for revolu-

From Baton Rouge in 2016 (left) to Texas in June 2020 (right), millions outraged by police violence mobilized around BLM’s liberal program, achieving nothing but the election of Biden as a new overseer. We seek to break militants from BLM liberalism and win them to a communist program.

BLM

From the frontlines of the Koja American

aries... — but as in the ’60s by black nationalism, which is just another dead end—but by a revolutionary working-class program. This raises two interrelated tasks for revolu-

From Baton Rouge in 2016 (left) to Texas in June 2020 (right), millions outraged by police violence mobilized around BLM’s liberal program, achieving nothing but the election of Biden as a new overseer. We seek to break militants from BLM liberalism and win them to a communist program.

BLM
ruling class spreads racist prejudice against black people in order to keep the oppressed divided and at each other’s throats. In response to this, black nationalism and liberal identity politics present all black people as having a commonality of interests against the dominant white population. Despite being generally espoused in reaction to brutality, division and oppression, these programs are fundamentally false and are obstacles to black liberation.

All black people in the U.S. are oppressed due to the color of their skin, but they do not form a homogenous bloc. The black cultural and business elite draws a large part of its success from the maintains of the liberal Black bourgeoisie. Lacking the resources to compete with the white elites who dominate the U.S. economy, this prosperous, well-organized and segregated black population can find a captive and receptive market in which they can have disproportionate influence. While buying black, guilt-tripped Hollywood into hiring more black actors and electing more black politicians is good for the careers of the black petty bourgeoisie, it does nothing for the black masses and, in fact, subordinates their needs to the distinctly pro-capitalist ambitions of this layer.

WV has two answers to overcome racial polarization. The first was using Lenin’s call for a party that is a tribute of the people, for all workers’ demands, and to reject the liberal formula (more on this later). The second is the classic social-democratic program of struggle against capitalist class and struggle. Part Two of the article quoted earlier makes a long list of demands which will not do this, and is, in fact, a total obstacle to this program.

Fine words, but the whole presentation promotes the illusion that such demands can be fought for without a revolutionary leadership in the working class. So, why do you need revolutionary leadership to overcome the racial division in the United States? Comrades in the SL/U.S. are wedded to the idea that all you need to do is raise good demands and the racial divide will be overcome. This is wrong. Revolutionary leadership is key. There has been plenty of economic struggle by the American working class, and while it can temporarily bridge the racial divide, that divide will emerge on a larger scale through the process of trade-union struggle. Increasing the size of the economic pie given to workers without attacking the white ruling class at the bottom and receive a proportionally smaller portion will maintain the basis for racial antagonisms.

Trade-union economics, which ignores the specific needs of black workers, will generate resentment and discord and can only fuel black nationalism. In turn, black nationalism proposes to redress the consequences of black capitalism through separation and the black bourgeoisie. But raising good demands and the racial divide will not be overcome on the basis of Black capitalism. The most basic measures will require momentous battles that confront the capitalist class and the state. Such battles cannot be won while the working class is blindfolded by trade unionism. It’s not just about having a bunch of demands that are useless without a leadership that can fight for and win them.

The working-class struggle can be achieved only through white workers understanding that it is in their own class interests to only temporarily unite in struggle against the common enemy but also to champion the struggle for full black equality, which itself cannot be achieved within the boundaries of capitalism. The working class can be united only around a program that connects struggle and integration. Trade unionism does not do this, and is, in fact, a total obstacle to this program.

4. Workers Movement

BLM has mainly been a petty-bourgeois movement which has not intersected much working-class struggle. The main call raised by Left Voice, the IG and the SL/U.S. has been for the working class to fight in defense of black people. Here’s Left Voice’s version (leftvoice.org, 25 May 2022): “SEIU called for a Strike for Black Lives in coordination of the IWW West Coast program has been much closer to that of the IG. The IG responds with its more “militant, internationalist” program—internationalist.org, 10 July 2020.

But the IG notes this truth only to better represent bourgeois liberalism. BLM is itself a bourgeois liberal force! The task of revolutionaries is not to merely observe the existence of the class line, but to clearly draw it in the course of struggle. In the case of BLM, that means fighting to break its mil itants from the liberal politics of BLM.

To the openly liberal slogan of BLM, the IG responds with its more “militant, international” slogan. But this is utterly meaningless because the IG’s propaganda is focused on liberal outrage and exposure of BLM’s internationalism, entirely compatible and acceptable to the liberal politics of BLM.

