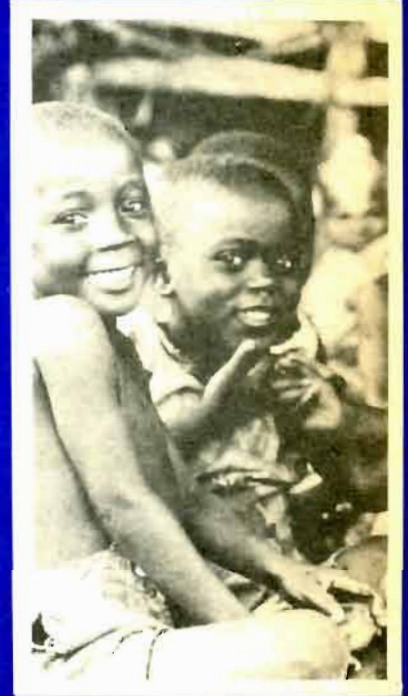


THE SPLIT

of the weather
underground organization



**STRUGGLING AGAINST
WHITE AND MALE SUPREMACY**

COMPILED AND EDITED BY JOHN BROWN BOOK CLUB

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PRAIRIE FIRE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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PFOC including the entire section
on women's oppression and libera-
tion, which was written by Prairie
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introduction

During the last year and a half, John Brown Book Club has reprinted and distributed Osawatomie, the voice of the Weather Underground Organization. The final issue of Osawatomie (June-July, 1976) marked the end of an era in the WUO and the intensification of an organization-wide political struggle. That struggle exposed and defeated the political line that led the WUO for the last 2½ years and split the organization.

The WUO rode on its reputation as a revolutionary anti-imperialist organization gained through its history of armed actions and the politics in its political statement, Prairie Fire. Since the publication of Prairie Fire, the organization systematically negated these politics when it abandoned armed propaganda and liquidated national and women's oppression in Osawatomie. These politics as put into practice in the Hard Times Conference (January 1976) were criticized by the women's and Black caucuses and other Third World forces at the conference. Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, which had provided leadership for the conference, began self-criticism around their role by late winter of last year. "Class and Revolutionary Politics" and "In Defense of Prairie Fire", both position papers of PFOC, outline this self-criticism and that organization's struggle to make the self-criticism real in practice (rectification). Each paper also pushed forward struggle within the WUO and parts of the anti-imperialist left by rooting the understanding of these political errors in an analysis of the material basis of white and male supremacy/chauvinism in our movement and all aspects of our lives.

The last issue of Osawatomie contained a shallow "self-criticism" which did not recognize that white and male supremacy were at the roots of WUO politics. On October 1, the WUO released its "Public Self-Criticism" which was written by the Revolutionary Committee of WUO, but signed by the organization as a whole. By the end of the month, the WUO had split over the refusal of part of the organization, including the whole leadership, to put the self-criticism into practice. The Revolutionary Committee emerged as a new political force, deepening the self-criticism with its own criticism of the Central Committee in November. The release of a letter from women in WUO to the women of PFOC concretized the specifics of the development of male supremacy within the WUO.

For white anti-imperialists, revolutionary politics are grounded in the struggle against white and male supremacy. Failing to wage these struggle necessarily supports imperialism. This is opportunism: selling out the long run revolutionary struggles for real or perceived short run gains. This has been the politics of the Weather Underground Organization since the summer of 1974.

We are alienated by opportunist politics, because they don't speak to our needs nor do they solve the problems we face in our political work and our personal lives. White supremacy and male supremacy aren't just bad ideas. Third World people and women live every minute of their lives under the oppressive institutions of these systems. When white "Marxist-Leninist" organizations make the struggles for national and women's liberation secondary to the "class struggle" they objectively mean that they don't want to confront and struggle with the painful realities of their own lives.

There have been criticisms and questions about the security level of the RC's materials, raised primarily by Black, Native American and some Puerto Rican comrades. People are concerned that the papers contain too much information that may be used by the state, that they expose our weaknesses too widely, and that the allegations are not sufficiently proved and are destructive.

We understand that the concerns of Third World revolutionaries, who have faced and still face state terror, are real and must be respected. We also understand that it is difficult for these comrades to accept at face value such strong criticisms of the former WUO leadership, who had won respect by the positive aspects of their previous politics and actions. It's important to point out that there are no responses or known facts that contradict what the RC lays out. Of course, it is forbidden to



Black Scholar



betray to the state that which can be used against other revolutionaries, and the people, but the details given here are necessary without the sort of details that constitute evidence. The main security danger in this struggle is from the WUO's opportunism and unconcern about anything except themselves. The so-called security of the former WUO was already a farce, they relied on toleration of the state to survive and used "security" to avoid struggle over their steadily deteriorating politics.



INS

In general, basic security is people struggling together and with each other's politics to a level where enemies have to expose themselves and get dealt with. Security is very little about detective work or hiding painful truths. Warning the people and all revolutionaries is the main task. We of the anti-imperialist left have been careful and prudent in our use of the truth, but we do not fear exposing our political weaknesses and traitors in our movement. This is necessary for our survival and growth. It is true that the WUO has made important contributions to the cause of revolution, especially to the white left, in terms of anti-imperialist consciousness and solidarity with the liberation struggles of the oppressed nations and peoples. However, the WUO has never been able to overcome serious opportunist, white and male supremacist and chauvinist influences and has now itself clearly acted as an obstacle to revolution. It was necessary for the old organization to be destroyed before the revolutionary struggle could move on. What little comfort our enemies may take will be short-lived. At the same time we must take heed of messages like the letter from the Native American Warriors, that words are not enough.....

class and revolutionary politics

by Prairie Fire Organizing Committee,
Bay Area

The revolutionary movement in our country can gain immensely from the Chicago Hard Times Conference if its lessons are understood and acted upon.

The Black caucus and Third World leadership intervention at Chicago posed our choices clearly. Their criticisms of the presiding leadership of the conference were solidly based upon Marxist-Leninist principle as it applies to our responsibilities here in the US.

We were emphatically reminded that for revolutionaries of an imperialist country the distinction between oppressor and oppressed nations is the main thing. This means that to be a communist it is not enough to be for class struggle, for socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat. A white communist must especially fight for the national liberation of oppressed peoples, for self-determination and against special privilege, white supremacy, chauvinism. Our duty to fight great nation chauvinism and for the right of separation of captive peoples is our first priority.

History further demands of us that we fight first of all for the rights and liberation of the Black colony. It also demands that we fight hard for the rights and freedom of Native America, the Mexicano people, the independence of Puerto Rico.

An important strength of Chicago was that most white activists responded to the Black, Mexicano, Native American and Puerto Rican leadership. The majority of the conference were well ahead of the official leadership in consciousness of the political issues and in support for meaningful anti-imperialist class and national struggle. In the US today this is the essence--there is no other kind of politics that can progressively move toward social revolution.

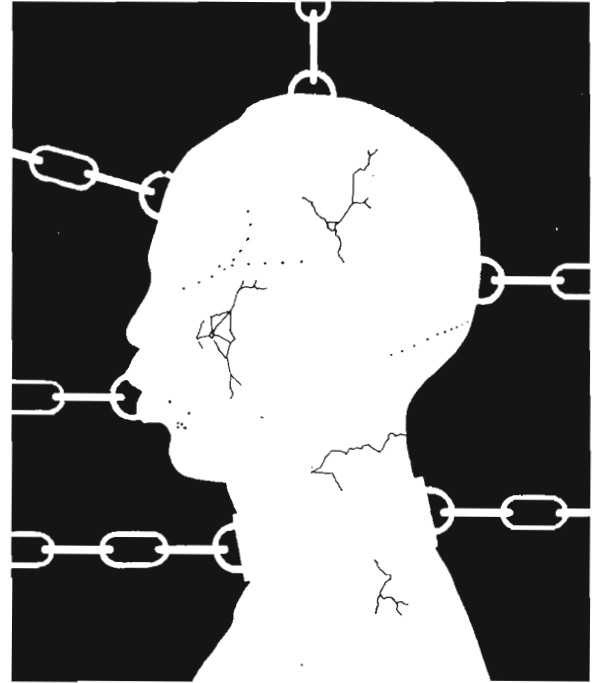
We need thorough criticism and correction of the disastrously wrong line put forward at Chicago. This is the only way to move on to successful struggle against the white supremacist and chauvinist opportunism that has been the historic downfall of the white left and revolutionary forces in the US.

It is not enough to register and agree with the criticisms offered by our comrades at the conference. We have to search out and deal with the particular roots and causes revealed in this particular event. We, those of the revolutionary-minded part of the left who are white, must take this task for our own. If we leave it mainly to our non-white brothers and sisters,

we will have failed before we start. The only way we can show understanding and appreciation of this special kind of help is to make it less necessary in the future.

Prairie Fire Organizing Committee was the principle carrier of the wrong line in organizing the Hard Times Conference. The issue for us is even more specific. Can we understand deeply enough our own brief history to root out the causes of the chauvinism and opportunism that made the criticism necessary? Can we change from an organization that is trying to be revolutionary and communist to one that is so in reality? Or will we join RU, PL, OL, the CP, etc. in the swamps.

We can change, we can avoid that. Provided that we analyze our own wrong line, its causes: that we define clearly the rev-



olutionary course and take concrete steps to overcome the wrong line and constantly struggle to remove its causes.

But our aims cannot be narrowly limited to that. We must aim to unite the best activists of our class and people around politics that are anti-imperialist, that fight discrimination, National and racial oppression, that fight white privilege and for self-determination, for full equality, for national liberation. This is an indispensable part and priority of fighting for socialist revolution. As we

meaning of the hard times conference

examine and criticize our history, we do so publicly and for the benefit of all. This is the only way to become stronger. What is decisive is not us as an organization, but the creation of a solidly based revolutionary communist organization as a guarantee of the forward motion of our entire movement.

This can't be done instantly or painlessly or in one paper. Theory and practice, politics, organization, leadership, political struggle, criticism/self-criticism, all enter in. So we have to touch on a wide range of things to avoid narrow and short-sighted view. We have to avoid substituting issues; like talking about two wrong lines or making the issue how well someone opposed the wrong line. In due course we all have to criticize ourselves and others. It won't come out equally, people have different kinds and amounts of responsibility.

Right now our priority is to understand and deal with the particular criticism and analysis of a particularly dangerous wrong line. We may have some differences in our views, but we must agree to examine the main errors, the causes and remedies; to base our evaluations and criticisms on our political priorities. We need to face facts and evaluate our history. And to remember that criticism is aimed at correcting policy and strengthening people. Smashing is for enemy politics and bourgeois habits and for identified enemies. Sharp criticism is called for, but must be aimed at the right target.

To turn this bad thing into a good thing, we first have to understand why the

portant factor. But it is too easy to offer the remedy of changing our class base as a remedy in and of itself. That mechanistic notion is part of the problem. Historically, working class movements in imperialist countries have also turned opportunist, social democratic, reformist, national chauvinist, social-imperialist. Especially in the US. And logically, to unite intellectuals still full of chauvinism and opportunism with a militant but pragmatic and economist working class movement is never going to produce any other result.

We have to strengthen our understanding of, and commitment to, revolutionary anti-imperialism. We have to create a revolutionary ideological firmness that will grow stronger and bolder in the very struggle that we now approach so timidly and feebly. (We have to raise our banners high instead of dragging them along buried in the baggage.)

We have examined closely the devices used to justify abandonment of our revolutionary positions in the name of building a "mass" or a "class" base. (These are also not new.) First we have to put the task of building a base in a revolutionary and not opportunist way.

Our task is to combine the universal truths(world experience) of Marxism-Leninism with the revolutionary experience of the working class and oppressed peoples of the US. This includes, but is a tremendous lot more than "base building".

For this task we require a theoretical and historical grasp of both world and US experience and a practical working relationship to struggles in-

UNDER IMPERIALISM, RACE STRUGGLE IS IN ESSENCE CLASS STRUGGLE

main thing for revolutionaries in imperialist countries is to understand the differences between oppressor and oppressed nations.

We know that such was Lenin's conclusion from his study of imperialism the stage of capitalism which is also the era of socialist revolution. It is no secret that Lenin also concluded that national liberation struggle is no longer part of the bourgeois revolution. National struggles are now a component part of proletarian socialist revolution. Lenin went on to recognize, as did Mao Tse Tung and Ho Chi Minh, that liberation struggles grow to become the cutting edge and vanguard force as imperialism is forced to give way to the advance of world revolution.

All this is not new to us. Anti-imperialists of the new left have repeated this a thousand times in a thousand ways. How then did PFOC take the same old wrong turn toward chauvinism and opportunism? How could it lose sight of and liquidate the very foundations of revolutionary anti-imperialism?

It is true that middle class and intellectual instability come through as an im-

side the US. The first never arises spontaneously, we have to struggle hard for our science.

One of the splendid achievements of the New Left was its active response and support to Black struggles, to China, Vietnam, Puerto Rico and others. In ideas our movement has been internationalist, anti-revisionist, pro-armed struggle. But within this there have been great weaknesses. One that is typical is the tendency to reduce the question of oppressed nations within the US entirely to a "race" question.

On page 8 of the Dec., 1975 PFOC national committee meeting report, amid much general confusion, internationalism and national chauvinism are treated as matters of external relations whereas racism is posed as an internal question that divides workers.

We have a clear and urgent duty to oppose and defeat "racism" among the people and within our class. (And also the sexism and arrogance of white males) but there is more to it than this. We have to fight the extraction of super-profit and the special oppressions of the capitalist-imperialist system—a system that is also white and male

supremacist through and through--we have to be anti-imperialist at home as well as abroad. One aspect of this is to fight against the privileged positions of all whites with extra attention to white males.

To struggle against "racism" is to recognize that exploitive and oppressive societies use distinctions of skin color and race to divide those they oppress. But this is not enough for scientific revolutionary struggle. Under imperialism, race struggle is in essence class struggle. But it is also, especially in the US, part of the struggle for national liberation and overwhelmingly a part of the counter-revolution against Black liberation. Boston, the Wallace campaign, "white back-lash." At most, communists should limit the expression "racist" to describe the ideological and cultural-psychological conditioning which causes us to participate in the humiliation and oppression of other peoples at home and abroad. We can never substitute that struggle for the struggle for national liberation, self-determination, against economic, political, social-cultural discrimination and oppression, against white privilege in all those areas. If we don't carry the struggle to these levels, then we are no longer revolutionary internationalists, we are ordinary social-chauvinists, opportunists, liberal or reactionary tools of the empire and its ruling class. This means to fight the white supremacist institutions of the system, all of them, the government, laws courts, police, prisons, schools, press-media, armed forces, medicine, Union bosses, management bosses--the whole thing. These are not just "racism institutionalized". They are the imperial structure of an oppressor nation and class which uses them to perpetuate and guard exploitation and super-exploitation; "racism" suits them to a "T". They will allow anyone of any color to help them run their system, but not as equal partners.

An article in Osawatomie #3, "Our Class Stand" by B. Dohrn states that the main contradiction within the working class is racism. This is wrong. The main contradiction within our class is competition between the workers. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels wrote: "Wage labor rests exclusively upon competition between workers."

Internally, such competition is expressed in wage and skill competition, for jobs and in discrimination by race, national origins, age, sex, social status. But it is all about economic (material) and social relative privilege offered by the system. Externally, there is seizure of colonies, super-exploitation of oppressed peoples, white supremacy, national arrogance, war for redivision of the spoils, etc.

Racism is a major prop of empire, and it can reach the level of really antagonistic contradiction between people. But to take it for the whole is to substitute a slogan for thought, to wipe out the duties of white revolutionaries. As in the approach to organizing the HT conference. To

make a fully Marxist analysis does not weaken the fight against "racism"; it puts it on solid foundation.

The "Our Class Stand" article is a step beyond earlier Osawatomie editorials in that it doesn't just make pronouncements, it discusses issues. It fails to arrive at correct conclusions, at least in part because it has a sloppy, careless approach to basic Marxism, like most of the New Left



writers who attempt this. This reflects a major weakness, not only of the new left, but of the US historically. The extreme hostility to theory and science, except in terms of immediate results, pragmatism, runs very deep. So it is commendable to want to try to correct weakness of the left in grasping the theoretical and class struggle foundations of the largely pragmatic and imitative struggles of the late 60's. And these struggles, objectively, were of great strategic class and revolutionary impact, regardless of political limitations of the participants. But today, to correct by posing class struggle against anti-imperialism is to go backward and not forward. The correction is worse than the error.

This is expressed in another error of the same piece. It is stated that the fundamental contradiction of capitalism is the contradiction between the workers and the capitalists. This is wrong. The fundamental contradiction of capitalism is that between social production and private appropriation. The class struggle grows from and constitutes an expression of this fundamental relationship. So does the "anarchy" of production--which is the contradiction between the organization and planning of production in a single factory or sector of industry as against the lack of planning of social production as a whole.

...WE ARE OF ONE HUMAN FAMILY, UNITING ALL WORKING CLASSES AND ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLES



BUT EACH WORKING CLASS AND PEOPLE ARE NECESSARILY THE MAIN FORCE OF THEIR OWN REVOLUTION.....

These contradictions express themselves in intense competition developing via the laws of value, leading to monopoly and world-wide extension of the fundamental antagonism between social production and private appropriation. And to the giant monopolies succeeding small scale competition and swallowing up all previous productive stages and forms, slave feudal, tribal, etc. All this creates new and greater contradictions, rivalries, wars, crises, power clashes, revolutions, etc. & etc. When imperialism became a world system, dominating all previous social formations, this compelled the socialist revolution to also become world-wide in scope, not abolishing, but uniting with and transforming earlier forms, principally national liberation in our time, but still with anti-feudal anti-slavery tasks in many cases.