The class line can only be drawn by showing how BLM liberalism betrays black liberation, and counterposing to it a revolutionary program for black liberation that goes beyond what is acceptable to liberals. The IG (as well as our press in the past) points to class independence from the Democrats, talks about revolution as the solution, but does not conclude from this that the task of communists is to break with the Democrats, that is to build a counterposed revolutionary pole for black liberation and socialism. This is the fundamental capitalism.

6. The Revolutionary Party

Throughout WV articles on BLM—and in most of its articles dealing with special oppression—we claim we want to build a revolutionary party and refer to Lenin’s conception of the party as a “tribune of the people.” In fact, the SL/U.S. program has been much closer to that of the Economist Martov than Lenin’s.

Just like the SL/U.S., Martov justified dumbing down the tasks of the party with the argument that current consciousness of the workers. From this, he drew the conclusion: “Since in ordinary times various social strata are in general satisfied with the existing order, it is, therefore, clear that we Social-Democrats cannot sink to the level of the activities of various opposition strata, we cannot dictate to them a positive programme of action, we cannot point out to them in what manner they should wage a day-by-day struggle for their interests.”

The liberal strata will themselves take care of the active struggle for their immediate interests, the struggle that will bring them face-to-face with our political programme...—VI Lenin, What Is To Be Done?]

To put this in the context of the black question, we, just like the Economists of Lenin’s time, did not put forward a positive programme of action, did not point out how to wage the day-to-day struggle and abandoned the slogan for a revolution in the leadership to the liberals. Lenin also quotes Martov arguing that the petty-bourgeois leadership espoused in reaction to brutal discrimination, the white population. Despite being generally anti-liberal, the IG responds with its more “militant, internationalist” program, entirely compatible and obscure the class line, and with their “right,” the leaders of the black bourgeoisie cross that line seeking political alliances with bourgeois liberal forces...—internationalist.org, 10 July 2020.

We must take up ourselves the task of opposing an all-round political struggle under the leadership of our Party in such a manner as to make it possible for all oppositional strata to render their fullest assistance to the movement of the masses. We must train our Social-Democratic party not just to present itself as the leaders of the masses, but also to guide all the manifestations of this all-round struggle, able at the right time toicticate a positive programme of action for the aroused masses in the interests of the Vanguard Party—in the interests of the working-class and the petite bourgeoisie...—Lenin, What Is To Be Done?

WV articles on BLM, which merely write long tirades exposures of the abuses against black people while dissolving hopes in political reform. Blacks don’t need WV and the Internal
to tell them how brutal police are. As Lenin responded to Martov, they will find out directly from the police. "Opportunist leftists see the present political police as liberal only because they use the tribune of liberalism to obscure the class line, and with their "right," the leaders of the black bourgeoisie cross that line seeking political alliances with bourgeois liberal forces...—internationalist.org, 10 July 2020.

Chicago. 6 August 1966: "Don’t the white police attack by racist mob. "Preaching of liberalism on the class line can only be drawn by showing how BLM liberalism betrays black liberation, and counterposing to it a revolutionary programme for black liberation that goes beyond what is acceptable to liberals. The IG (as well as our press in the past) points to class independence from the Democrats, talks about revolution as the solution, but does not conclude from this that the task of communists is to break with the Democrats, that is to build a counterposed revolutionary pole for black liberation and socialism. This is the fundamental capitalism.

The class line can only be drawn by showing how BLM liberalism betrays black liberation, and counterposing to it a revolutionary program for black liberation that goes beyond what is acceptable to liberals. The IG (as well as our press in the past) talks about class independence from the Democrats, talks about revolution as the solution, but does not conclude from this that the task of communists is to break with the Democrats, that is to build a counterposed revolutionary pole for black liberation and socialism. This is the fundamental capitalism.

The class line can only be drawn by showing how BLM liberalism betrays black liberation, and counterposing to it a revolutionary program for black liberation that goes beyond what is acceptable to liberals. The IG (as well as our press in the past) talks about class independence from the Democrats, talks about revolution as the solution, but does not conclude from this that the task of communists is to break with the Democrats, that is to build a counterposed revolutionary pole for black liberation and socialism. This is the fundamental capitalism.

Lenin: “To the openly liberal slogan of BLM, the IG responds with its more “militant, international” slogan. But this is utterly meaningless because the IG’s propaganda is focused on liberal outrage and exposure of BLM’s internationalism, entirely compatible and acceptable to the liberal politics of BLM.

The class line can only be drawn by showing how BLM liberalism betrays black liberation, and counterposing to it a revolutionary program for black liberation that goes beyond what is acceptable to liberals. The IG (as well as our press in the past) talks about class independence from the Democrats, talks about revolution as the solution, but does not conclude from this that the task of communists is to break with the Democrats, that is to build a counterposed revolutionary pole for black liberation and socialism. This is the fundamental capitalism.

The class line can only be drawn by showing how BLM liberalism betrays black liberation, and counterposing to it a revolutionary program for black liberation that goes beyond what is acceptable to liberals. The IG (as well as our press in the past) talks about class independence from the Democrats, talks about revolution as the solution, but does not conclude from this that the task of communists is to break with the Democrats, that is to build a counterposed revolutionary pole for black liberation and socialism. This is the fundamental capitalism.
Enough Defeats! — Workers Need a Program for Victory!

The following article is translated from O Kommunistiko Pan-Epithorisi (No. 7, December 2022) published by our comrades of the Trotskyist Group of Greece.

The imperialists, along with the Greek ruling class, have ravaged the country. Ever greater imperialist enslavement is paid for with the blood of working people: deportation of ports and shipyards, factory closures; attacks on unions, on health care, on education and on union rights. Inflation is increasing the cost of basic goods and electricity. One crisis follows another: the crisis which began more than ten years ago, Germany’s overturn of the result of the 2015 referendum on European Union (EU) austerity, Syriza’s sellout to the EU and the banks, the government’s disastrous policies in the pandemic and in the Ukraine war, the current crisis. The masses have been impoverished, the lower layers of the petty bourgeoisie ruined. Their immediate need is to link every fight into their hands with the basic pillar of the capitalist system: private ownership of the means of production.

Struggle now is urgently needed to meet the needs of working people and to link that with the fight to liberate the country from imperialist subjugation and establish a workers government. The working class cannot take power into their hands, sweep away all the useless parasites and run the country from top to bottom. With the working class in charge and the profit motive cut out, the scourges of price gouging, unemployment and expensive housing can all be rapidly eliminated.

But why is it that—in a country where socialism is part of the everyday vocabulary of the whole of the left, where there is a mass Communist Party (KKE) and a proletariat that has fought like no other—Greece is not imperialist but a country subjugated by imperialism. Accordingly, it is opportunist to recognize the fact that Greece is not imperialist but a country subjugated by imperialism. Accordingly, the struggle for national emancipation—which has to be at the center of the revolutionary program—is also opportunist, because it lets the local bourgeoisie off the hook. The KKE writes:

“On a political level, this opportunism conceals the KKE’s program of revolutionary transformation of society. A revolutionary program is a precondition even for the struggle for reforms. But the KKE’s program is as much an obstacle to that struggle as it is to the realization of a workers revolution. It is reformist on fundamental questions—on the state, on emancipation from imperialist enslavement, on common struggle of Greek and Turkish workers, etc. It is urgently necessary to replace the workers’ existing leadership with leaders whose program for the immediate betterment of the masses’ living conditions is an integral part of a broader strategy to bring the working class to power.”

The KKE creates a false dilemma, counterposing the struggle against imperialism to the struggle to overthrow the national bourgeoisie. The revolutionary struggle to break the imperialist yoke does not weaken but rather strengthens the political differentiation of classes. The local bourgeoisie has a solid rear guard behind it in imperialism, which will always help it with money and arms against the workers. Everything the oppressed and exploited masses do to stand on their feet inevitably pushes the national bourgeoisie into an open bloc with the imperialists. To fight against imperialism, one must necessarily fight against the national bourgeoisie.

The KKE believes that the struggle against imperialism leads to conciliating the Greek bourgeoisie. This is indeed a danger in the absence of a revolutionary perspective against imperialism. That is what happened in the 1940s when the Stalinists formed a popular front in the name of fighting fascism, collaborating with the Greek bourgeoisie as well as with the “progressive” imperialists (British and American). (See “Greece 1940s: A Revolution Betrayed,” Spartacist [English language edition] No. 64, Summer 2014.) Indeed, the program of class conciliation must be rejected; the workers have to do that is not by refusing to fight against imperialism but by fighting it.