This process is what Lenin deals with in the work, *Imperialism* and in his addresses to the Communist International after the 1917 revolution. Whoever wishes to define US imperialism in a different way than the classics should explain why, not just mumble it over. But it is clear that imperialism and national liberation could never be understood if we take class struggle as the foundation without considering the contradictions between the material base and the social relations of production which give rise to that struggle, and condition its form at the present stage.

It is this fundamental process underlying the uneven development of empire and the super-exploitation of colonies and dependent peoples and countries, and neo-colonies and the resistance thereto in the era of victorious socialist revolutions and national liberation struggles that makes the struggle against imperialism the primary focus of world revolution in our time. This applies to the US both inter-

nally and externally as the US is a modern prison-house of nations.

This is the crux of proletarian revolutionary class consciousness and struggle in our time. Anti-imperialism is the essence of class struggle in our time and place. (See Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* for better description of the fundamental contradictions of capitalism, Ch. III, from *Anti-Duhring*.)

Within this overall unity, our strategic fronts and forms of struggle and national identities are different. Therefore we compose separate national contingents against the common enemy. A most important form of our unity is alliance. This is also an expression of the principle of self-determination. We unite and work together even as we respect our differences. There can be no working class version of the melting-pot that does not end serving the enemy. At the same time our unity is not merely one of convenience, uniting antagonistic systems against a more immediate danger as was the Alliance of capitalist and socialist countries in WWII.

We share a common goal and ultimate destiny that unites us all in fighting for the world-wide victory of social revolution. In this sense, we are of one human family, uniting all working classes and all oppressed peoples.

Our alliances are between equals. No one from a dominant nation can be allowed to regard others as mere reserves to their own more important cause. Internationalism can be crucial for victory, but each working class and people are necessarily the main force of their own revolution.

Another of our departures from revolutionary thinking and action has been in

our attitude toward the economic crisis. In order to justify the substitution of "class struggle" in general for revolutionary anti-imperialism (which had to be put down as "left-sectarian") the crisis was described as just another cyclical crisis of the system, or as primarily the result of the inflation attending the Vietnam War. It was "analyzed" out of wishful thinking that the crisis would level out the material base of relative privilege. Oppression would become more equal. The needs of the whole class could be primary. Of course, facts proved the opposite. Millions of whites suffered, but Blacks, Mexicanos, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans were hit by far the hardest. Within the white population, sex, age, skill, lack of organization also created greater rather than less distinctions.

While not everyone expressed all of these errors, in sum they justified an organizing strategy that wiped out the Leninist analysis of reflections of the class struggle within the class, and of Mao's line of Unite with the advanced, win over the intermediate, struggle with the conservative. And in our country we have whole strata that are even reactionary and outright support the enemy!

Worse, proposals to base our politics and organizing on the needs and struggles of the most oppressed peoples and the most militant, conscious and advanced white workers and women were not heeded but rejected. This happened at the Boston Conference and in the Bay Area immediately afterwards when the July National Conference report was discussed. In this instance, national representatives took the lead in pushing the wrong line and criticising heavily those who spoke for a revolutionary content. The same sort of push for the wrong line then followed in the steering committee, in membership meetings in documents. In some cases it was even theorized that the economic crisis was wiping out or at least reducing the material base of national and racial oppression and privilege.

In the Hard Times work, even talk about white supremacy and chauvinism among the white left and white workers was dropped. Instead there was substituted an emphasis on working with particular Black and Third World activists. Criticism of the opportunism involved in this was called racist. Thus, right from the start, all out "unity", economism, reformism, utopianism became the politics and the style. All unity and no struggle with liberalism and all struggle and no unity with proposals to give priority to national liberation and to the needs of those hardest hit by crisis and most open to struggle. Events compelled some gestures toward change. They were too half-hearted and too late. At the end of Dec. the NC was still defending its wrong line in a report rejecting criticism and proposals from the Bay Area Steering Commit-



tee which was moving toward unity around correct politics.

In our society all weaknesses feed into and reinforce the wrong line on class and national struggle, as in the case of PFOC. This is not only a theoretical and political process. It is profoundly influenced by social, cultural, psychological and material competitive pressures. And it is most essential to understand that the ever present climate of white superiority and chauvinism feeds all other class and political weaknesses of white revolutionaries and activists.

So it is with the contempt for theory mentioned before. For the first half of 1975 the question of who and what we are was debated in terms of cadre and organizational form as opposed to mass organizing. It took months of struggle to gain a toe hold for the idea that communist organization is an urgent priority of political analysis, of line and of leadership. Politics in command and the strategic unity of theory and practice. Even then, spontaneous ideas remained very strong. Boston reinforced those ideas, even after we accepted communist organization as a goal. In fact organization was put ahead of politics to protect opportunism.

About bourgeois concepts of leadership: wrong politics need bureaucratic protection. Manipulative and factional methods serve bad politics. They cover for opportunism. They facilitate liquidation of struggle against national oppression and white supremacy. This is the real content of the "non-political" approach of the organizers of our Boston conference. (PFOC) A headlong rush to national organization without a revolutionary political line led directly to the suppression of the anti-imperialist

and pro-communist party politics of elected delegates from San Francisco Bay Area. Enforced by an indecent attack upon women and men alike for our politics, but covered by false charges of sexism. Charges "with-drawn" but never dealt with.

This opportunist misuse of the cause of women's liberation expresses a tendency to substitute the issue of sexism for the struggle against male supremacy and women's liberation as a major component part of social revolution. This misuse and wrong focus not only weakened our struggle against national oppression, it weakened our struggle against the oppression of women as well. This was the case at Chicago. PFOC leaders made a commitment to struggle for a stronger position, they did not do so. They were heavily criticized at the conference by Black, Third World and white women. Properly so, it was a major failing.

Thus, bad methods are not only internal questions. They always affect mass politics and practice. Bad politics and leadership at Boston reproduce themselves a hundredfold at Chicago. Suppression of politics at Boston matched at Chicago by a program that restricted political debate to the chosen. Black and Third World women and men were strong enough to break through. Otherwise it would have been disastrous.

We also need to criticize acceptance of the PL, CP, RU mush about multi-national class and party. And reject the title "socialist revolutionaries." (Jan. Groundswell). There isn't space here—we need to say a little more about causes and corrections.

We already said that the system conditions us. One way is by the old left, the CP, Trotskyists, the in-betweens, PL, RU; we react to them and to even "newer" dogmatist-opportunists. But we haven't criticized their bad politics and treachery. This is a liberal conception of uniting the left. We have to expose their wrong policy on National liberation and their phony anti-racism. Instead of imitating it. Unless we fight for our anti-imperialism, it will always fade under attack.

We too are crippled by a heavy resistance to theory and a devotion to "practicality". A variant of this contempt is to study classics without regard to our real needs. Again, the Dec. NC report is a prime negative example. The NC studied Lenin's "What is to be Done" and ended up supporting everything that Lenin opposed!

Too many of us imagine that ordinary workers and people will only fight for the most immediate selfish needs. This is nonsense. Most people need and want a better life even more desperately than we ourselves. They are right, the crisis is a cumulative one marked by convulsions of a dying system.

We can't go on living as we have. Society is wasting. The rulers can't go on ruling the same old way either. What is missing is a strong Communist Party with massive revolutionary support. But there have been too many hollow revolutionaries with loud promises. We need honesty and hard work to produce results and show strength, not timidity. Lenin said it:

Don't blame the workers for your own backwardness.

Facing the facts is the first part of correction. More is required. Thinking deeply, serious political evaluation and criticism. Digging out roots and causes.

Then self-criticism: concrete searching out the individual and group and leadership responsibilities for wrong line and bad methods. This has to include the active participation nationally of those who opposed the wrong line: there must be recognition of the inner struggle. Honesty is totally important for us now.

Our rectification must be public as well as internal. This is the only guarantee of a new style of responsibility to members, the left and our class and peoples. Our study and political statement discussion must be re-oriented to these needs.

We must be exemplary in struggle against national oppression and white and male supremacy.

Claim no easy victories -- tell no lies. (Amilcar Cabral)

REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONALIST POLITICS
IN COMMAND.

Prairie Fire Organizing Committee,
Bay Area



DON'T BLAME THE WORKERS FOR YOUR OWN BACKWARDNESS

in defense of prairie fire

11

by Clayton Van Lydegraf,
for P.F.O.C.

It is now two years since the public circulation of the book *Prairie Fire*. We may anticipate that 200 years from now something more positive will have emerged from this final quarter of the 20th century than the world has experienced from the birth of the United States as an independent country in the fourth quarter of the 18th. (1776) In any case, those who offered *Prairie Fire* to us expressed high hopes and good intent.

From the letter introducing the Political Statement of the Weather Underground Organization as contained in the book *Prairie Fire*, May 9, 1974:

...we hope people will take PRAIRIE FIRE as seriously as we do, study the content and write and publish their views of the paper as well as their analysis of their own practice. We will respond as best we can.

Our movement urgently needs a concrete analysis of the particular conditions of our time and place. We need strategy. We need to battle for a correct ideology and win people over. In this way we create the conditions for the development of a successful revolutionary communist party in order to lead the struggle, give coherence and direction to the fight, seize power and build the new society.

..At this time, the unity and consolidation of anti-imperialist forces around a revolutionary program is an urgent and pressing strategic necessity. *Prairie Fire* is offered as a contribution to this unity of action and purpose. Now it is in your hands.

Many people did respond seriously, and with enthusiasm. 35,000 copies of the book have been circulated, many groups have studied it. This without commercial distribution facilities or much advertising. And many of us have applied ourselves to furthering those fundamental political aims and principles with which we found ourselves in agreement.

We have not had an easy time of it.

We too are the product of our age, conditioned by US imperial history and culture; our convictions and commitment, our enthusiasm for revolution and a better world do not of themselves automatically cancel out the arrogance and cults of superiority built in by the system. But where we have stumbled and fallen we can still pick ourselves up again and push on, hoping to do better this time.

There is no reason or right to think that it is easier to make revolution in the US than elsewhere. In some ways it is harder. Those who blunder must accept the blame and also the responsibility for rectification.

In this spirit the National Committee of *Prairie Fire* Organizing Committee (March, 1976) seriously evaluated and accepted the criticism made by the Black Caucus and CASA speakers at the January 1976 Hard Times Conference in Chicago of the political and organizational preparations for the conference. Since PFOC had major responsibility it made a public (though belated) statement accepting the criticism: (excerpt)

At the Chicago conference, the Black Caucus led in a comradely and correct manner in overturning the errors of the conference. It identified the primary error which had resulted from our abandonment of anti-imperialism; our failure to recognize the right of self-determination for Black People. CASA, PSP and Native American speakers explained that unity must be based on respect for each nation's right to self-determination. Most of the 2,200 people at the conference strongly supported this line.

PFOC's wrong line was an attempt to win popular support in an unprincipled and opportunist way. This was reinforced by our failure to see party-building as the primary task of US communists at this time. This is bowing to spontaneity. This is to downplay the role of Marxist-Leninist conscious leadership. To negate principled political struggle in turn always leads to the emergence of white supremacist and national chauvinist tendencies. In the conditions of US imperialism, the central task in creating a revolutionary communist party is to unite on the basis of a strong political line on the national question and on the relationship between class and national struggle. PFOC did not advance such an anti-imperialist and internationalist political line in preparation for the conference or at the conference itself...

Similar criticism had been made internally to PFOC by some of us, but this had been rejected by the then national leadership prior to the conference. Since the conference, PFOC has engaged in serious struggle to correct our own wrong politics. PFOC has also evaluated and changed the leadership responsible, and publicly stated the nature and causes and proposed remedies and changes. Now it is timely and possible to give some attention and effort to comradely but equally rigorous criticism of serious and far-reaching wrong political line and impact of some other groups and individuals.

It is one of the many ironies of history that WUO has itself led in undermining and rejecting the politics of its own written statement. We shall not dwell upon this; *Prairie Fire* is still in print.



As to WUO as an organization, its political initiative and its actions are a significant part of the historical challenge of the movements of the 60's and the 70's to the reformism, revisionism and liberalism that formerly dominated in the old and corrupt left scene in the US. The re-claiming and deepening of a revolutionary anti-imperialist consciousness and politics; promoting realism about the world and the role of armed struggle and the state and anti-imperialist and socialist and communist revolution; demonstrating dedication, conviction and commitment are all tremendous things. These positives are also reflected in the book.

Revolutionary organizations that work mainly legally and openly among the people and the working class can only welcome and support comrades and organizations that uphold revolutionary principle in deeds as well as words and at the cost of great risk and sacrifice. We have the duty to explain and support the necessity and righteousness of this among our class and people. However, when bad politics and wrong positions are promoted by such comrades, they are all the more dangerous because they come from respected leaders. It is our duty to criticise this. (At the same time, we also criticise those who follow authority passively and blindly and they must struggle to find their own bearings.)

WUO has opened these questions to public discussion in *Osawatomie* Vol.2#2, June-July, 1976 in an editorial titled "Anti-imperialism vs. Opportunism: Self-Criticism." The editorial states: "We have made opportunist errors." It also states that WUO has been engaged in a deep criticism/self-criticism and wants to address and correct its own errors and push

forward debate over vital issues and be accountable for changes in their own line. WUO also states that it wants to draw lessons useful for the entire left.

These aims are not realized. Although deep criticism may be going on in WUO, it does not emerge in this editorial. This is demonstrated by the definition of "opportunist errors." A definite political line of WUO that has been and remains wrong in theory and practice is much more than merely "errors". The WUO editorial spells out its own conception of the "errors".

- 1) abandoning revolutionary anti-imperialism.
- 2) submerging the national question into the class question, especially in relation to the Black liberation struggle.
- 3) downplaying the struggle against the special oppression of women/sexism and male supremacy.
- 4) downplaying the essential role of revolutionary theory and communist organization.

From all our own experience we conclude that this adds up to more than error and downplaying. It has to be called betrayal of revolutionary internationalism, of anti-imperialism, of Leninism itself.

To assess the wrong line of WUO objectively, it is necessary to examine the editorial line of *Osawatomie* from its first issue and also an article titled "Politics in Command", issued separately in June of 1975 by WUO. Such examination reveals a systematic liquidation of the basic politics of the book *Prairie Fire*.

(PF, May 1974, p. 11): Now the movement is disorganized, divided and defensive ... There are serious problems and barriers to revolutionary growth... some

are anti-revolutionary currents and errors within the movement.

(Os. #1, Spring, 1975, slightly over 6 months after circulation of PF):

Now comes a time of decision for the left. Can we overcome the small points that divide us?

(Politics in Command, p. 1, June 1975):

There are many on the left who self-righteously condemn all violence of revolutionaries. They are keeping their own hands clean by avoiding the full consequences of revolutionary ideas. For these people the revolution will happen only some day and hopefully be made by somebody else.

(Os. #1p.4): The immediate task for the left is this: organize the masses...

We need to out-organize the sophisticated and well-financed forces of George Meany, Louise Day Hicks... it is the people who will create the ultimate solutions. Waiting to begin until theory is fully worked out is to create the certainty of failure (p. 5)... It (theory) will... grow from practice.... ideology is for everyone.

Compare the above with "at this time, the unity and consolidation of anti-imperialist forces around a revolutionary program is an urgent and pressing strategic necessity. ... We need a communist party," from the introductory letter to PF previously mentioned.

Osawatomie #2 gives something of a political context by talking about the state of class struggle on a world scale. It quite properly gives recognition to the great importance of the anti-imperialist revolutionary victory of the Vietnamese. However, like PF, the first sentence of which is "The unique and fundamental condition of this time is the decline of US imperialism", the result is a too narrow definition. "This is the stage of anti-imperialist struggle." is the way it is put in OS. This leaves out of account the fundamental role of victorious socialist revolution from October, 1917 to the present. Leaving this out omits the organic basis of unity of national liberation and proletarian revolution. Not taking seriously the Marxist-Leninist analysis of all the principal contradictions of revolutionary struggle on a world scale opens the door to all kinds of wrong conclusions.

From the same editorial, p.4:

Some comrades criticised us for this approach: they argued that we were ignoring the primary importance of developing cadre organization at this stage. We disagree....

Yes, some of us did criticize Os. #1 (and later #2 even more so), but not just for ignoring "cadre organization" as WUO puts it and in doing so WUO is setting up a straw target. We criticized #1 for downgrading revolutionary politics, communist party and for a totally wrong negative estimate of the strength

of the left. Also for substituting the question of relating to Black and Third World organizations and contacts for the entire question of fighting white and male supremacy and for support of Black and Third World liberation struggles among the white working class and people. Also for opportunist and populist concepts of base building and unity of the left, leading to liberal notions of mass support and solidarity work and united fronts without the necessity of communists to organize and fight for anti-imperialist and revolutionary content.

Os. #2 defended and carried much further the wrong line of #1. On page 4 it sets up its critics: "But we are opposed to the mechanistic idea that developed cadre organizations are a necessary prerequisite to mass work." (Os. emphasis) Then on p.5 at the end it finished us all off with this: "Besides organizing, revolutionaries should be talking to working people everywhere, checking out every picket line you pass, taking notes. This is not so complicated."

In short, us stupes shouldn't bother leaders with stupid theory, etc., but should get busy with the real work.

Alongside Os. #2, the question of armed struggle comes in for attention. This is the subject of the article, Politics in Command (hereafter PiC), dated June, 1975. PF had said this: "To wait, to not prepare people for the fight, is to seriously mislead about what kind of fierce struggle lies ahead." (p. 2) Considering that once OS makes its appearance, PF hardly ever gets mentioned by WUO and its politics practically never, the question is, does this turn toward opportunist politics reflect itself in questions concerning armed struggle?

PF is quoted on the first page of PiC: "... Revolution is the most powerful resource of the people." On page 5 of the typed version this has already become "Organization is the strongest resource of the people." This puts the whole thing in focus, for it perfectly matches the "reductionism" which is the mechanism by which Os #1 and 2 liquidate revolutionary politics and substitute capitulation to opportunism, white supremacy and male supremacy.

In the cover letter for PiC the two authors write: "... In our statement we argue that at this time armed struggle must be seen as a central part of building a broad revolutionary movement based in the masses of people and we oppose three strategies which in our view are of more limited scope..."

So we may ask, did armed struggle grow from a "small point" in the spring to something worth a whole paper in June? Did WUO change its strategy so quick? No, to both questions. This paper is not about returning to the strategy of Prairie Fire, which really was a turn toward politics in command. It is an effort to convert the military line of PF in the same manner as Os. #1 and 2 deal with politics. The editorial in Os #2 Vol 2 ignores this whole subject in its self-criticism. All the more reason to give it close attention.

PiC seeks to substitute the advocacy of revolutionary armed struggle as a necessary path to victory with an opportunist and spontaneous strategy of calling forth mass response primarily by an "exemplary" armed propaganda. Political strategy is consigned instead to the guerrillas. It is not even seen as the task of the revolutionary anti-imperialists among the guerrillas but rather "all the diverse forces now engaging in some form of armed struggle in our country" who are to learn the laws of revolutionary warfare and apply them to the concrete conditions of the US today. A truly populist receipt. There is no mention whatever of the world-wide and internal changes of the US situation that would call for and make possible this or that stage and form of the struggle and the various priorities. Political analysis, line, strategic role of a communist party are all reduced to vague mentions as things one is bound to mention but not take seriously. Such things were to some degree understandable in the late 60's before anyone in the Students for a Democratic Society took Marxism-Leninism very seriously and before the book *Prairie Fire* was dreamed of.

On page 5 of PiC we find this: "...Action ...should pull forward the people's understanding" and then a real hymn to organization, "...Organization capable of waging full internal political struggle around direction and capable of uniting in action, directs people's energies like a spear"... and "Military actions and offensive are at their heart political." "...consciousness is decisive. At this point timing is critical because timing makes action comprehensible. Guerrillas must integrate armed struggle with mass political struggle thru precision and timing.,etc....the strategic necessity of this period is to mobilize the oppressed and exploited people against US imperialism..."

This doesn't deal with the political task of how to unite the working class and people of the oppressor nation in support of the national liberation struggles of the oppressed nations and people. It substitutes "mobilizing". The entire section is saturated with this arrogant manipulative approach to people. But the real work of uniting can only be done by hard work and struggle based upon theoretical clarity and political analysis and line that resolves concrete contradictions of real existing class and national relationships. These tasks are not even posed; they are all dropped in order to chase after populist unity around petty reforms.

Pg.7: Because imperialism is in decline, whole sectors of the poor and working population can be won to a radical perspective.

The mishmash of populism substitutes again for anti-imperialist and revolutionary mass consciousness. There is no context or even a grain of serious political analy-

sis here; it is the old pragmatic praxis-axis, do it philosophy. Quoting Ho Chi Minh about armed propaganda can by no means rescue this non-analysis.

P. 11: (toward the close of a discussion of the "foco theory"):

The task of the armed revolutionary organization at this point is to make a plan to help ensure the victory of the people in a long and costly war.

This was given as a refutation of the foco theory but it still contains the essence of the gun in command considering the real and not fantastic state of affairs "at this point". What "armed revolutionary organization" is now capable of making or carrying forward such a plan? Or is it merely speculative? It seems more likely that this is a self-image of the authors; they are the army and the revolutionary party, if only in anticipation, and their stamp of approval transforms nonsense into "Politics in Command."

There is more. P. 11 (on the theory that the guerrilla role is to bring about chaos inside...the oppressor nation.)

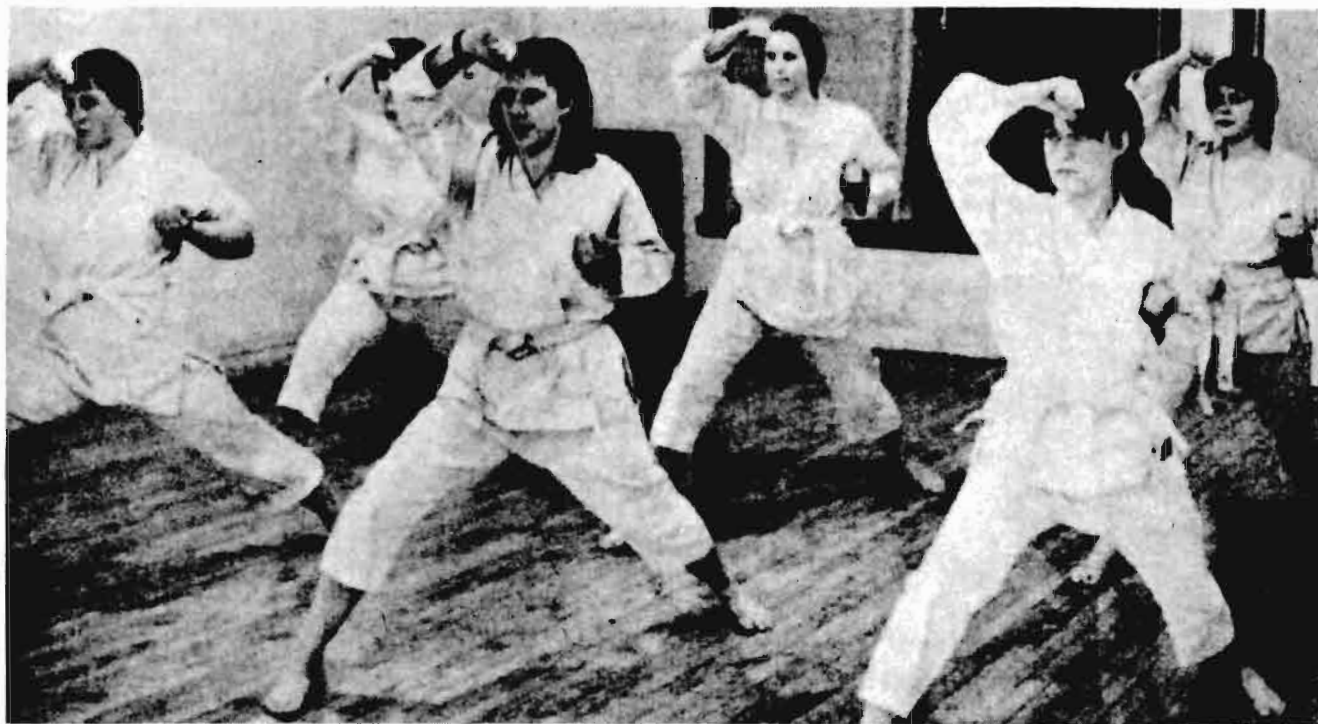
People do not need us to be fearful, or to create chaos. Chaos prevails. Our task is to show the way out of the madness. All revolutionary communists love peace...

Right after calling for distinguishing the violence of the revolution and that of capitalist society, they are all mushed into one result called chaos. But of course there is counter-revolutionary chaos inflicted by the system on the people and the chaos that the people and their armed forced must of necessity inflict upon the armed and violent structures and forces of their enemies.

More: (still P. 11):

...the fault of the strategy of an eye for an eye in our country at this time: we can never match the violence of the enemy one for one...or avenge each death. (here you take your pick between "at this time" and "never"--but never will prevail) We retaliate to educate... and to exact a price for imperial crimes...This is also the only way to prevent the enemy from carrying out false murderous acts in the name of guerrillas."

There is another page of text, but the motion of PiC ends with this. Starting with a commitment to build armed struggle as a necessary means to overthrow capitalism/imperialism after enough repeats of "politics in command" and "at this time", we are supposed to arrive at armed actions to coerce the enemy into better behavior. This is the conclusion of the piece. It will be said that this is pulling things out of context and the sounder parts of the text have been omitted. However, what still must be answered is that this reading is consistent with the politics of the *Osawatimie* editorials and the self-criticism of WUO so far as it goes. Where is the evidence that any other line consistent with revolutionary



anti-imperialism is being followed? It isn't easy to work out the best strategy for the struggles of the present times. But if a correct strategy is to be found, the wrong ideas of Politics in Command must be rejected and given up.

Retreating from instead of growing from the politics of Prairie Fire is also an explanation of the authoritative style of giving directives and having all the answers. Without a solid revolutionary perspective, it is easy, given a little success, for leaders to think that all they need are networks and organizational cogs and levers and they will be able to make miracles. It seems evident that WUO came to totally underestimate the importance and difficulty of creating a communist party in the above ground world; that it never understood the importance of revolutionaries at all levels of political organization also learning to find their own bearings and to be able to stand on their own feet.

All this sheds light on the content and quality of the self-criticism found in the article, "Anti-Imperialism vs. Opportunism", Osawatomie, June-July, 1976. Here PF is credited with the strength of its strategic line of anti-imperialism and with making a sound definition of imperialism. With modesty now, it is said that this is not new, Lenin made the definition in 1916 and 1920. The writers also understand that many who accept Lenin as an authority ignore the strategic implications of his analysis. Ramon Arbona, a leader of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party is quoted:

We know this already, many will say. True, but it is one thing to say it and quite another to take it as a serious central strategic conception to define struggles in the very heart of the imperialist nation.

This conception is very good. But, there is still something missing; without which we shall all fail, and not advance a single inch toward revolution. This unique thing is the application of that Marxist-Leninist Analysis and strategic line not just to imperialism and the imperialists in general, but also to the history and present situation of the working class and revolutionary movement of the oppressor imperial nation itself. Doing this in a thoroughly revolutionary way is something that is new in the revolutionary movement of the US. The Communist Party, USA, with the help of the Communist International had made some important beginnings on this task, but in the end it failed and abandoned anti-imperialism for opportunist and revisionist politics.

The self-critics of this article have either forgotten or still have not learned the real weight and decisiveness of the task PF seriously attempted--the integration of Lenin's basic class analysis of imperialism with the history and the prospects of national and class struggles in the US. This is true even though they summarize it and conclude that "Anti-imperialism is the necessary basis for class struggle in the US." Which is very good but better if you add the work revolutionary, for class struggle goes on at many levels and has two sides, not one only. The failure in depth of understanding shows in the very next section titled: "The Working Class, A Self-Criticism."

It is very strange that in a criticism of the abandonment of revolutionary anti-imperialism, the first criticism to be strongly affirmed should be one that is profoundly wrong and was made months ago in the full swing of the wrong line. To reassert this now is not to criticise the wrong opportunist line, rather it is to



confirm it. Hence, there are really two lines in the editorial, both mixed together and side by side. The wrong line is in tactical retreat but not vanquished, not overthrown.

So the writers, on behalf of WUO, accept whole-hog the criticism that PF "dismisses the central role of the proletariat and fails to develop a full anti-imperialist strategy."

The WUO ought to have been suspicious of this right off because this is the charge that has always been the heavy artillery of all the opportunist, white and male supremacists that still infect the left, against anything that smacks of internationalism or genuine Leninism. Anyone (Judah Hill in this case) whose work "lacks an anti-imperialist framework", p.17) cannot be a Marxist, a Leninist, or a revolutionary--not in the US. In passing, when did anti-imperialism cease to be a basic and turn into a "framework"? So here is no authority on Leninist analysis.

But there are facts and there is a problem. Actually, PF, far from dismissing the role of the proletariat and its historic mission, in its main thrust, spends a major part of the book in historical and current analysis aimed at discovering and disclosing why and how this central revolutionary role of the working class has been restricted, diverted and frustrated by the impact of imperial expansion and its consequences. PF attempts to discover the factors that can break the chains of US arrogance and white and male supremacy and competition and privilege.

For the US this is the essence of class analysis and revolutionary class struggle and Leninist internationalism. Without this content there is only the

swamp of chauvinism, racism, opportunism, white supremacy, spontaneity, betrayal of the oppressed nations, the revolution, the working class and people. Many "leftists" in the US get so brainwashed they don't recognize class analysis unless it is certified by a direct quote from classics and think that all problems are solved by finding such a quote.

The real weakness of PF, the book and its sponsors is not in one bad compromise paragraph that J. Hill and every other opportunist pounced on to prove their own self-asserted devotion to the centrality of the working class and its historic revolutionary mission. The real weakness of PF and its sponsors is that they could not adequately analyze and comprehend all the complications of world and US contradictions at their first serious attempt. Being very new and aspiring but shaky Marxist-Leninists, it is not amazing that there are errors, gaps and definitions that are not precise.

The introductory letter to PF poses the task of building a revolutionary communist party in the US. There is no analysis in the book as to why this is necessary or how to go about it. They were not able to do that. But PF did breakthrough to analyze the historic blockage of working class revolution in the US due to the effects of white and male supremacy and opportunism, the most necessary preparation for such a party.

PF presents internationalist theory and politics of revolutionary class struggle in the stage of modern imperialism and of national and socialist revolutions. Which must prevail if there is to be a real change. The book identifies the sectors of the working class it sees as most open to revolutionary consciousness and organiza-

tion. It understands and supports the leading role of Black revolution and self-determination and the liberation struggles of all nations and peoples. It exposes revisionist doctrines of pacifism, gradualism, reformism. It affirms the necessity of armed struggle.

PF didn't understand and couldn't demonstrate how a class controlled by a corrupt economist labor movement could break through to produce a revolutionary vanguard force and a communist leadership. Or, on the other hand, how there could be a revolutionary working class communist party if there are almost no advanced revolutionary communist workers. The New Left started out seeing all this as failure not only of the Old Left, but of Marxism-Leninism, theory, and the working class itself. Moving away from this origin, people didn't have a lot of faith in a historic mission that they did not themselves know how to bring to life.

The real tragic thing was when WUO accepted economist criticism without analysis. It thereby substituted blind faith in the WC for its own developing anti-imperialist and Leninist class analyses. That is the formal and ideological process by which its internationalism gets turned around into its opposite. More basically--the cause is the total social and cultural pressures working--not just middle class and intellectual backgrounds. There are the whole imperial sets of values and conditioning and fears and insecurity of seeming to stand alone against the familiar world and the powerful state--all this multiplies the power of rationalizing chauvinism and opportunism tremendously.

When serious gains are made in proletarianizing our revolutionary forces both in class stand and in social composition--we shall still find various forms of chauvinism and opportunism to combat--questions of immediate and long range objectives, of small group vs. class, national vs. international, age, sex privilege vs. necessity and survival, etc. But this is another article.

The same thing applies to the struggle for women's liberation and against male supremacy. The material basis of the special oppression of women lies in the fact that the capitalists derive super-profit from the differential lower wages paid to women and from the role of women as a special reserve army of labor, temporary workers. To protect those profits and defend its power over society, the ruling class continues and upholds all the oppressive and reactionary institutions of male supremacy. This includes the basic family unit where "women's work" in the home is given inferior economic and social status and she is generally expected to play a subordinate role to husband, father, brother or son. This condition prevails in one way or another in all social and cultural formations up to the most powerful instruments of class rule--the laws, courts, prisons, police, etc. of the state.

The entire structure of relative privilege, economic and social, of the male sex is used by the ruling class to hang on to power and the structure is bolstered and perpetrated by an unrelenting resort to all varieties of sexism. Not to take all this into account is to mystify everything.

The article "The Women's Question is a Class Question" (Os. #4) is a part of the wrong line of WUO and reflects not only left economist and sectarian attitudes, but it denies the real social as well as class content of women's oppression and liberation issues. This weakens the struggle against male supremacy. Opposing this wrong line is also a part of combating WUO's generally bourgeois concepts of leadership methods and style. Women's leadership is not just a question of reflecting politics, it is also a question of power--who leads whom, when and why and how.

A final point: In the US spontaneity needs spelling out. Competitiveness, individualism, selfishness, male and white supremacy, arrogance; all this is spontaneity, US imperial model.



w.u.o. public self-criticism

Comrades,

This is an essential addition and correction to the October 1st self-criticism of the Weather Underground Organization.

In our self-criticism we exposed the white and male supremacist political line and activity of the WUO during the past two years to push forward the struggle for revolutionary anti-imperialism. Further we say, "Based on this unity the leadership structure and goals of the WUO has been changed."

This was a misleading and incomplete analysis of the situation. In fact, a part of the former membership of the WUO, concentrated in, though not restricted to, New York City has failed to disband the manipulative apparatus founded on opportunist politics.

These opportunist elements stated agreement with our revolutionary criticism of the WUO up to the point where real change was called for. At this point they parted company with revolutionary anti-imperialism.

The opportunists were driven to this end by a desire to maintain individual power.

In June 1976 the WUO published the article "Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism vs. Opportunism: A Self-Criticism," but this was not real self-criticism. This article reflected directly, both in its title and content, a two-line struggle within the WUO, and showed that opportunism still dominated. This reality made true self-criticism of the WUO's errors impossible.

The membership of the WUO rejected this article as a basis of political unity; at the same time severe and correct criticisms were made of it by progressive and revolutionary people throughout the U.S. Despite all this the central committee of the WUO refused to accept further criticism and adopted a stance of "business as usual."

This position made it clear that the central committee was no longer able to lead politically. In the period of no leadership a number of forces and coalitions emerged within the WUO that opposed the central committee, but which based themselves on the same erroneous political concepts of the central committee.

In the political struggle to criticize these wrong notions another force developed and organized itself within the WUO. This force bases itself on the political line of revolutionary anti-imperialism of the book Prairie Fire, and the further developments of these politics made by the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee in its own struggle against opportunism.