The KKE says that the struggle against the imperialists “shifts the class dividing line from inside the country to outside (to the ‘managers,’ to the IMF, to the German, etc.).” In other words, if the workers fight in the first place mainly against the IMF and the German bourgeoisie, that is opportunism. With this reasoning and the argument that “capitalism in Greece is in an autonomous development, in an intermediate position in the international imperialist system,” they deny that the workers can and must fight against the imperialists. They disappear the decisive role of the working class in Greece as a subjugated country. Their argument rejects the struggle for national and class liberation. Let’s see how the struggle for basic needs is tied to the struggle against imperialism. The KKE calculates “the debt of worker’s people’s households and for professionals,” “abolition of the property tax on worker’s peoples’ households” and “abolition of debts to banks and the tax office” (Panuperiaki No. 15, September 2022).

We agree. But how will that happen and who will do it? A workers or a bourgeois government? The KKE doesn’t tell us, so we’ll answer for them. Can the debts be canceled without the expropriation of the banks by the proletariat? No. In order to cancel the debts we must nationalize the interests of the imperialists, the banks and the local ruling class, who have burdened the country from imperialist enslavement and established a workers government. The working class cannot take power into their hands, sweep away all the useless parasites and run the country from top to bottom. With the working class in charge and the profit motive cut out, the scourges of price gouging, unemployment and expensive housing can all be rapidly eliminated.

But why is it that—in a country where socialism is part of the everyday vocabulary of the whole of the left, where there is a mass Communist Party (KKE) and a proletariat that has fought like no other—Greece is not imperialist but a country subjugated by imperialism. Accordingly, it is opportunist to recognize the fact that Greece is not imperialist but a country subjugated by imperialism. Accordingly, the struggle for national emancipation—which has to be at the center of the revolutionary program—is also opportunist, because it lets the local bourgeoisie off the hook. The KKE writes:

“On a political level, this opportunism conceals the KKE’s program of revolutionary transformation of society. A revolutionary program is a precondition even for the struggle for reforms. But the KKE’s program is as much an obstacle to that struggle as it is to the realization of a workers revolution. It is reformist on fundamental questions—on the state, on emancipation from imperialist enslavement, on common struggle of Greek and Turkish workers, etc. It is urgently necessary to replace the workers’ existing leadership with leaders whose program for the immediate betterment of the masses’ living conditions is an integral part of a broader strategy to bring the working class to power.”

The KKE creates a false dilemma, counterposing the struggle against imperialism to the struggle to overthrow the national bourgeoisie. The revolutionary struggle to break the imperialist yoke does not weaken but rather strengthens the political differentiation of classes. The local bourgeoisie has a solid rear guard behind it in imperialism, which will always help it with money and arms against the workers. Everything the oppressed and exploited masses do to stand on their feet inevitably pushes the national bourgeoisie into an open bloc with the imperialists. To fight against imperialism, one must necessarily fight against the national bourgeoisie.

The KKE believes that the struggle against imperialism leads to conciliating the Greek bourgeoisie. This is indeed a danger in the absence of a revolutionary perspective against imperialism. That is what happened in the 1940s when the Stalinists formed a popular front in the name of fighting fascism, collaborating with the Greek bourgeoisie as well as with the “progressive” imperialists (British and American). (See “Greece 1940s: A Revolution Betrayed,” Spartacist [English language edition] No. 64, Summer 2014.) Indeed, the program of class conciliation must be rejected; the workers have to do that is not by refusing to fight against imperialism but by fighting it.

The KKE says that the struggle against the imperialists “shifts the class dividing line from inside the country to outside (to the ‘managers,’ to the IMF, to the German, etc.).” In other words, if the workers fight in the first place mainly against the IMF and the German bourgeoisie, that is opportunism. With this reasoning and the argument that “capitalism in Greece is in an autonomous development, in an intermediate position in the international imperialist system,” they deny that the workers can and must fight against the imperialists. They disappear the decisive role of the working class in Greece as a subjugated country. Their argument rejects the struggle for national and class liberation. Let’s see how the struggle for basic needs is tied to the struggle against imperialism. The KKE calls for “cancelling the debt of worker’s people’s households and for professionals,” “abolition of the property tax on worker’s peoples’ households” and “abolition of debts to banks and the tax office” (Panuperiaki No. 15, September 2022).

We agree. But how will that happen and who will do it? A workers or a bourgeois government? The KKE doesn’t tell us, so we’ll answer for them. Can the debts be canceled without the expropriation of the banks by the proletariat? No. In order to cancel the debts we must nationalize the interests of the imperialists, the banks and the local ruling class, who have burdened...
the masses with an enormous national debt. It is the task of revolutionaries to fight against the imperialists and the banks. Abolish business and banking secrecy—open the books! Banks in the hands of the workers: In 2015 no interest in paying the debt by means of which the imperialists have sucked the blood of the Greek people. The KKE means that we can take power now. Yes. Only a revolutionary workers government fighting against all the tools of the capitalists can win this war. However, this can only be realized by a revolutionary party which puts national and class emancipation at the center of its program.

The KKE also calls: “For a workers government that can expropriate the banks. Abolish business and banking secrecy—open the books!” Banks in the hands of the workers: In 2015 no interest in paying the debt by means of which the imperialists have sucked the blood of the Greek people. The KKE means that we can take power now. Yes. Only a revolutionary workers government fighting against all the tools of the capitalists can win this war. However, this can only be realized by a revolutionary party which puts national and class emancipation at the center of its program.

No objection. But how do we get from where we are today to using all the mod- ern possibilities to satisfy working people’s needs so that these become “social property,” and how will the people be “at the helm of power”? That remains a mys- tery. Here we have two banks of a river but with no bridge to link them. The KKE walks on the path of social democracy, dividing its program into a minimum pro- gram limited to the demands of the working class, as in the strike, and a max- imum program of “scientific, centralized planning—with the toilers, the people, at the helm of power” relegated to a foggy, idealistic dream. Here we have two banks of a river but with no bridge to link them. The KKE walks on the path of social democracy, dividing its program into a minimum pro- gram limited to the demands of the working class, as in the strike, and a max- imum program of “scientific, centralized planning—with the toilers, the people, at the helm of power” relegated to a foggy, idealistic dream.

Our TOE comrades called for “No” vote in 2015 referendum on EU austerity, allied to forming a workers government. KKE’s refusal to call for “No” vote, rejection of our united-front call for workers action committees, brought huge defeat for workers.

The Lessons of 2015
In 2015, after years of brutal austerity when the proletariat was fighting tooth and nail, the country reached a turning point. To divert the angry struggles of the masses into safer channels, Syriza, then the ruling party, tried to deceive workers that it could champion the struggle against imperialist subjugation. Indeed, there were many illusions that Syriza would get a better deal when the imperialists, and it would fight against the imperialists.

In 2015, Syriza held a referendum on EU-dictated austerity, hoping for a “yes” vote. That would have been the best out- come from the bourgeois point of view. They would then a mandate to devastate the prole- tariat. For revolutionaries, opposition to imperialism is not simply a question of tactics but a principle of principle. Our task was to expose the fact that Syriza was incapable of leading a fight against the imperialists and to show the masses that only a proletarian leadership can bring about their emancipation. The only re- volutionary position on the referendum was “no,” with no support to the government. The KKE leadership criminally refused to take a position against the imperialists and called on workers to spoil their ballots, in order to win the “yes” vote. The victory of the "no" vote was a loud and clear mes- sage that the imperialist parasites could go to hell, and it cannot stand up against the KKE, which weakened the struggle against imperialism. The referendum result showed that the masses were determined to fight. In the face of the result and massive protests, the whole mini-machinery of the political world turned white. His imperialist bosses said: “You have won, but Greece has lost.” The masses had been defeated before the ref- erendum. But following the “no” vote, its overturning by Germany and Syriza’s capitulation to the government, the 2015 was understood and exposed. What was posed was an open confrontation with the imperialists and the local bourgeoisie.

The role of revolutionaries was to pro- vide a revolutionary pole to transform the rage of the masses into a revolutionary situation. The working class had to be organized to fight. We said “ENOUGH!” and organized a campaign with precisely that objective. We directed attention toward unions and left organizations and fought to build workers action committees. It is impossible to deal with the struggle against imperialism subjugation with the overthrow of all the oppressors and the formation of a workers government. We did not demand the KKE and the left literally went on holi- day. They criminally refused to take up our call to form a united front in bringing about an enormous defeat for the workers. The KKE leadership, with its potential role in organizing workers move- ment, has the greatest responsibility. It clearly did not want to lead the workers in a struggle against the euro and the EU when it was posed concretely, thus rescu- ing the local capitalists and strengthening the empire. To justify its position, the KKE claims to this day that voting down the austerity measure was drawn from the bloc of the middle (ME, EU and European Central Bank) was equivalent to an indirect vote for Syriza’s own austerity package and, by extension, support for its government. This position sounds orthodox in that it apparently supports both the imperialists and the capitalists. However, the Stalinists fall into ultrafascism. This arises from the KKE position that Greece is an impe- rialist country and leads to a betrayal of the struggle for national liberation. The KKE leadership criminally refused to take a position against the imperialist subjugation counterposed to the fight against the national bourgeoisie leads inevitably, as shown in 2015, to capitulation to both the imperialists and the bourgeoisie. Break with the treach- erous leadership of the KKE! For the reforging of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution!