The opposition of these opportunists to the application of the politics of our self-criticism has caused a split. When we signed the Self-Criticism it was wrong to sign it as the WUO, thus implying that there is still one unified organization. We should have signed ourselves the Revolutionary Committee of the WUO, defined on the side of the split that takes its stand in the best revolutionary anti-imperialist tradition of the WUO.

To those who have supported us and worked in solidarity with us, we want to say that the only way to judge which side of this split particular cadre are on must be based on political line and practice day by day, and not on past associations. The name of the WUO must not be a cover for people to get by shoddy work and unprincipled struggle. Remember that Lenin said "When dealing with opportunists, listen to their words, but watch their hands."

Signed,

Revolutionary Committee of the WUO
Venceremos!

October 12, 1976

The political struggle to define the content, material and social roots, and the consequences of our errors has developed unity within the organization that revolutionary anti-imperialism, as formulated in Prairie Fire, is the correct line and strategy for revolution in the U.S. oppressor nation; and, that for two years the political line of the WUO has been opposed to these politics; that it has been an opportunist line, characterized by a white and male chauvinist political content.

Based on this unity, the leadership, structure and goals of the WUO has been changed.

Throughout the course of the internal political struggle, our main goal has been to release a self-criticism that is as full and correct as possible; one that strengthens the struggle to undo the damage caused by our wrong line in the past two years.

This self-criticism is to the anticolonial liberation movements and communist organizations in the oppressed nations; to the women's movement; and to the anti-imperialist movement in the U.S. oppressor nation. Most especially it is for those revolutionaries who adopted the wrong line of the WUO and carried it into practice. We hope this statement provides a political basis to understand and overturn errors in your political work, to make appropriate self-criticism, and to deepen criticism of our line and its consequences.

This political struggle against opportunism, in the WUO and the entire left

movement in the U.S. oppressor nation, is taking place in the midst of a world-wide counter-offensive by U.S. imperialism against revolutionary movements. U.S. imperialism's counter-offensive, a response to defeat in Angola, has intensified struggle on all fronts, especially in the Middle East, Argentina, Chile, Africa. It is the context necessary to understand Kissinger's neo-colonial moves in Southern Africa.

The struggle against opportunism in the oppressor nation revolutionary movement is part and parcel of developing our own revolutionary offensive against U.S. imperialism. Events in the world and this country only make this struggle more immediate and important.

We hope that this statement, and this organization, will aid, and be a part of the growth of our movement into one that strikes real blows and scores revolutionary victories against U.S. imperialism.

Venceremos,
Weather Underground Organization

October 1, 1976

For two years, the WUO has pursued a wrong direction - our strategy and organizing has been based on a white and male chauvinist political line. We have completely abandoned the anti-imperialist politics of Prairie Fire, the correct politics that guided the organization from 1969 to 1974. The errors of the WUO were not limited to a few areas of work, rather they have dominated every aspect of our politics and have created a complete reversal of direction.

The WUO's history of anti-imperialist struggle and the writing of Prairie Fire are real strengths that have led many people to respect it as a leading force in the anti-imperialist movement. But, this history does not create any immunity from the very same forces - white and male supremacy - that have turned previous revolutionary organizations into opportunist and revisionist organizations.

The force of white and male chauvinism, operating in society and in all of us, was not effectively opposed because of anachistic, anti-political, and anti-ideological tendencies that existed throughout the organization. These tendencies are rooted in our history, in the history of the New Left; in the reaction against the revisionism and inaction of the CP. Anarchism has also manifested itself within the organization through spontaneous concepts of strategy for revolution; and in concepts of organization and leadership that were not collective and not founded on political struggle.

White and male chauvinism merged with New Left spontaneity led to an economist, populist program of struggle. This strategy was justified with a phony



Marxism that ignored the changes brought about by the development of imperialism.

Our errors are the classic errors of revolutionary organizations in oppressor nations, particularly in the U.S. They are rooted in a four-hundred year history and tradition of empire-building and imperialist expansion; and grow directly out of the fact that the rulers have been able to involve the whole population of the oppressor nation, including the working class, in its crimes.

Oppression of nations is firmly rooted in the development of U.S. imperialism, in the rip-off of land from Native Americans and genocide against them; in the enslavement of Black Africans; in the seizure of half of Mexico; etc., etc. Implicit in the Louisiana Purchase and so on is the essence of imperial ideology: that the world belongs to white people, to be divided up as they see fit.

From the beginning, the U.S. colonist bourgeoisie organized support for manifest destiny, for slavery, for the Indian wars by passing on a share of the plunder to white people, and by granting to them privileges and status denied to the oppressed people. These were the rights of the overseer: protection for the white trades unionists against competition from free Black labor; the right to own land while it was denied to free Blacks; access to training and education while it was a crime for Black people to learn to read; the possibility of freedom after years, while Black slaves were owned for life. The modern-day expressions are not really different; they exist as privileged access to higher paying jobs, better working conditions, better housing, schools, etc. But privilege is more than just the bribe; it is the bribe plus a culture of self-justification, social approval and status. White supremacy is the rock upon which U.S. capitalism and imperialism have been erected.

The combination of modern capitalism based in industry in the North and the capitalized slave colony in the South expanded West, and finally crossed the oceans, seizing territory for the investment of surplus capital, insuring



supplies of raw materials, and markets for its junk. Imperialism arrives at an historical stage on the North American continent. Bolstered by super-profit derived from the exploitation of the whole world, U.S. imperialism vastly expanded the extent and breadth of bribery of the oppressor nation people. All the social institutions are adapted to the goal of material gain and power of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

White and male supremacy are built into every social structure and institution: churches, schools, the press, literature and art. All social concepts and behavior are developed in the adequate fashion to insure imperialist rule, and justify and mobilize for imperialism. Most especially white and male supremacy are built into the state, written into law and enforced through the police, courts prisons, probation and parole departments.

White and male supremacy are rooted in the material base of imperialism, permeate all social institutions, and dominate the ideology of the oppressor nation. White and male chauvinism are reproduced continually, day-by-day, minute-by-minute; they are reflections of the primary and essential social relations of production under imperialism.

A revolutionary line and strategy for the oppressor nation can only be formed in the context of a constant struggle against the forces of white and male chauvinism and arrogance. The WUO grew out of this struggle, carried on within the New Left against organizations (CP, PL, RU) which claimed to be revolutionary, but opposed the struggle of Black people for liberation, opposed the struggle of Vietnam against U.S. imperialism, and opposed the women's movement. The WUO developed in 1969 the basic strategic principle of building an organization and movement to lend concrete assistance to the national liberation movements in their struggle against U.S. imperialism.

Following the chaining and gagging of Bobby Seale at the Chicago Seven trial, and the assassination of Fred Hampton, the WUO decided to create an underground capable of developing and sustaining armed

struggle to respond to the crimes of imperialism.

From 1970-74 we developed this basic strategy, and our actions guided by a principled political line, were an important contribution to the whole anti-imperialist movement in the oppressor nation.

Yet, throughout this period there was a continual two-line struggle between opportunism and anti-imperialism. The most significant right opportunist politics in this period were that of New Morning. It put forward the existence of a youth nation, that would become revolutionary and become the basis of revolutionary struggle in the U.S. This document completely liquidated the distinction between oppressor and oppressed nations, and extolled "dope" at a time when a main strategy of imperialism against the Black nation was the importation of heroin into Black communities. The New Morning line completely opposed the political basis for the organization's existence and its actions. All of this was pointed out by the New York 21 in a criticism, but the organization never responded. The failure of the WUO to engage in political struggle with Third World revolutionaries is a measure of the national chauvinism and arrogance that has existed within the organization.

Prairie Fire was written in opposition to the line of New Morning and to overcome the de-mobilization caused by its opportunist line. Prairie Fire once again laid a correct political basis for the organization to exist and act. It clearly analyzes the leading role of the national liberation movements in the world proletarian revolution and in this country. It begins an historical analysis of the forces which have prevented revolution in the oppressor nation, and the means and necessity to oppose the forces of national and male chauvinism in the development of revolution in the oppressor nation. Prairie Fire began to correct the WUO's incorrect line on women, for the first time. On the whole, it was an important step toward the formulation of an anti-imperialist line and strategy for the oppressor nation, and a useful contribution to the struggle against opportunism within the U.S. Left.

At the same time, opportunism, white and male chauvinism, is clearly expressed in Prairie Fire. The Go to the People section shows this tendency most clearly. It puts forward a totally spontaneous and economist concept of organizing, completely abandoning the political principles that predominate in the book.

The Go to the People section clearly summarizes the anarchist, spontaneous and opportunist tendency that has existed in the organization since the beginning. It was between these two tendencies that struggle broke out and which led to the defeat of anti-imperialism within the WUO. By the time Prairie Fire was printed in July of 1974, this struggle had been completed within the leadership, and an

opportunist, economist direction firmly set.

For two years, the WUO has used Prairie Fire and the real strengths of its history to cover the abandonment of the movements of national liberation (especially the Black liberation movement) and the women's movement. Because the WUO has been respected and trusted, the effect of its line and organizing has been to mislead, disorganize and destroy anti-imperialist organization nationally.

The WUO abandoned the strategy of building an organization and movement in the oppressor nation to give concrete support to the national liberation movements and replaced it with the populist strategy of "uniting the multi-national working class" (see Our Class Stand). This strategy opposed the distinction between oppressor and oppressed nations, and subsumed the Black liberation movement into the struggle of the whole class. For example, in the article "Break the Chains" prisons are described as tools of capitalist oppression, not forces of national and colonial oppression.

In Our Class Stand the entire system of white supremacy through which imperialism oppresses nations is reduced to a problem of bad ideas among white workers. The material basis and structure of bribery, privilege, political and social status granted to the whole population of the oppressor nation is liquidated and along with it the material basis for the liquidation of the national question within the oppressor nation left. This led directly to the abandonment of the struggle against opportunism: in fact, the leadership became convinced that the main danger within the left was "left sectarianism."

The WUO liquidated all struggle in support of national liberation. The WUO has not done an action in support of Black people since June of 1974. In Boston we said that the issue was racism, not national liberation for the Black nation. We did nothing to support the Black Liberation Army in this period when they were struggling within the prisons and courts.

The WUO has not done a single thing to support the struggle of undocumented workers. In the article "Imperialism = Hunger" we do not say among the suggestions of things to do: support the demands of undocumented workers. Mexicanos are forced by imperialism's domination of the Mexican economy to emigrate to the U.S. in search of employment and decent wages but then are murdered at the border and brutally hunted down in the fashion of the "search and destroy" missions used in Vietnam. The only project group for this work within the WUO was disbanded.

In the period since Wounded Knee, the Native American movement has suffered extreme repression by the imperialist state and has still dealt it some revolutionary blows. The WUO has done nothing to support this movement beyond sporadic propaganda.

In the action in support of the Ponce strike in Puerto Rico, we don't raise the demand "Independence for Puerto Rico". We try to organize support on the basis of the anti-worker, strike-breaking tactics being used there; not because it is our duty to fight for the liberation of nations oppressed by U.S. imperialism. In the follow-up article we reduced ourselves to asking readers to send money to the Ponce strike fund.

Support for the right of self-determination is a fundamental principle for revolutionaries of oppressor nations; in abandoning the national liberation movements we adopted a stance of socialism in words, but imperialism and chauvinism in deeds.

Within the U.S. oppressor nation (and throughout the imperialist system) male supremacy operates as a system to maintain the private servitude and super-exploitation of women and to maintain their social domination. The bourgeois nuclear family is the cornerstone of this system, a form which maintains the subservience of women to men, individualizes child-rearing and domestic work, and maintains women as a ready reserve army of labor to be called on and super-exploited according to the unequal development of different sectors of the imperialist economy, and the incidence of war which drains the labor pool of male workers.

This system grants to all men (including workers) real privileges (very similar to those all white people hold in relation to oppressed peoples): the ability to dominate women and a sense of superiority; more educational opportunities; better jobs and wages; access to positions of power within the system; and protection from prosecution for rape and wife beating. Male supremacy manifests itself in every social institution and in a dominant ideology of male chauvinism (sexism). Male chauvinism is socialized into all men and is continually reinforced by society. The system of male supremacy is the material and social basis of opposition by "revolutionaries" to the revolutionary struggle of women for liberation. Male supremacy is a foundation of the whole system of imperialism, key to imperialist exploitation and domination.





Racism and sexism operate in close connection within U.S. imperialism. White men are given license to rape and assault women of oppressed nations; Black men are lynched and castrated. But when imperialism uses the white woman to fortify the oppression of nations by participation in white prerogatives, it does so in such a way that her own degradation and oppression are driven home all the more.

The WUO has never previously developed a correct analysis of the material basis of male supremacy. Without this understanding it has been impossible for the WUO to develop a correct line on the struggle of women for liberation. One form of the wrong line has been to see sexism as a problem of bad ideas among men, again stripping ideology from its material and social basis. The most reactionary form of the line was that expressed in "The Women's Question is a Class Question" and in "Women Workers": the line that reduces the special oppression of women to their superexploitation as members of the waged work force. This eliminates the basis of this superexploitation - women's servitude in the family; and eliminates its concrete manifestations in the institutions of society and consciousness and attitudes of men.

The consequences of this wrong line has been to have an attitude that bourgeois feminism and separatism are the greatest dangers in relation to the women's movement. Stated directly, this means that the greatest danger to women is other women.

The WUO's male chauvinist line has consistently opposed the independent women's movement, and internally the leadership has opposed the development of women's groups with power to develop strategy, and criticize men within the organization. Because the policy of the leadership has been to divide women and

oppose solidarity among them, the women in the organization at all levels have been made to depend on the opinions of men. This phenomenon was a major lever for pushing the wrong line within the WUO.

The liquidation of the material and social basis of women's oppression in the WUO's political line led to having no comprehension of the revolutionary content of the independent women's movement, and a consistent line that women could only be revolutionaries if they worked in the whole movement. At one point this meant the anti-imperialist movement, for the last two years it was the "class struggle." In every case, the consistent feature was this: women can be revolutionary only if they work with men.

In every respect the WUO's line has reinforced the domination of women by men.

The abandonment of these two key revolutionary principles meant the abandonment of the concept of revolutionary class struggle. In its place the WUO developed an economist, spontaneous view of class struggle. Under the cover of supporting the historic mission of the working class to make revolution, the organization put forward a view that workers could only be fooled into making revolution, lured and manipulated into struggle by the bait of higher wages. This is precisely the view of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which bribes and manipulates workers in the oppressor nation in order to gain their support.

In the name of responding to "weaknesses" on the working class, we abandoned the strongest part of our analysis of the working class, simply that it, like every class in the oppressor nation, has to be analyzed on the basis of how imperialist expansion and empire has affected it. This involves more than mechanical recitation of Marx's Capital. It means discovering the forces that have prevented revolution in the oppressor nation, and finding those sectors of the working class where opposition to national and male chauvinism and arrogance have and are developing. Class analysis in the oppressor nation must take as its basis the growth of capitalism into a world system of exploitation and oppression - imperialism. On this basis we can determine the advanced sectors of the working class in the oppressor nation, within which an anti-imperialist communist party can develop, and a revolutionary mass movement can be built.

White and male chauvinist politics led to the liquidation of military and clandestine struggle, which has been a major strength and contribution of the WUO to the whole anti-imperialist movement. The revolutionary basis for engaging in armed struggle in the oppressor nation is the recognition of the leadership of the national liberation movements in attacking and defeating imperialism. A proletarian internationalist

view of the socialist revolution involves developing all forms of struggle necessary to support the most advanced, not waiting for the most backward. The existence of bourgeois democracy in the oppressor nation can not be an excuse for failing to respond to the fascism and genocide used against the oppressed nations.

Abandoning revolutionary anti-imperialism was the political basis for a denigration of the anti-imperialist left, and cadres; and reduction, in our view, of the anti-imperialist left to dupers, suitable and necessary only to carry our line to the people. Our spontaneous attituded towards mass work, and our opposition to ideological struggle within the left was arrogant and manipulative. It was the reflection of a hegemonic view of party-building; an attitude that we alone build the Party, that we were the only people capable of developing theory and strategy for revolution. We constinually rejected

the wrong line and strategy of the WUO was to cover the left flank of Meany and Woodcock et al.

The WUO's white and male chauvinist path would lead the great revolutionary advances made in the oppressor nation during the '60's, the movement and its leaders into reformism and class collaboration.

The struggle within the WUO to overturn its opportunist line has produced many changes. The hegemonic relation to the Left; the chauvinist response to criticism from national liberation movements, communist organizations, and revolutionaries in the oppressed nations; and rejection of the importance of the women's movement isolated us from political struggle and suppressed criticism of the wrong line. Overturning all these things has been essen-

A PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALIST VIEW OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION INVOLVES DEVELOPING ALL FORMS OF STRUGGLE NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THE MOST ADVANCED, NOT WAITING FOR THE MOST BACKWARD.

principled criticisms of our wrong line, and engaged in personal attacks, character assassination, etc. against those who continued to make revolutionary criticisms of our line and strategy.

The very same course was foolowed by the organization in its practical work in the left. We attempted to dominate organizations, rather than leading thru education and persuasion, and open political struggle based on unity-struggle-unity. Our activity in the left has been disastrous and destructive, it has caused a tremendous set-back to the development of revolution in the oppressor nation by destroying revolutionary anti-imperialist organizations, and cadres; isolating those we couldn't destroy; and by legitimizing and strengthening white and male chauvinist politics in the movement. We abandoned our revolutionary duty to support the national liberation movements and the fight for the liberation of women and led others to adopt the same stance.

In "Osawatomie" we attacked OL, RU, the CPUSA; but internally the leadership adopted the stance of conciliation, and desiring unity with the opportunists and revisionists. This attitude shows that the organization was not pursuing the goal of revolution, but rather the goal of replacing these sects as the main "left" opposition in the bourgeois labor movement. The concrete result of

tial to the development and resolution of political struggle in the WUO. The criticisms made of us by all these forces have played an important role in this process. The political struggle against opportunism has been of special importance to us.

The existence of forces within the PFOC that have stood by the politics of Prairie Fire, and continued to develop them has been decisive to the struggle for a revolutionary line within the WUO. We have grown and learned much from study of the documents produced by revolutionaries in the PFOC. We feel that the revolutionary anti-imperialist line expressed in the March report of the PFOC National Committee, and subsequent documents, especially the Draft Program, is a correct and leading line for revolutionaries in the oppressor nation. We wish to express profound gratitude to the comrades who have struggled for these politics, and who have consistently criticized the wrong line of the WUO in a correct and principled manner.

This whole process has driven home the lesson of the wrongness of the elitist bureaucratic concepts of leadership and organization previously held by the WUO. We intend to develop our organization and its practice as a part of the whole anti-imperialist/communist movement; a part subordinate to the interests of the whole movement.



Because of this attitude we feel that the most important task of anti-imperialist communists in the oppressor nation is the development of unity around a correct political line and strategy; and the formation of organizations that embody these politics and carry them into struggle with U.S. imperialism, and opportunists. In the long run our goal is the formation of a Leninist combat Party.

What underlies this goal is the need to create a militant, proletarian internationalist force that supports the national liberation movements through all forms of struggle. Support for the struggle of women for liberation is essential to this strategy. This is the only path to the destruction of U.S. imperialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the construction of socialism in the U.S.

Revolutionary struggle in the U.S. will take many forms, peaceful and violent; legal and illegal; open and secret.

When revolution succeeds it will be because all these forms of struggle, including armed struggle, have been developed by the participation of millions of people. Armed struggle is not the main form of struggle in this period, yet to successfully lead our own people in socialist revolution we must struggle to understand and develop armed struggle alongside all our other movements. We are committed to maintain and develop the experience and history of the WUO in armed struggle, and to communicate important lessons.

We intend to participate in the political and revolutionary struggle necessary to create political and organizational unity. For us, self-criticism/criticism is the most important form of struggle within the revolutionary movement. "Tell no lies, claim no easy victories" - Amilcar Cabral.

Weather Underground Organization

criticism of the central committee

By the Revolutionary Committee

In the Public Self-Criticism of the Revolutionary Committee we attempted to expose the transformation of the WUO from a revolutionary organization to an opportunist one that based its practice on white and male supremacist political lines and policies. We did this to provide a tool for revolutionaries in the struggle against opportunism and to aid in the undoing of the damage wreaked by the politics and activities of the WUO.

Because the base, networks, and leadership of the WUO are still at work promoting the same old bad practice in many areas, it is necessary to go further and place responsibility for specific crimes against the revolutionary movements. We do this so that the role and effect of the WUO will no longer be invisible; to contribute to helping identify and destroy the ability of the WUO to continue as agents of the bourgeoisie within the revolution.

This statement is necessary because the Central Committee of the WUO has consciously used a variety of media and gimmicks to promote a mythology about the organization and themselves. This veil only serves to hide the damage that they have done to the revolutionary movements and their own abandonment of revolutionary principles and direction. Before anyone of the Central Committee members, or their allies put themselves forward as part of the revolution they must answer for their actions. This statement is put forward in opposition to the vested interest of the Central Committee, and its allies, in maintaining the WUO.

For ourselves, who were members and leaders of the WUO in our own right, and were organized by and put into practice the white and male supremacist policies of the Central Committee, the release of this criticism of the CC makes deepening of our own self-criticism more necessary. Investigation of the practice of the organization has uncovered the full weight of the crimes of the organization, and shown how deeply white and male supremacy went in all of us. This depth of realization was not a part of our consciousness in writing the Public Self-Criticism, and led to compromise with wrong lines, and a re-emergence of the domineering and arrogant tone so characteristic of statements by the WUO. These errors were the direct outcome of white and male supremacy within us. In order to write this document we have had to engage in fuller self-criticism/criticism of these politics among us. We recognize that everyone who was a member of the WUO has a reason to want to limit its political exposure; our own self-conceptions, status and power have been based on being part of the WUO. So this examination of the Central Committee has forced us to examine ourselves.

There is no reason to protect from criticism those who made a positive accomplishment after they have abandoned that direction. It is our view that the line of the CC of the WUO and the entirety of the organization's practice for the past two years has been opportunist and served the US imperialists; but, we are not the ones who must make this judgment. This is why we are releasing this information.

Very little has ever been written about the internal history of the WUO; what has been is mainly false. This makes it difficult for people outside the organization to understand the development or motivation of the organization's practice. In the present circumstances we feel that it is necessary to provide a summary of the past three years, and place key events in their proper relationships.

In October of 1973 the WUO was completely disorganized as a result of three political factors. First, the white supremacy of New Morning (see Weather Eye, politics formulated by Jeff Jones and supported by the entire CC) had eliminated the political basis of many members original commitment--support for Black liberation, Vietnam, and armed struggle. Second, male supremacy acted on in two ways: smashing of women's solidarity and organization, rejection of criticism of sexism in men, especially among the CC; and an organized campaign by the leadership against gay women and men within the organization. Finally, the CC's practice of isolating, villifying and driving out anyone who disagreed with them, combined with giving more responsibility and power to those who supported them.

The CC analysis was that they had vacillated, and that the cadres were not building their leadership, and had been "irresponsible" in criticizing them for authoritarian methods.

At this time the CC, led by Bill Ayers, developed a plan for re-organization. It was summarized by three slogans: "Educate Ourselves, Organize Ourselves, Activate Ourselves Around a Written Program" (see "Our Class Stand", Os. #3). At no time did the CC make self-criticism for the politics of New Morning, their male supremacy, or bourgeois methods of leadership. The initiation of the plan was actually accompanied by the smashing of a woman's initiative. In retrospect it is possible to see that the development of women's organization was a force contending with both the power and politics of the CC proposal, for nowhere in their slogans is there any mention of why we should be organized. This is, then organization for the sake of individual power; not to support national liberation or to fight for the liberation of women.

The writing of Prairie Fire was the center-piece for generating organization,

and Bill Ayers assumed this responsibility. But his first draft was no good, and was strongly criticized. At this point, the CC called on the skills of an experienced and trusted comrade (E.C.) but one who was not under their discipline. He was able to ally with and lead a small group within the organization to struggle over line and do the writing. Together with a separate group of women this group was responsible for the dominance of a revolutionary line in Prairie Fire. The CC did not lead this process and four of them-- Ayers, Jones, Sojourn and Reed-- fought tooth and nail for opportunist lines. For all five of them the politics were secondary to the fact that it was producing organization.

When opportunist criticisms were made of the drafts produced ("Support for national liberation is moralism" and Sojourn's "idealism, not economism is the main danger") by the writing group, Ayers and B. Dohrn discouraged struggle against them by saying it was sectarian and factional. Throughout the writing the CC put organizational unity above political principle and at every point defended the opportunists.

These struggles finally came out in the open at the national meeting to ratify the final draft. Consistently and overwhelmingly, the opportunist position was voted down on every issue. Yet three months later the main opportunist leader at this meeting was put in charge of political education by the CC, and the leader who defended the line of the book, E.C., was forced out of the organization by Bill Ayers.

This occurred because the struggles over line also emerged in questions of strategy for using the book. The difference was over whether to present it as a contribution to the political struggle for a revolutionary line going on in the left, or whether to use it as a means to recruit more members out of the open movement. These differences broke out over whether the book should be printed secretly or in the open; and over how to distribute the book.

The CC wanted to use the book to establish its control over the anti-imperialist left, a position that was mainly supported by the secret members, and the few people who supported the opposite position were forced out. At the same time the CC had gone a long way toward overthrowing the political line of the book, so that its goal was not only to control the anti-imperialist left, but to change its direction away from support for national liberation movements, toward unprincipled participation in economic struggle. These politics can be seen in the Go to the People section of Prairie Fire, which section was written by Bill Ayers (also the main architect of the organizational plan of the WUO).

The Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, established and built up by comrades who welcomed and supported the general revolutionary and anti-imperialist content of the book, began to be a significant political force on the left. The Central Committee concluded that if it could control this organization

it would be an important step toward realizing its over-blown ambitions to control the whole left. For a year and a half they tried hard. Editorials in Osawatimie were fired off against the revolutionary forces in PFOC; people outside PFOC were mobilized to denounce the revolutionary line and people inside; after these tactics were rebuffed and defeated, direct intervention was attempted. But this had an opposite effect: the resistance of genuine revolutionaries outside and inside PFOC led to rejection of the wrong opportunist and white and male supremacist politics and organizing and to exposure and crisis for the line of the CC and its authority within the WUO itself.

Along with this activity the CC had a strategy of making the main work of the organization recruitment from the anti-imperialist and womens' movements. The goal was to extend the direct influence of the CC over the whole movement, and to redirect these movements along revisionist lines. The CC thought they were the only force capable of leading the movement in the oppressor nation:

We need to build a successful struggle, strong organization and a winning revolutionary party...We know where to begin. (Osawatimie, Spring 1975)

Because of the respect held for the WUO in the anti-imperialist left, and because of Prairie Fire, the organization was able to grow rapidly in the months after the publication of the book. By wintertime the WUO had the resources and members to fund and distribute Osawatimie. When the CC was questioned about military work, they replied, "distribution is an action, this increases our clandestine capability." It really increased the power and influence of the CC, and its opportunism.

In the lead editorial of issue #1 of



Weather Eye



LNS

Osawatomie, the women's movement is not mentioned, even though the article is about the left. In the same issue, the Toolbox on "Internationalism" does not mention the necessity for revolutionaries in oppressor nations to support the right of self-determination and secession of oppressed nations. The issue in Boston is racism, not white supremacy. The economic crisis comes from inadequate markets and the struggle of the working class for higher wages. In these articles the basic direction of abandoning anti-imperialist principles in order to expand the mass base is clear.

Along with Osawatomie, the CC began a whole media blitz advertising the organization. The original contacts for the film Underground were made and Abby Hoffman was given support and assistance by the CC in return for promoting the WUO on TV and in the New Times Magazine. Support for the organization was developed on the basis of hype.

By the spring of 1975 the CC felt that the organization's power had been built sufficiently to take on bigger projects, but at the same time the restrictions of clandestinity were a fetter on its development. Jeff Jones hatches a plan to begin surfacing the organization. Jones planned his bid for power along the lines expressed in Osawatomie:

We are building a communist organization to be part of the forces which build a

revolutionary communist party to lead the working class to seize power and build socialism. This involves taking responsibility for every aspect of the struggle. This is our direction...

(Our Class Stand, Sept. 1975)

It is our responsibility... to rouse the working class and join wholeheartedly in all its struggles against US Imperialism....(ibid.)

The original plan to surface two members of the CC to lead the inversion was rejected that summer, but not from a revolutionary position. It was thought that two people would be ineffective, so the concept was broadened to include the entire organization. The CC position on surfacing was raised internally as the question, "Are we organized correctly to do what we want?"

We evaluate action by analyzing the extent to which it reflects and builds the organization....whether actions win people...at this point a comparatively small sector of the population actively supports armed struggle.

(Politics in Command, Spring, 1975)

This was the theoretical justification for the elimination of armed struggle. From the fall of 1975 on, this plan, termed "inversion", was put into practice without the knowledge of most members. Lawyers were organized to prepare legal defense, the film Underground was planned both as a means to sanitize the image of the organization and to raise money for legal defense; new organizational bases were set up from which to surface; and a plan was developed to increase the frequency of Osawatomie and to create a "professional" staff. Overtures were made to the Democratic Party in connection with break-ins against family and associates of the WUO. This provided the possibility of deals in return for the trials being a lever for purging of Nixon people from the Justice Department and the FBI.

This plan would be the culmination of the organizational strategy to dominate and control large sections of the left. It is the logical outcome of the abandonment of the political principles that generated the WUO in the first place. For the CC, who once stood at the head of the largest student organization in the US oppressor nation, it would mean the re-establishment of former position and power.

The consequences of this history are the crimes of social imperialism; deadly, grave crimes committed against the women's movement, against revolutionary anti-imperialist politics and organization in the oppressor nation. These crimes are backed up and justified by the CC's writings in Osawatomie and in their internal documents.

Crimes Against National Liberation Struggles

In a word, white supremacy meant active opposition to the national liberation struggles, and especially the Black liberation struggle. The CC sought to dominate and control national liberation struggles and Third



Gay Liberation took to the streets in the late 60's

Gay Flames

World organizations. In all relationships with Third World organizations the CC put the WWO's safety first, refused to accept criticism, and rejected Third World leadership. Since 1971, the CC put first the struggle of Vietnam and then Puerto Rico forward in opposition to Black liberation in the US.

The CC used its relationships with Third World organizations to increase its own power and prestige, and to justify rejecting criticism of its white supremacy. Joe Reed, August 1975 internal paper on Cadre School:

The Black worker--male and female--play the decisive role in the US revolution. While stressing the central role of the Black liberation struggle this analysis differs from the sentence in Prairie Fire which says: 'The Black liberation struggle for self-determination is the leading force in the US revolution.' This sentence implies that the national struggle of the Black people has the task of leading the whole US revolution to victory. It is the particular responsibility of the multinational proletariat to lead the struggle for socialist revolution in the whole US and to lead in the seizure of state power.

--In Boston, this meant withdrawing armed and political support from Black people who faced physical attacks by fascists: attacking their allies; taking cadre out of anti-racist work.

--Pushing economic reform as an alternative to anti-racist work, Third World solidarity work, prison defense. "Prisons are the state's first line of defense in the class war." (Osawatomie #2 Summer, 1975)

--At a time when the prisons were the front line of the Black liberation struggle, the CC attacked this movement as ultra left extremists, pulled cadres out of prison defense work, and controlled and dominated ...resources of the prison movement.

--Refused to do prison breaks of Black prisoners when asked. Leary the only prisoner ever liberated, were paid for that.

In a sentence, the program means this: Mobilize the oppressed and exploited people to wage class struggle against US imperialism, the common enemy.

(Osawatomie, 2/6, "Who We Are")

--This line organized for the prosecution of undocumented workers on the basis they were scabs.

--abandoned the Native American people in their struggle for survival and self-determination and ignored opportunities to give concret support and assistance.

--The one action in alleged support of Puerto Rico does not call for independence for Puerto Rico; it is limited to support for the Ponce cement strike.

Revolution...grows through the accumulated experience of the working class in every form of struggle, against

racism, lousy schools and high prices: for jobs, a living wage, for socially meaningful lives; against police repression, sexism, hunger...only in the practical work of building the class struggle can we develop the guerrilla struggle into popular armed struggle.

Armed Struggle and the SLA,
(Osawatomie #4, B. Dohrn)

--meant the abandonment of armed struggle in support of national liberation,

--attacked the BLA for being "militarist", refused to give any form of aid or support (to any Black revolutionary organizations, ed.) on the alleged basis that they weren't Marxist-Leninist, or organized along the lines of democratic centralism, as defined by us. The same was true for Native American fighters.

--disregarded all criticisms (direct and indirect, ed.) about our line and practice from Third World revolutionaries: the Panther 21, Ruchell Magee, the Black caucus at HTC, prisoners' letter about the film.

--opposed the Palestinian struggle as terrorist.

Crimes Against Women and the Women's Movement

For seven years the CC has supported male supremacy, denied the special oppression of women, sought to avoid criticism, attempted to co-opt, then dominate and then destroy the women's movement. The all-out attack is most clearly stated by Celia Sojourn in "Women's Question is a Class Question," Winter 1975:

We need a women's movement right now unlike anything we have built in the last ten years. (emphasis added) A mass movement of women whose organization reaches into every office, sweatshop, household and high school to demand jobs, equal pay, adequate income, day care the right to unionize, an end to every type of racial discrimination and equality for women. This is a turning point for the women's movement when it could fall definitively to the elitist leadership of bourgeois women's organizations..

Part of the male supremacist line was the CC's explicitly anti-gay line and practice. Their stated line was that gayness was a matter of sexual preference not politics; but their line in practice was to define gay relationships, politics and organizations as inherently racist, reactionary and irrelevant. Lesbianism was a separatist nightmare and threatened their politics and power.

In a word, male supremacy meant opposing in every way, and with the weight of the entire organization, the struggle against male supremacy, power and liberation for women.

--the poetry book "Sing a Battle Song" was an attempt to co-opt and fend off criticisms for male supremacist politics, thru showing we were nice and could contribute

to women's culture. Lesbian poetry axed by Sojourn, on explicit anti-gay basis.

--HEW action carried out to leapfrog the women's movement and speak directly to masses of women, on the basis of opposing the organized struggle against male supremacy within the revolution.

--pulled women out of women's unions and organizations; competed with women's movement for cadres; discredited women who fought against male supremacy

--set up B. Dohrn as archtypical exceptional woman in opposition to all other women to enforce and be a cover for male supremacy

--dominated or made the attempt all major anti-imperialist women's conferences and demonstrations with liquidationist politics on women, using Third World struggles to justify a male supremacist line:

--At HTC used influence to oppose all attempts to struggle for women's caucus, or to challenge corrupt line on women in Bill of Rights.

--Opposed support for gay women in struggle against the state: Susan Saxe, Terry Turgeon, Ellen Grusse.

--Rejected revolutionary criticism of women fugitives, refused to assist them.