For Common Class Struggle of Turkish and Greek Workers
It is important for the working class to understand that in every serious struggle it undertakes, the capitalists will attempt to fragment such struggles in order to create chaos and unite the KKE is itself the vehicle for control over the KKE. At best, they make left criti- cisms of the KKE in order to pressure it to capitulate to the KKE. In 2015, after years of brutal austerity when the proletariat was fighting tooth and nail, the country reached a turning point. To divert the angry struggles of the masses into safer channels, Syriza, then the ruling party, tried to deceive workers that it could champion the struggle against imperialist subjugation. Indeed, there were many illusions that Syriza would get a better deal when the imperialists, and it would fight against the imperialists.

In 2015, Syriza held a referendum on EU-dictated austerity, hoping for a “yes” vote. That would have been the best out- come from the bourgeois point of view. They would then a mandate to devastate the prole- tariat. For revolutionaries, opposition to imperialism is not simply a question of tactics but a principle of principle. Our task was to expose the fact that Syriza was incapable of leading a fight against the imperialists and to show the masses that only a proletarian leadership can bring about their emancipation. The only re- volutionary position on the referendum was “no,” with no support to the government. The KKE leadership criminally refused to take a position against the imperialists and called on workers to spoil their ballots, in order to win the “yes” vote. The victory of the "no" vote was a loud and clear mes- samage that the imperialist parasites could go to hell, and it cannot stand up against the KKE, which weakened the struggle against imperialism. The referendum result showed that the masses were determined to fight. In the face of the result and massive protests, the whole mini-machinery of the political world turned white. His imperialist bosses said: “You have won, but Greece has lost.” The masses had been defeated before the ref- erendum. But following the “no” vote, its overturning by Germany and Syriza’s capitulation to the government, the 2015 was understood and exposed. What was posed was an open confrontation with the imperialists and the local bourgeoisie.

The role of revolutionaries was to pro- vide a revolutionary pole to transform the rage of the masses into a revolutionary situation. The working class had to be organized to fight. We said “ENOUGH!” and organized a campaign with precisely that objective. We directed attention toward unions and left organizations and fought to build workers action committees. It is impossible to deal with the struggle against imperialism subjugation with the overthrow of all the oppressors and the formation of a workers government. We did not demand the KKE and the left literally went on holi- day. They criminally refused to take up our call to form a united front in bringing about an enormous defeat for the workers. The KKE leadership, with its potential role in organizing workers move- ment, has the greatest responsibility. It clearly did not want to lead the workers in a struggle against the euro and the EU when it was posed concretely, thus rescu- ing the local capitalists and strengthening the empire. To justify its position, the KKE claims to this day that voting down the austerity measure was drawn from the bloc of the middle (ME, EU and European Central Bank) was equivalent to an indirect vote for Syriza’s own austerity package and, by extension, support for its government. This position sounds orthodox in that it apparently supports both the imperialists and the capitalists. However, the Stalinists fall into ultrafascism. This arises from the KKE position that Greece is an impe- rialist country and leads to a betrayal of the struggle for national liberation. The KKE leadership criminally refused to take a position against the imperialist subjugation counterposed to the fight against the national bourgeoisie leads inevitably, as shown in 2015, to capitulation to both the imperialists and the bourgeoisie. Break with the treach- erous leadership of the KKE! For the reforging of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution!

Everywhere So That the People...

The KKE openly upholds the aims of the Greek bourgeoisie against imperialist bases in Greece, Turkey and the Balkans! Out of the EU/euro! For the ruling class, we demand a new crisis of the ruling class: Greek workers will not be deflected from the working-class struggle against capitalism.
Editorial...

(continued from page 2)

and the more openly bigoted bourgeois anti-liberalism of the Democrats.

The conservative leadership of the Democrats has been using the race divide by blaming white workers for racial oppression, driving them into the arms of reaction. White workers become resentful for being blamed, and black people become resentful for the failure of liberalism to achieve any real gain. As a result, black people go down non-revolutionary roads, like identity politics, despising the prospect of giving black people a voice in the fight for black liberation, because they know spineless white liberals won't defend them.