--Opposed support for Third World women in prison and under attack by the state: Assata Shakur, Joanne Little, Inez Garcia.

--destroyed anti-rape, anti-sterilization work; opposed all superstructural aspects of women's oppression struggles.

Crimes Against the Anti-Imperialist Left

In a word, abandoning anti-imperialism meant substituting a spontaneous and economic strategy in place of support for national liberation and the liberation of women. The practical task to carry out this strategy was the achievement of hegemony and leadership over the anti-imperialist forces in the oppressor nation. Thus, to subvert and control the development of revolutionary anti-imperialism within the oppressor nation and stamp out principled opposition.

--sought to penetrate and control by bringing under our leadership key sectors of anti-imperialist organization and work: Third World solidarity work, presses, publications, collectives

--under the cover of Prairie Fire, raised hundreds of thousands of dollars from the movement given in support of national liberation and armed struggle, but used to attack national liberation and armed struggle through Osawatomie, the film, HTC.

--organized for white and male supremacy inside all organizations had influence in; attacked revolutionary line of those we could not control thru use of character assassination.

--Secretly attended major conferences and demonstrations to promote domination

of the white and male supremacist line of WUO.

--Gave aid and comfort to opportunists, pushed people as leaders on the basis of their willingness to ally with the WUO's white and male supremacy politics, under the guise of commitment to building the WUO.

--Used the cover of the need for security to hide the crimes of WUO and to wall off revolutionaries from one another. Meanwhile building an organization and practice that violated all rules of real security. Relied upon white privilege and the tolerance of the state instead of upon the revolutionary movement.

The Film, Underground

Underground is a crime against national liberation movements, women, and the anti-imperialist left. It is a vehicle for promoting opportunist politics, and was part of the WUO's strategy for achieving hegemony over the revolutionary forces in the US. The CC is responsible for the film -- Jeff Jones initiated the idea and led its implementation. Our denunciation of the film is not a criticism of the filmmakers.

1. The Film is national chauvinist.

--the focus is on us as individual white revolutionaries instead of national liberation movements, the leading revolutionary forces in the US and the world. When footage of Black and Third World people appears, it is only part of explaining our political development. Third World people are again used in the street interviews, to show us relating to oppressed people. This is substituting "relating to Third World people" for a revolutionary line and practice about national liberation.



What Have Women Done?

--the portrayal of ourselves as gentle, reasonable, well-educated and WHITE was a move to disassociate ourselves from the alleged "extremism" of prison struggles, the BIA, FAIN, SLA... from armed struggle itself. Bill Ayers is indignant at people who call us adventurist and terrorists.

--the discussion about the Town House explosion is a way of saying, "our comrades have died, we have crossed the line, we are beyond criticism, not subject to the same pressures towards sellout that every other white organization faces." Jeff Jones' rap about waking up each morning wondering how many times he'll be nervous that day is an arrogant lie that denies the existence of privilege in our lives.

--the reality of oppressor/oppressed nations is liquidated constantly. Examples: B. Dohrn asks, "who created the wealth of this country?" and answers with "the people," followed by several shots of white workers. No mention of Black slavery, of the land and labor stolen from Native Americans and Mexicanos, of the tremendous wealth derived from imperialist plunder around the world. Bill Ayers talks about the "American people" rising up to become a people for themselves, comparing them to the Vietnamese. B. Dohrn says we are a white organization for historical reasons, but never names national oppression and white supremacy for the creation of separate organization.

2. The film reeks of male supremacy from beginning to end.

--the material basis of women's oppression is denied, and with one exception sexism is defined as a bad attitude, a bad idea. The reality of male privilege is denied. The women's movement is never mentioned. The WUO has a reputation in the Left for deep male supremacy but Ayers assures the audience that even though sexism used to be a bad attitude in some of the men, things are different now because of how "loving and encouraging" the women have been. This is an attack on women who fiercely fight against male supremacy as man-hating separatists -- that is not loving and encouraging.

--The presence of the three women in the film is the substitution for the missing revolutionary line on women. We are clearly an organization of exceptional people: women who have made it without the women's movement, men who stopped being sexist so painlessly they didn't feel a thing.

3. The film attacks the anti-imperialist left by denying its existence.

--The message is clear: the WUO and the masses of white American people will make the revolution. "Socialism for white people." This film organized for opportunist politics. It is a setback to revolution, a betrayal.

--It was a direct attempt to counter the effects of PFOC's rectification. The

fact that it was released after the Hard Times Conference, when the WUO's line was publicly discredited, indicates that the CC really rejected revolutionary criticism of its line while pretending to accept it.

--It also reveals the CC's willingness to go to any lengths to try to build its own power without regard to revolutionary principles.

For these crimes, the WUO and in particular the entire Central Committee is collectively responsible. Within the CC, competition, not political struggle over principles, was the way of life. Defining particular responsibility among them is not a function of sorting out two line struggle. Their method was division of labor and unity and conciliation at all costs. So ascribing individual responsibility must be understood in this light.

Bill Ayers: Wrote "Go to the People" in Prairie Fire, editor of Osawatimie, main person responsible for politics of organization, for recruiting, for fund-raising. With Jeff Jones, main leader of the organization, main developer of the opportunist line, culminating in inversion. Osawatimie articles: editorials 1 & 2, all the Tool Boxes. Organized for prosecution of undocumented workers. Wrote Politics in Command, and with Jones is main person responsible for liquidation of armed struggle and clandestinity. Led public glorification of revisionism in Osawatimie, at HTC, in film Underground. Responsible for character assassinations of above ground revolutionaries. Attempted destruction of prison solidarity movement.

Jeff Jones: Along with Ayers, main leader of the organization, developed opportunist lines over seven years: New Morning, his political conception though written by Dohrn and Sojourn. Never agreed to criticism of NM. To this day main rear base is yippie, Abby Hoffman types, most reactionary aspects of youth culture. Allied with Ayers to throw out left-wing forces in writing of Prairie Fire, to consolidate opportunist line and power. Conceived and led film and strategy for inversion. With Ayers seized position as military leader to control women, limit and eventually eliminate armed struggle. He has historically fought to do actions to counter criticism of his cowardly collaborationist political line. In Feb. 1976 after the Black caucus and women at HTC strongly attacked opportunist politics, Jones takes responsibility for national production of Osawatimie to go bimonthly and to prepare for inversion. Tried to organize a pamphlet called "Best of the Hard Times Conference" to recoup the blow to his power. Presently working on a book about the film for the same end, and to counter the criticism of revolutionaries. Osawatimie articles: Fighting for Our Film;

Truck Stop 1 and 2; Korea; Cambodia.

Bernardine Dohrn: Both major leader in own right, and spokeswoman for Ayers and Jones. Fronted self to speak for the entire organization (CC) when leaders and developers of line were Ayers and Jones. Had major and primary responsibility for development and carrying out of line with regard to solidarity work--relations with Third World people, national liberation struggles; and in developing line to destroy the women's movement. On the backs of women who were wasted and excluded from the revolution Dohrn ascended and was put forward by Ayers and Jones as a leader of women. They built a pedestal based on contempt for women and for national liberation struggles and on it Dohrn got her strength, dignity, prestige and power on the basis of superiority--an alliance and fostering of white and male supremacy. This is bourgeois feminism, the accusation with which Dohrn sought to destroy the women's movement as a threat to the male supremacists who guaranteed her power. She traded her history of principled support for national liberation struggles and the fight to build armed struggle in the oppressor nation for what seemed to be a guaranteed position at the head of the revolution with international recognition. Osawatimie articles: Mighty Army; Armed Struggle and the SIA; Our Class Stand; Anti-Imperialism vs. Opportunism: A Self-Criticism; Out of Work.

Joe Reed: With Ayers, editor of Osawatimie, the driving force and lead writer for the CC's ideological line. He had primary responsibility for political education of cadres and led both cadre schools. Developed the white supremacist position on Boston, major responsibility for the deadly work of the WUO in that city. After cadre school #2 stated explicitly that Prairie Fire was wrong with regard to the leading role of the Black liberation struggle, that working class struggle was leading. Consistent with this, he argued that Boston represented a major attack against the working class, within which racism was the main contradiction. Self-determination was specifically not an issue: therefore all cadre were removed from anti-racist work in support of self-determination for Black people and put into their own opportunist organizational priorities by the WUO leaders. Funds were organized away from the Black struggle. He led this, developed and glorified this is Osawatimie. Osawatimie articles: Boston articles; Commentary: Angola; Fireworks; John Brown; Anti-Imperialism vs. Opportunism: A Self Criticism; Our Class Stand, Default.

Celia Sojourn: In an organization dominated by male supremacy, how a woman got to be leader was to line up with the CC men, on the backs of women. This was Sojourn's role as well as Dohrn's. The con-

dition of her leadership was the unstinting destruction of women cadres, of every attempt to struggle for the liberation of women, and of the development of a political line and direction to carry this out in the entire women's movement. The culmination of this was her work in developing "Women's Question is a Class Question." With Dohrn had particular responsibility for carrying out solidarity work, and as such her articles, writings and work with regard to the Puerto Rican struggle have to be seen as on the back and in opposition to Black liberation struggle. Osawatomie articles: Women's Question is a Class Question; Puerto Rico articles; Prison page and prison article and cover; Politics in Command.

Among the closest allies of the CC were the "loyal lieutenants" developed by the CC who achieved power and privilege in the WUO in exchange for unflinching public and internal support for the CC line and practice. When public criticisms of the WUO reached proportions which allowed the discrediting of the CC internally some of these lieutenants seized the opportunity to maneuver their own selves into leadership. While they were the most outspoken in decrying the "crimes" of the CC, their political line was no different and the schemes to maintain their hegemony of the old organization no less determined.

Because some old WUO members have joined forces to use the resources of

the old organization to continue the opportunist line and practice in new forms we feel it necessary to expose their leadership. While there are several other members of the WUO who bear particular responsibility after the CC, we are singling out one person, SLIC, who is the present leader of the continuation of these politics, and who is actively organizing against the forces of revolution.

What do these crimes amount to for the Central Committee and the WUO? White and male supremacy; material privilege in the form of prestige, power and status; the ability to control others and to lead a comfortable life. The domination of Third World nations and of women was the basis of seeking hegemony and control over the whole revolution, and turning it into counter-revolution, to "socialism" for white people.

The experience of the WUO showed that it is possible to initiate armed struggle in support of national liberation movements within the oppressor nation itself, and that the necessary base of anti-imperialist support exists among people in the oppressor nation to sustain it.

But, this experience also shows that revolutionary armed struggle can only be sustained if it is carried out in the context of struggle against the imperialist state and struggle against opportunism. White and male supremacy operated within the WUO over the years as forces to cause the abandonment and destruction of armed struggle and of clandestinity.



Post Wolcott

tape from bernardine dohn

This is Bernardine Dohrn. I am making this tape to acknowledge, repudiate and denounce the counter-revolutionary politics and direction of the Weather Underground Organization. Immediately during and after the publication of Prairie Fire, the Central Committee went back on the anti-imperialist line of Prairie Fire and aggressively opposed it. We led the entire organization to abandon the principles of anti-imperialism, liquidated the Black nation and the leading role of national liberation struggles, and heightened our attacks on the women's movement.

I repudiate and denounce the central committee of the WUO, myself included, who bear particular responsibility for the criminal consequences of having led the WUO into full blown opportunism. I am speaking for myself alone: I no longer speak for the rest of the central committee--Bill Ayers, Jeff Jones, Celia Sojourn, Joe Reed. Nor do I speak for the old organization.

This statement is a product of criticism and struggle carried out with me by the Revolutionary committee and other comrades.

The split in the WUO is real. To the extent that the old organization exists, it continues to maintain counter-revolution and remains a threat to revolutionary anti-imperialist politics and organization. No member of the central committee nor any former member who promotes the continuation of the WUO has overturned their wrong line or speaks for revolution.

I recognize that it will take a long time and tremendous struggle to overturn the world view from which my politics and leadership have come since the reversal of Prairie Fire. I am making this tape to acknowledge the seriousness of the crimes carried out by the WUO and myself, to be of help to revolutionaries engaged in the struggle against opportunism and US imperialism.

In this spirit, I would like to say to all Third World comrades and organizations we have known and related to, that all ties and relationships with the old organization are formally dissolved. Anyone from the WUO who attempts to maintain these formal relationships is doing so on the basis of white and male supremacy and is in opposition to revolution.

Since 1973, the central committee undermined solidarity with the Black struggle by criticising the revolutionary forces as left-sectarian. We elevated differences on Communist organization and Marxism-Leninism above oppressor nation solidarity with national liberation struggles. We completely failed to support and organize for the revolutionary struggle of the Black Liberation Army or to oppose the police terror directed against them. We attributed our survival and their losses to our superior politics and organizing, and not to our white privilege,



to the fascism directed against Third World struggles for liberation, or to our comfortable opportunist path.

We pitted other national liberation struggles against the Black movement. For a long time it was Vietnam. "Common Victories", a statement we wrote on the occasion of the Vietnam Cease-Fire, does not mention the imperialist attacks on the BIA, or the prison movement, or the genocidal murder of Black youth by racist police. When comrades criticised this, we accused them of pitting the Black struggle against Vietnam. Actually, it was our liquidation of Black liberation which failed to draw the relationship and support national liberation within "US borders."

These are crimes -- they are naked white supremacy, white superiority and chauvinist arrogance. The murder and capture of so many Black comrades has cost the Black movement heavily; the principled stand and ongoing revolutionary work of the BIA in prison has helped make the prison movement a leading center of revolutionary struggle. Our line and practice toward the leading role of Black liberation, toward the BIA and toward the prison movement is nothing short of betrayal of revolution -- selling out the Black struggle for our own safety, and in the name of revolution. Within the central committee, Bill Ayers and I were the most right-wing forces toward the BIA and the prison movement -- opposing solidarity and support in the name of building our organization or political differences. We removed cadre from prison work in order to do opportunist workplace organizing. We dismantled defense committees and destroyed activities which agitated in support of the Black struggle. We rejected or ignored Third World prisoners' criticism of us for our lack of armed struggle and for our increasing attacks on those carrying out armed struggle.

We developed and organized for a line on Boston that opposed the right of self-determination for Black people and supported an opportunist white supremacist analysis of the racist/fascist movement against Black people. The consequence was to destroy

anti-racist work there for a year and a half. We opposed slogans and strategies supporting the right of Black people to self-determination.

We opposed doing armed struggle in support of the struggle of Black people in Boston, following the line of the article "Politics in Command" that mass work is primary and armed struggle must wait for the white working class. Within the central committee, Jo Reed initiated and organized for this line.

We have used our support for the Puerto Rican struggle to cover our liquidation of the national question. First, we used it in the way we used Vietnam, as a banner to hide our opportunism. No force can even claim to be revolutionary today without token support for national liberation and even some practice to make it look good. We used the just demand for Puerto Rican independence to oppose self-determination for Black people and support for Black liberation--in Osawatimie, in the Hard Times conference and in July 4th.

But even our support for Puerto Rican independence was eroded and destroyed by our opportunist line which liquidated the national question. Thus the communique from the Ponce Cement Workers' action and the follow-up story in Osawatimie do not call for or support independence for Puerto Rico. We argued against Puerto Rican independence as a major demand for the Hard Times conference.

I organized for white supremacist and chauvinist politics which attacked undocumented workers. We organized for trade union politics and strategy willing to sacrifice the struggles and rights of Mexicano workers for the privileges and immediate gain of those living in the US. This is clear because we never supported the struggle of undocumented workers. We have existed as an organization on the West coast for six years without material support and solidarity with the Mexicano liberation struggle.

The solidarity work, our name for formal relations with Third World organizations and people, and other fugitives, was also guided by white and male supremacy and resulted in serious crimes against national liberation movements and against women. Within the central committee Celia Sojourn and I had special responsibility for this work.

We denied Black and Third World organizations aid and support they requested and rejected offers of meetings and joint work unless they were completely on our terms. That is, our security and our safety we placed above that of Black and Third World organizations. This was especially true of struggles under heavy attack by the state, under severe and murderous repression. I characterized these groups as left-sectarian, dangerous and threatening to us. By placing our protection and resources above the revolutionary principles of proletarian internationalism, we in fact operated to control Third World movements by making support and



resources available only on our white terms or by denying and withholding support.

Meanwhile, this organization refused to seek out or recruit revolutionary women fugitives. We characterized these women as anti-men, anti-communist, anti-Marxist-Leninist. Actually, the central committee feared their effect on women in the organization and was threatened by their criticisms of central committee leadership for male supremacy. We attacked and defeated a tentative proposal for a women's underground, to carry out anti-imperialist and revolutionary feminist armed struggle. This is another example of using the solidarity relationships to keep control of the weapons--keeping them out of the hands of revolutionary women as well as national liberation movements.

While denying support to Third World Liberation, to revolutionary armed struggle forces, and to revolutionary women fugitives, we used resource and cadre's efforts to support opportunist and bourgeois men fugitives. The most glaring example of this is our support in the form of time, money, cadres, of Abby Hoffman, a relationship which produced media attention for us, through the articles in New Times and his TV program.

For seven years I have upheld a politics which is male supremacist and opposed the struggle of women for liberation. I have attacked the women's movement as bourgeois, separatist, anti-communist, divisive,

anti-Third World, and a grave danger to revolution. I have been a token woman, part of the structure of women's leadership which actually served male supremacy, on the basis of liquidating the revolutionary content of women's politics and power, thus my leadership was used by men on the Central Committee, and I used it against other women.

In line and practice, I have given support to the continuing oppression, super-exploitation, violence, brutality, contempt, humiliation and suppression of women. Throughout this period we consolidated an anti-gay line which blamed gay people for the bourgeois aspects of the gay liberation movement, characterized gay liberation as right-wing, and failed to struggle against anti-gay ideas and practice.