It was a criminal betrayal that much of the left, including the SL/U.S. for a time, paid tribute to Trump's base, saying that the white "deporable" workers who voted for Trump, i.e., "Trump's base," are responsible for racism, while the racism is perpetuated by the white working class as a whole. Revisionism, the vicious cycle of racial division—needed to be poisoned—which wrote off large swaths of black people across the country, i.e., "Trump's base," are responsible for racism, while the racism is perpetuated by the white working class as a whole. Revisionism, the vicious cycle of racial division—needed to be poisoned—which wrote off large swaths of black people across the country, i.e., "Trump's base," are responsible for racism, while the racism is perpetuated by the white working class as a whole. Revisionism, the vicious cycle of racial division—needed to be poisoned—which wrote off large swaths of black people across the country, i.e., "Trump's base," are responsible for racism, while the racism is perpetuated by the white working class as a whole.

What is posed is not to make black people like white people or to make white people empathize with black people, but to win an alliance of white workers to fight racism, because black people need white workers to liberate themselves, and white workers need black workers to liberate themselves. To make that happen requires a struggle against liberal- ism in all its forms—bourgeois liberalism as well as guilt white liberalism.

Racial divisions and the liberal poison that they can only be combated with the program of revolutionary integrationism. That is the understanding that the need to unite black and white requires communist leadership. The needs of the black population and the working class go beyond what the capitalist class will ever provide. It is impossible to fight to get rid of capitalism without fighting against the racial divisions of capitalism by the white working class and black people and for their integration into society on an equal basis. On every front—health care, housing, the capitalist lib- eration, unionization, etc.—the proletariat in the U.S. requires a communist program for the defense of the working class. The struggle to win the white working class to the struggle against black oppression is a necessary lever to advance the fight for socialist revolution.

The Struggle at the SL/U.S. Conference

To pursue its emancipation, the working class—the black working class that can lead it in the struggle against the capitalist class. That party can only be built through struggle against every obstacle that binds workers and the oppressed to the capitalist order and sells out their struggles. That betrays those which mask its accommodation of liberalism with revolutionary rhetoric, is the most dangerous of these obstacles. But to clear these obstacles, just as the class requires the revolutionary party, the party as well requires a revolutionary leadership.

The principal struggle at the conference was between those who fought for com- munist leadership based on a complete break with liberalism and the centrists, who refused to fight for such a break and availed themselves of the liberal path. As the conference progressed, there was less and less room for centrism. This came to a head at the conference when the question, which is the strategic question for the American revolution and the one where the pressures of liberalism are most intense. The "For Black Trotskyism" presenta- tion confronted head-on the longstanding anti-liberalism of the party, explained the different pressures operating on different comrades, frankly detailed liberal tendencies inside the party, exposed the hypocrisy of liberalism as well as outside the party and insisted that both black and white comrades break with liberalism, as well as white comrades identify with anti-liberal racism. Many comrades defensively resisted with guilty white liberalism, while some others were in full agreement with anti-liberal racism. frying the Russian evil. Rightist elements regurgitated the same slogans would put us back on course. They assured the body that they cared about black people and made empty appeals for black and white unity. This response was possible only if viewing the report through a liberal lens, that is, viewing its analysis of liberalism's harmfulness as incapable of shaking them rather than pointing to the communist way forward. A revolutionary party must be the voice of the oppressed and the more advanced black and white workers to a communist program.

The International Executive Commit- tee approved the report, recognizing that it was necessary to wage war against the black liberalism inside the party and to add the central question of the revolu- tion. As Lenin stressed, that was the political split between the conciliators and oppo- nents of liberalism was posed. A response of the party was to kick the box—just like WV articles did—and raise abstractly correct arguments about revolutionary integrationism, the dangers of liberalism and the fight for communist leadership. But they refused to break with liberalism and the white working class to the struggle for black liberation to advance. Winning the fight for a communist movement for black people is impossible without the white working class.

The KKE's reformist program is at the service of the bourgeois state, because black people need a party that is not afraid to smash the capitalist state and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is the fundamental dividing line between reform and revolution. That is the understanding that the need to unite black and white requires communist leadership. The needs of the black population and the working class go beyond what the capitalist class will ever provide. It is impossible to fight to get rid of capitalism without fighting against the racial divisions of capitalism by the white working class and black people and for their integration into society on an equal basis. On every front—health care, housing, the capitalist liberation, unionization, etc.—the proletariat in the U.S. requires a communist program for the defense of the working class. The struggle to win the white working class to the struggle against black oppression is a necessary lever to advance the fight for socialist revolution.