In 1974, we set out to destroy the women's movement. Using the cover of Prairie Fire to justify ourselves, and our widespread influence over the movement, we had a great effect on boosting male supremacy and defeating the struggle against it.

By the summer of 1975, the attack on the women's movement and feminist politics was naked and bitter. I led the attack on cadre's work in women's unions, arguing that all women cadre should leave these organizations for work-place organizing of women. I opposed the political struggle of women and glorified the purely economic struggle. "Our Class Stand" never mentions women except to pat ourselves on the back for our great record. This attack on women and the women's movement was carried out in a very personal way against women most identified with the women's movement. The consequences were the collapse of several women's organizations, and the withdrawal of anti-imperialist women from women's political work. It resulted in taking women out of anti-rape work and in defence of Third World women like Joann Little, Inez Garcia, and Yvonne Warrow. It meant an end to women's health care programs, abortion and anti-sterilization work, and work with women prisoners.

"Womens' Question is a Class Question," written by Celia Sojourn consolidated these crimes and openly attacked the women's movement. It justified all the male supremacy of the left and blamed it on the "bourgeois womens' movement." It crystalized the opportunist and purely economist analysis of women.

Why did we do this? I don't really know. We followed the classic path of white so-called revolutionaries who sold out the revolution. For me to understand this requires much more study and struggle. What I do know is that by standing on my anti-imperialist record in a self-satisfied and self-justifying way, by assuming that I was beyond white privilege or allying with male privilege because I understood it—I prepared and led the way for a totally opportunist direction which infected all our work and betrayed revolutionary principles.

Our view of ourselves was that we, the central committee of the WUO were leading the revolution. We developed a political line that opposed the leading role of Black and Third World national liberation struggles and women. We sought therefore to oppose, control or destroy who disagreed with us: to control Third World groups, destroy the women's movement, and to achieve hegemony of the WUO on the left.

The aim of the WUO was nothing less than to establish itself, with its white and male supremacist politics as the leadership of the whole US revolutionary movement. Jeff Jones of the central committee initiated and led this strategy and the events I'm referring to. Bill Ayers was the second main leader of the plan.

In our view, the Hard Times Conference in Chicago was an opportunity to promote these aims. We felt that this conference would bring together almost every national liberation struggle, women's organization and anti-imperialist force and that the influence of our corrupt political line could predominate the event.

But for the revolutionary criticism of the Black caucus who repudiated the betrayal of the right of self-determination for Black people, and women who criticized and rejected our sabotage of the struggle against male supremacy, this conference could have been turned into a major victory for opportunism.

These criticisms constituted a setback but not a defeat for the central committee and the direction of the WUO. We carried on a superficial rectification campaign, but in no way overturned our line, self-conception or strategy.

The film Underground reeks of white and male supremacy and organizes against real revolution. The release of the film in May was a further step towards implementing our program; to organize a mass base of support on the basis of a reactionary line. It was a conscious attempt to organize support for the individuals in the film—not to strengthen the revolution.

The culmination of this strategy was to be inversion, the word we used to describe surfacing the entire organization. Along with the attempt to control the Hard Times Conference, we had counted on the movie and the establishment of a legal apparatus to implement this strategy of inversion. Jeff Jones proposed this concept, won the entire central committee to it, and has organized for its implementation. This is accurately described in the revolutionary committee's statement.

Because the central committee has not overturned its wrong line, and Jeff Jones is still pursuing the opportunist line and direction, I cannot say this plan has been stopped. Inversion sums up the total negation of the original principles which founded the WUO—support for national liberation movements and armed struggle.

(end of tape by Bernardine Dohrn)

letter from sisters in the w.u.o.

Dear PFOC sisters,

This is an internal paper tracing the development of the WUO's right opportunist line on women through the last seven years. We thought the paper might be useful to you at this time. Please use it however seems useful to you.

We are engaged in tremendous struggle and self-criticism in our organization over our opportunist, white and male supremacist line and direction of the last two years. We are sending this paper out of respect and acknowledgment of your revolutionary work and direction in struggling to overturn opportunism and develop a revolutionary line. We would like to do everything we can to support you in this. Your existence and work is of tremendous importance to the revolutionary forces in the oppressor nation left. Your leadership is of critical importance to us in our rectification.

In Struggle,
Sisters of WUO

Outline History of our Opportunist Line on Women

This is a paper arguing that our right opportunist line on women must be overturned. Without doing so there can be no revolutionary line, strategy and practice. The development of our wrong line is clear in the line of Osawatomie and our practice of the last two years. Opportunist errors have different content during different historical periods. At this stage of imperialism and inside the oppressor nation, the essence of opportunism is the denial of the national and women's questions, of white and male supremacy. This paper is an attempt to define our current wrong line on women and to trace its history and development.

The development of our right opportunist line on women is the result of a two-line struggle over the seven year period of our existence: the main contradiction has been between liquidation of the struggle against male supremacy, on the one hand, and the fight for revolutionary women's politics on the other. In the aspect of the struggle for a revolutionary line, there has been a contradiction between revolutionary and bourgeois feminism. The aspects of liquidation, which has been the primary aspect, has been characterized by: a) naming bourgeois feminism, not male supremacy, as the main enemy of women. This was a consequence of: b) denying the decisive importance of the special oppression of women to the maintenance of imperialism, thereby denying the revolutionary content of the struggle against male supremacy, the need for power for women. Along with this was the definition of all forms of women working with women separate from men as separatism and anti-communism.

In Spring '69, SDS attacked the women's movement for not being revolutionary, being racist and reformist. Bourgeois feminism and separatism were seen as the main enemy of the women's movement. In "You Don't Need a Weatherman....etc" (6/69, Weatherman, Jacobs) we wrote: "How do we organize women against racism and imperialism without submerging the principled revolutionary struggle of women's liberation? We have no real answer, but we recognize the real reactionary danger of women's groups that are not self-consciously revolutionary and anti-imperialist." (emphasis added) Liquidation of the women's question is clearly the secondary concern. This error served to disarm the organization, especially the women, and laid the foundation for the development of the right opportunist line consolidated in the article "Women's Question is a Class Question." The essence of the attack on the women's movement was to make no distinction between white women and the oppressor nation as a whole. We claimed that "any demand made by white people short of total annihilation of imperialism can be granted by the pigs--and will be." This formulation made out that the struggles of white women inside the oppressor nation against male supremacy were in opposition to and a threat to Black liberation, rather than potentially closest allies.

This attack undercut a relatively more progressive line which was being argued against PL. PL's position was that the special oppression of women was their super-exploitation as members of the working class. We argued that women also suffered a special oppression as women, namely sexism--the ideology of the inferiority of women--and that building women as fighters was a way to challenge this. Seven years later we put forward "Women's Question is a Class Question." The title says it. The politics consolidated in the editorial is in fact the right opportunist politics of PL in '69. Women are once again defined only as superexploited members of the working class, and as members of the reserve army of labor--their special oppression thus reduced to the workplace. This is not a Marxist-Leninist analysis. The material basis of women's oppression, and its concrete expression in the institutions of society--the family, schools, courts, laws, religion and the state--are left out. Male supremacy is liquidated and sexism seen as unimportant.

In '69 the line that stated the politics of the period was women as fighters. VIETNAMESE WOMEN CARRY GUNS. In "Honky Tonk Women" we say: "Our liberation as individuals and as women is possible only when it is understood as a political process--part of the formation of an armed white fighting force. Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun, and the struggle to gain and use political power against the state is the struggle for our liberation." This line completely by-

passed and denied a materialist analysis of the special oppression of women. There was political struggle about this, and Cathy Wilkerson wrote in *New Left Notes*, 8/69: "The inability of the Weatherman proposal to include an organic analysis of male supremacy stems from a weakness in the basis analysis."

But this criticism was ignored. In this period, women were in self-conscious struggle over sexism throughout the organization. This took the form of smashing monogamous relationships, of women leading demonstrations and actions, and fighting to build women's leadership in the collectives. This coincided with the struggle of women in the national organization for leadership and a base of power in the national structure. There was a call for a form of women's organization within the Weather organization. This struggle was defeated by the line opposing the initiative as separatist and anti-communist. This corrupt line was a cover for male supremacy. As a consequence, the initiative was co-opted through putting a second woman on the Weather Bureau. The demand had been for power for women, while the addition of another woman could have been a basis for forward movement, it was token because it did not reflect the victory of a revolutionary line. This was a major defeat for women in the organization. Individually and collectively women were weakened. This was the basis for the worsening of political line, and for a lowering of women's consciousness.

Townhouse 3/6/70

Male supremacy and wrong line on women played a role in the Townhouse. Sexism was intertwined with the military error. But women had been weakened, and were unable to name and struggle against male supremacy. In the attempt to overturn the military error, male supremacy continued unchallenged. Because of the depth of this setback for women, the main form in which the struggle against male supremacy took place for some time after the Townhouse was the struggle for women to be able to work together.

Proud Eagle(1 and 2)

The Proud Eagle actions reflected this struggle of women. To the extent that these actions represented the struggle of women to work together, they represented a struggle against male supremacy. These were the first women's armed actions in the organization. A report on Proud Eagle #2 reveals a political line whose defining characteristics are that: the content of the struggle against the special oppression of women is the struggle for women to be fighters -- doing the action is the way that those women were liberating themselves. This practical activity stems from the line that male supremacy is a bad idea, experienced as oppressive sex roles which individual women can and should struggle to change. Coexisting with this

line and in contradiction to it was the liquidation line that defined women working together as separatist. This took the form of men out front saying this; but also the indirect form of denying the validity of the action through other arguments.

In all this the political line and content of the action, target and communicate were explicitly secondary. What the content of the action said to and about and for women was secondary to the process of doing the action. This was consistent with the line that separated women from anti-imperialism. The line of the actions maintained and unheld the liquidationist male supremacist position that the struggle of women against male supremacy has no revolutionary content.

The First Women's Newsletter, Winter '72 also reflected and was a consequence of the struggle of women to work together. The newsletter includes articles about a variety of women's experiences as well as poetry by women in the organization. However, none of these articles name or attempt to analyze male supremacy or the special oppression of women.

An internal paper, *Mountain Moving Day*, Feb. '73, represented an initiative by women to "overcome the weaknesses" in our separation of women from anti-imperialism. (it was not understood to be a wrong line.) It was written after the ceasefire and argued that the change in the world situation made it possible to make a priority of correcting our weaknesses in our line on women, and was a call to develop analysis and program. In the following year women met, did retreats together, jumped into the upsurge of women's literature and music, and began to work on projects relating to women: work on HEW, health, welfare, rape and forced sterilization were undertaken. This work was weakened by not working simultaneously on developing theoretical understanding of women's oppression. At the same time there were aspects of this work that were mystical, anti-male, etc; these errors were used as proof that the solidarity that had been built among women was divisive and that the initiative represented once more a move towards separatism and bourgeois feminism. One man argued that the women's movement had gone "too far". Other men argued that only women and gay men in the organization had any hope of being revolutionary, and that it was correct for the women to be separatists--they therefore moved out to work and live with men! The national question was once more pitted against the women's question and sisters were gutchecked as to their commitment to Third World struggles. This was the coup de grace to the initiative.

Six Sisters was a study group of women who met to study the special oppression of women and to advance our theoretical understanding of the woman question (Summer '73). From the work of this group emerged an analysis that HEW, i.e., the state, was the embodiment of male supremacy, and as such

was the main enemy of women in our society. This group was consciously used by the leadership to be an alternative to Mountain Moving Day--as such its purpose included destroying solidarity among women and protecting leadership from criticism. This hidden purpose undermined the real advances made by the women and ensured that the political advances of the Six Sisters study could not challenge the dominant line of the organization and overturn it. When the group finished its study, it was disbanded. HEW Action 3/8/74

This action nevertheless marked the possibility of a breakthrough around our politics: the special oppression of women was described and identified, and the state was named as the main enemy of women. Women's liberation was understood as a matter of survival.



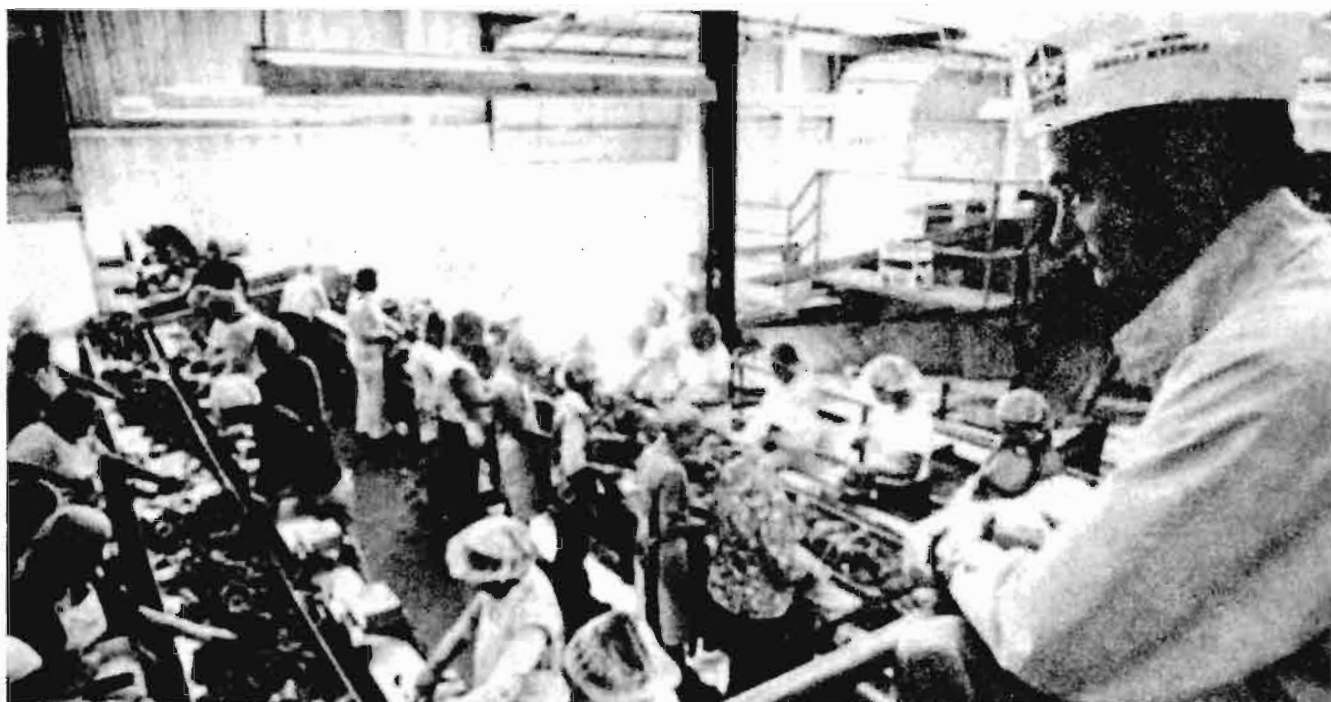
Prairie Fire

The politics of Prairie Fire represented our most advanced understanding about women. The politics of the HEW action are developed in the book, both in the sections explicitly about women, and in the whole. There was a critical struggle waged by women in the writing of the book that women be understood in the entire analysis --not just in one section: so women are throughout, in the history, Vietnam, etc. We understood and said that the oppression of women was crucial to imperialism, although we could not explain this in depth. Sexism was linked to imperialism. At the same time, the material basis of the oppression of women is missing. Thus the analysis is firmly anti-liquidationist, but not a materialist analysis. This was the best of our political line on women (July '74). But these were the politics that got once more liquidated a very short time later at the first Cadre school.

Cadre School 1. The school leadership argued that a revolutionary women's movement and program had to be based in the workplace. That our strategy should be to acquire a lot more information (census tracts) as to where women worked, what kinds of jobs, etc. The development of a program and analysis of HEW was explicitly argued to be liberal and reformist. The line of women and the workplace was consistent with the overall line of the school leadership that the fundamental contradiction was between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The extraction of superprofits and not wage labor and all the relations of production including the family and oppressor/oppressed nations, defined the base of society. This formulation laid the basis for liquidating the national question and the women's question. Linked to this reductionist view of the base, the superstructure was defined as ideology, only: the ideas which reinforced the base. The institutions of society were omitted from the superstructure. This meant omitting the analysis that the institutions of society arise from the base and exist for the purpose of maintaining the base. This eliminates the imperialist state from the analysis. Instead, the state and institutions of society come to be not embodiments of the wage-labor system, formulations of this error are "institutionalized racism and sexism." The wage labor system and the role of women in the family are the material basis of the special oppression of women, but if you leave out the state, you leave out how this oppression is organized, fought for and maintained. You leave out male (and white) supremacy. This is how the woman and national questions got liquidated at Cadre School, and this is at the heart of what we have to overturn now. Cadre School 1 was a turning point in the organization. It was the place where the opportunist line that was sub rosa in the writing of the book, but checked up until its publication, emerged as the dominant line of the organization.

Consistent with this line were commandist suppressive leadership and rank sexist practice. But the wrong line disarmed our ability to identify this. When women disagreed, they were crushed, and when they were subsequently silent, they were criticized for being subjective, lacking self-confidence, unwilling to lead and build organization, passive. This has been a major manifestation of sexist practice during the last two years. Women who continued to oppose the line and direction of the organization were kicked out or isolated based on the same criticisms.