Revolution, 1905-1907: December 1907). In opposition to the KKE's hush the state can be reformed, the working peo- ple must be conscious that they cannot not only not take over the existing state apparatus and wield it in their interests. It is necessary to smash the capitalist state and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is the fundamental dividing line between reform and revolution.

The KKE's reformist program is at the heart of why general strikes are carried out in the form of "anti-establishment." The logic is that even the struggle for reforms has to be part of a revolutionary program with the goal of a workers state and the fighting for a communist revolution.

We need a real general strike which works for:

- For industrialization of the country to create additional jobs!
- For a free, quality health care system for all!
- For workers' control of food distribution and prices!
- Cancel the debt! Down with the EU and the IMF!
- For the national liberation of Greece through socialist revolution!

We need the active participation of the party that Lenin and Trotsky would be proud of.
At the end of January, video footage was released of Tyre Nichols, a 29-year-old black FedEx worker, being pulverized by Memphis, Tennessee, cops and left for dead. This recent episode of murderous police terror enraged many black people, workers and activists. But unlike when millions mobilized in BLM protests in 2020, that anger did not pour out into the streets. There is plenty of bitterness toward BLM, which has achieved nothing for black people—it only helped elect Biden as overseer of American capitalism. Despite all the time and energy expended, this country remains a recurring racist hellscape for black people. The rest of the left has no real explanation for this impasse and no solution. The presentation below, given by I.S. Secretary G. Perrault in New York City last summer as part of the fight against the programmatic liquidation of the SL/U.S., explains why the black struggle is paralyzed and provides the communist answer for how to overcome it.

There have been two main waves of BLM protests in the U.S. At their peak in 2020, millions of people were in the streets. What have the results been? Well, Biden is in the White House, and Derek Chauvin is in jail. But when it comes to the conditions of black people in the U.S., they have only gotten worse. Blacks are gunned down as always, and the living conditions that are dreadful in normal times are getting ever more wretched due to rising inflation and other consequences of the pandemic. That BLM has not led to any significant progress for black people is pretty obvious and uncontroversial. The real question is: why?

Black people are segregated at the bottom of American society. Any significant progress toward social integration and equality—whether it is ending police brutality, integrated housing, high-quality health care, free, integrated education—requires confronting the fundamental interests of the American capitalist class. You cannot resolve a single one of these questions while staying within the confines of capitalist America.

BLM, on the other hand, is a liberal movement for police reform. You just have to look at its main slogan—“black lives matter”—to see that it is not a call for freedom, for power, but an appeal to the ruling class to “care” about black people. The movement is based on a coalition going from liberal capitalists to unions to pseudo-Marxists. It is a classic popular-frontist movement whose entire political program and composition guarantees from the outset that it will not pose any challenge to capitalist interests.

For a KKE/PAME Workers Government!

We print below a translation of a leaflet issued by the Trotskyist Group of Greece. Our comrades distributed over 1,000 copies at a March 12 rally of tens of thousands headed up by the rail workers union. The protest was called by the Communist Party (KKE), the PAME trade-union organization, unions and student groups.

The Tempe rail crash, which left 57 dead and many injured, is the result of decades of vicious austerity and privatizations dictated by the EU and the U.S. imperialists. After the 2015 defeat [Syriza government’s overturning of the referendum result against more EU austerity], the working class has found itself waging defensive struggles, frustrated and facing one defeat after another. The crime committed at Tempe has brought forth enormous rage among the masses. In the massive strike on March 8, the working people said, “ENOUGH!” and demonstrated their readiness to fight against the consequences of austerity. For the first time since 2015, the working class is on the counterattack, putting the bourgeoisie and the New Democracy (ND) government on the defensive. In contrast to 2012 and 2015, there are far fewer illusions in Syriza. It is clear that ND, PASOK and Syriza are equally responsible for the suffering of the masses. To hell with all of them!

With the anger of the masses at a boiling point and elections approaching, the question is: who will run the country? The needs of the workers are clear: Cancel the debt! Overturn the austerity packages! Out of the EU and NATO! In order to achieve those demands, a general offensive of the working masses is necessary. The main question is who will lead this struggle to victory. Nobody on the left has a clear answer. We call for a workers government of the KKE/PAME!

continued on page 10

Fight Now To:
• Cancel the Debt!
• Throw out the Austerity Packages!
• Out of EU/NATO!

continued on page 13