When women returned from Cadre School, work on HEW, health, etc. mostly stopped, and an attempt was made to implement the politics of cadre school, to research where women work. "Working Women" came out of this a year later, an article which liquidated both the national and women's questions. The implications of this line was to deny, this time with the cover of phoney ml, that the oppression of women is key to



imperialism and that women must have a base of power in the struggle. Thus women working with women was now explicitly viewed as at best an embarrassment, and at worst inherently dangerous and separatist. Thus the second women's newsletter (3/75) contains a short argument for why we should not have all women's collectives in the organization: this would reinforce bourgeois feminist tendencies among women. This was a specific attack on women in the organization with a more revolutionary line on women.

There is much more to look at, but the rest of the history is largely exposed in all the issues of OSAWATOMIE and in the film: from the second editorial where "Urgent Tasks of the Revolution" omitted the struggle against male supremacy, to "Our Class Stand" which leaves out the special oppression of women, to "Women's Question is a Class Question" which liquidates it, to the last editorial which attempts to cover it over.

In struggling over how we developed this line, how we have, plainly speaking, betrayed women and concretely opposed the struggle against male supremacy, the primary reason to underscore is the material basis for male supremacy in the oppressor nation. Inside our organization, the male supremacist line was reflected in a male supremacist structure which aided the enforcement of the opportunist line on women and the national liberation struggle. Women were both suppressed and promoted to leadership on the basis of the wrong line; women's leadership was not defined by political line, but as "ability to take responsibility for the whole," willingness to build organization, "influence over and respect of cadre." Women were thus dependent on higher bodies for their leadership and were passive and allied with leader-

ship against criticisms of the wrong line. The fiercest fighting for the opportunist line on women was done by women, who were promoted and used for this purpose.

As women we are responsible for the consequences of what we have developed and led. But we must look at the roots of male supremacy and its consequences for women as the basis for overturning our errors. There is a material basis for passivity amongst white women in the oppressor nation. We think it meant inside our organization complicity and alliance with male supremacy and active enforcement of white supremacy. Passivity is a social expression of real dominance and powerlessness of women, rooted in the relations of production, especially the family: private servitude and economic dependence on men. It has to be overcome by attacking male supremacy. The WUO has always promoted passivity as an individual character trait and problem of women. This coincides with the line "sexism is a bad idea that individual women should get over." This formulation makes women out to be weak and confirms our worst fears of ourselves.

We are in the middle of this struggle now: what is the relationship of the special oppression of women to imperialism? We think it is a cornerstone, decisive, very very important. We think it is a revolutionary principle, a law of social development in this era that the main danger inside the revolutionary movement is opportunism, that its essence in the oppressor nation is the liquidation of the national and women's question. There is a material basis for white and male supremacy against which we must wage continuous struggle. Agreement with this is the start and the basis for overturning opportunism and developing correct political line.

j.b.b.c. self-criticism

(This self-criticism is not intended to be John Brown Book Club's final and deepest statement on our errors during the last year and a half. It is an initial sketch made publicly - our attempt to deepen the meaning of these documents by applying them to our own history.)

JBBC came into being, grew and developed, now ends its practice and sums up in a period that has been tumultuous here and elsewhere. Events in Seattle and the struggles surrounding them like the development of the George Jackson Brigade, its destruction by the state, the deaths of two revolutionary comrades, and a federal grand jury assault on the left all helped shape our politics. Physical injuries caused by misdirected revolutionary violence of the GJB sparked a reactionary response from us and much of the rest of the Seattle left. We participated in building a militant movement against the grand jury on the one hand, while on the other we attempted alliances with organizations of the left, which in the face of rising repression would not challenge the state. Our mistakes showed that we accepted, a piece at a time, the slow, sure sell-out of revolutionary armed struggle that the WUO made during the 1974-76 period. These were significant, but not the principal processes of these times for us.

The cause of anything is an internal matter determined by the contradictions within it. Change and development can be shaped, but never determined, by external conditions. As we studied our recent political history, we found that inside JBBC and in our other work we had never taken responsibility for our politics. Political line was something that came from somewhere else, too complex for us to figure out and develop in our busy, harried lives. Theory was something we accepted from "trusted" leaders, not part of our own political process. It has only been in the recent period that the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee has shown us convincingly the necessity for theory and political line.

Without a thorough understanding of the critical process of testing political theory in practice, then adjusting the theory to account for the errors in practice, we were totally bound up in moving erratically from one errant position to the next, one mistake being our reaction to the last. We looked back longingly to the mass movements against the Indochina War. In one way after another, we sought to recreate this type of massive anti-imperialist upsurge without examining carefully our errors of that period. We wanted to "massify" the movement, to build on the lowest common denominators. This process didn't challenge us as revolutionary people or the movement in general to grow and develop in new and better ways. We stood still and the development of the world passed us by.

We never really tried to learn how to think and understand the world the way it

really works. Dialectical materialism was our philosophical outlook only in words, not in practice. We did not learn to apply it concretely, which is its essence as a philosophy. Without even a rudimentary practice of this, we were left hopelessly caught up in our own contradictions, unable to struggle through things in a logical manner. First things were often last. Our politics stood on its head.

Concretely, this meant white and male supremacy were practiced in widespread ways. Women's leadership was turned into women could lead by allying themselves with men and their ideas. Male chauvinism went virtually unchallenged and our bureaucratic style of work reflected this in its individualistic work patterns.

Criticisms from prisoners and from Third World movements of the WUO political line were somehow seen as unimportant. We accepted dogmatically the WUO positions without struggle and rarely took responsibility for raising the differences we felt. When criticisms were raised internally, they were usually judged by the political line of the people who made them, rather than substance.

We sought to correct our traditionally weak position on the working class in a mechanical way, we squeezed the validity out of Third World and women's liberation movements in favor of the "multinational working class" making socialist revolution. We didn't recognize that imperialism's fundamental contradiction (between private appropriation and social production) takes different forms: oppressor and oppressed nations; male supremacy and women's liberation; bourgeoisie and proletariat. We saw only the third.

What we didn't do is lose respect for revolutionary leaders (particularly in PFOC) who eventually challenged the WUO line and organized for revolutionary politics. This provided the basis for us to begin to question our own errors and turn them around.

Since the Hard Times Conference a year ago, we have undertaken our own independent study in a serious way. We are trying to link theory and practice in a constantly evaluated back and forth process. We have deepened our understanding that not figuring things out and not acting in a conscious way leads to the outcome of our work being determined by the spontaneous forces in us and in our young politics.

We are coming back around to what was valid and true about our earlier anti-imperialist politics. This time, however, we are armed with a new, more developed self of revolutionary tools. Confronting our own opportunist and male supremacy and chauvinism has given us a political basis with which we are changing the quality of our relationship and love for each other. We see this change as part of our growth and strength as revolutionaries. Our only assurance against falling back is to be constantly shattering the old and creating the new.

native american warriors

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE REVOLUTIONARY
COMMITTEE OF THE WUO FROM SOME
NATIVE AMERICAN WARRIORS:

We have read your criticism of the WUO, its Self-Criticism, and the statement by one of its leaders, Bernardine Dohrn. We have read of the crimes which it perpetrated against the Women's Movement, the prison movement, the BLA, and of course, we knew only too well those crimes that it committed against us, the armed segment of the Native American Liberation struggle--its warriors!

In this past year that was such a crucial one in our struggle for sovereignty--the Bicentennial--in this year in which you were "going to bring the fireworks"--we had begun to wonder what the WUO was going to do to contribute to the revolution we have envisioned. To add to our growing disillusionment with the WUO over these past years was the absence of actions against the State by the WUO during this Bicentennial. Instead of armed actions directed against the enemy, we received copies of *Osawatimie*--but again we read an entire issue without seeing a firm dedication to revolutionary principles, knowing that in the actual struggle going on within this oppressor nation, our People were virtually fighting alone and without that WUO support we had expected.

Now we understand more completely why this happened. Our first reaction to *Prairie Fire* was one of comradely joy in knowing that some of you in the white Left had begun to understand the necessity of armed struggle and had made it a vital part of its program for revolution. We fell to some extent under that "myth of the WUO" which you referred to in your criticism of the Central Committee. But that admiration soon turned to skepticism when we saw how our movement was treated by the WUO; how our struggle was written up in your press: how little space was given to its struggles in your



Voices From Wounded Knee
Ellen Moves Camp



Voices From Wounded Knee

publications; how "lip service" to support for Indian resistance would occasionally appear in an issue of *Osawatimie*; how articles about Indian people were so dated ("historical"), failing to give current material, or actually contained errors in fact; how an article referring to a Native American struggle was reported by a non-Indian, instead of relying on some of the plentiful Native American accounts of those same events, or failed to utilize some of our Native American political worker/writers for contributions. It was obvious to us that the Native American struggle was not regarded as a leading element in the US revolution by the WUO. As the year went on, the white, male, national chauvinist tone to *Osawatimie*--the voice of the WUO--began to become an explosive issue with us. this before, but you do not listen.

Now we still have these concerns: We are concerned how a revolutionary group criticises itself, and how it allows the enemy (the State) to know of its errors. We are concerned about the value that the Revolutionary Committee places on security. We are concerned about where the only group we see in the white Left that has been able to successfully conduct clandestine warfare against the state, is now going, for we believe strongly in the necessity of such an organization in the revolution! We want to say: now that you have "cleaned house",

where are you in the struggle? Where are you in the revolution? We do not mean where your statements about yourselves say you are. We want to know if the Revolutionary Committee is indeed different from the Central Committee that it has just exposed. Do you still hold onto vestiges of white privilege? Have you truly rid yourselves of male chauvinism? Are you accepting Third World leadership and criticism? Have you truly reinstated armed struggle and clandestinity to its important, vital, rightful place? Do you acknowledge Third World Marxist-Leninists within the oppressor nation, especially our women?

In what way do you differ from the old leadership? We can only judge by your actions. Is the Revolutionary Committee of the WUO going to lead to a change in the actions of the organization, so that the WUO becomes a vital part of the internationalist struggle for nations' self-determination?

And then the abandonment of armed struggle! Armed struggle is the foundation of our movement. Our people have been fighting imperialism for 300 years. Today, extreme repression and confrontations with the state are continually upon us: our homes are attacked, our leaders shot or assassinated, our women raped and thrown in jail, our children are dying in the cities of decay. To this, knowing our enemy's true nature, we have responded with direct action! We intent to defeat this enemy. We had expected the same of you. Only now we are beginning to understand how these changes in your organization had come about, and how the WUO had abandoned the politics of Prairie Fire.

Now, in return to those revolutionary politics of the book, we wonder how deep this new insight has become. We wonder if you truly understand the meaning of armed revolution within this nation, really know the nature of our struggle and of the material basis for our oppression. Do you understand our leadership, and above all, our women? Do you know that many of our leaders in the armed struggle are women? Perhaps we are not vocal, or do not appear before the media. That has not been our concept of leadership. It surely is not guerrilla leadership!

Do you know how many of us are Marxist-Leninist? In sweeping aside organizational arrogance, do you pretend to know all there is to the Native American liberation struggle? Or do you take the isolationist position that there is no need to know of our movement or struggle, since you had been planning to lead only the white classes and Left? Is it a reflection of national chauvinism that you cannot see those of us who are Marxist-Leninist? Or is it just another step which kept you from working with us, Native-American Marxist-Leninists? We may have something to contribute to Marxism-Leninism in the Oppressor Nation.

We would call it national chauvinistic to continue to ignore the historical and current rip-off of our natural resources in your analysis of imperialism in the oppressor nation; that in the United States,

the oppressor nation continues to oppress those Indian NATIONS within its present borders in the exploitation of those resources, and that this of which we speak is more than a historical fact of "The White Man took Indian Land and built his empire on slaved labor of the Black people." In this period of history, when imperialism has suffered the loss of its colonies in the Third World, it is beginning to intensify its exploitation of those resources found on Indian land, within this country, to replace those it can no longer get elsewhere. The importance of this fact for the future of imperialism and the potential for dealing a mighty death blow to this monster by denying it those Indian resources, is staggering. We would call your analysis of the economic crisis incomplete and lacking in the understanding of the material basis for imperialism in the oppressor nation. Indian voices have told you ermination, sovereignty, and ultimate Revolution? We have seen generations of the white man speaking many words of change, and of support for our People. We have learned many times over that the white man cannot always be trusted because he says many things and that his actions do not match his words. We want to see now, what you are....



Voices From Wounded Knee

"We're not going to massacre the white man, we're going to massacre his attitude and his government."

Leonard Crow Dog
Native American spiritual leader

Immigration & naturalization bombing

February 3, 1977

Statement about the bombing of the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the U.S. Justice Department (San Francisco) by the Revolutionary Committee

The Immigration and Naturalization Service is the federal administrative and police body with special authority for the enforcement and oppression of Mexicano and Latino people. Thousands of Mexicans from Los Angeles to Toledo to Texas to the Imperial Valley have named and are fighting against the INS as a major imperialist enemy of the growing movement for self-determination and national liberation of the Mexicano/Chicano people.

This action is done in support of undocumented workers, in solidarity with the struggle of Mexicano/Chicano people for self-determination. It is also a statement of intention on our part to put into practice as well as words our responsibility to all Third World people struggling for national liberation; to women and those who struggle for the liberation of women; and to all those who struggle against imperialism and all forms of opportunism, white and male supremacy and revisionism. As white people, particularly coming from an immediate organizational history of white and male supremacy, we do not pretend to the depth of understanding and knowledge of national liberation struggles that is required of revolutionaries, or that this act is more than a small step in the process of overturning past errors.

The Southwest of what is presently called the United States of America is land stolen from and belonging to Native American and Mexican peoples. In 1976 alone, more than 650,000 Mexican nationals, most living and working in the southwest US, were arrested and deported as "illegal aliens." The name "illegal aliens" itself is a racist lie. It is the US imperialist border that is illegal and the imperialists themselves who are alien: who stole and have been exploiting the natural and human resources of Native American nations for 400 years; who built the US off the backs and in the blood of the enslaved Black nation. In the past we have rejected the conclusion that must be drawn from US history: that the US is not a country, it is an empire, depending for its existence on the subjugation and domination of whole nations abroad and at home, their land, people and resources; and that the struggle for self-determination and the liberation of imprisoned nations means the destruction of imperialism.

Mexicano people south and north of the border live under US imperialism's social, political and economic control. US capital's control of the Mexican economy has meant rotten living and working conditions including over 40% unemployment. This plus the promise of higher wages has forced millions of Mexicans to migrate north to work on land stolen from them over 100 years ago. For the US this migration of Mexicans is crucial to the functioning of the economy; imperialism requires a reserve army of labor that can expand or contract according to the needs of capital.

The imperialist system of national oppression attacks Mexican people inside the US. At the so-called border, Mexicans are faced with the well-armed INS border patrol using anti-personnel methods first developed in Vietnam. Racist gangs, sanctioned by the INS, rob, rape and murder Mexicanos traveling north. With the threat of deportation in the hands of the employers, the government's massive

deportation sweeps threaten everyone with brown skin -- with or without papers. In one week last June, 9000 Mexicanos were rounded up in Los Angeles. INS agents opened doors to homes without knocking, grabbed people off the street and forced people to sign papers before shipping them to "detention" center/concentration camps.

Police brutality and racism are an everyday part of the lives of Mexicanos within the US. The US government puts forward racist legislation such as the Rodino bill, the Bakke ruling -- the California State Supreme Court decision against open admissions, and recently the Eilberg bill which separates children from their parents according to their place of birth and slashes the "legal" immigration of Mexican people by 50%.

Male supremacy, the special oppression of women, is a pillar of the imperialist's strategy to control the Mexican nation and its people. Forced sterilization of Mexicanas occurs continually at Los Angeles County Hospital. In the fields, entire families are forced to work to survive and Mexicano children are often unable to attend school. In the barrios the tracking of Mexicano children and 56% drop-out rate reinforces the attacks against the family; as do the constant witch-hunts of Mexicana women on welfare, and laws such as the Eilberg bill.

Because male supremacy is a pillar of imperialism, the fight for the liberation of women is of decisive importance to the overthrow of imperialism. The struggles for justice and dignity in the fields and factories, the fight to preserve Mexicano culture through bilingual education are only a few of the areas in which Mexicana women have been central to the struggle for national liberation and the liberation of women.

The Mexicano/Chicano struggle for self-determination, from the battles of workers with or without papers, to the armed land seizures by Mexican peasants, to the campaigns against forced sterilization and against police repression and racist legislation is part of the leading forces destroying US imperialism.

Our responsibility as communists of the white oppressor nation is to oppose white and male supremacy in ourselves and in our class and to organize active revolutionary support for national liberation movements, especially those of nations held captive inside the US borders; and to fight for and organize active revolutionary support for the liberation of women. The timetable for revolution in the US is the timetable of Third World peoples' struggle for self-determination and national liberation.

All of this is the opposite of most of oppressor nation history including our own. It is our responsibility to seek and recognize the leadership of national liberation struggles and Third World revolutionaries, of revolutionary women; whose public and principles criticisms of us are guiding us in our struggle to overturn our past errors and move on.

White and male supremacy, rooted in the material base of imperialism, are the principal forces holding back revolutionary struggle by the working class of the oppressor nation in the US. Our strategy is to arm and defend the peoples resistance to white and male supremacy; to arm and defend the struggle for and in support of national liberation and the liberation of women.

Revolutionary Committee

FREE ASSATA



What is left?

After the bars and the gates and the
degradation

What is left?

After the lock ins and the lock outs
and the lock ups

What is left?

I mean, after the chains that get
entangled in the grey of one's
matter

After the bars that get stuck in the
hearts of men and women

What is left?

After the tears and disappointments

After the lonely isolation

After the cut wrist and the heavy
noose

What is left?

I mean, like, after the commissary
kisses

And the get-your-shit-off-blues

After the hustler has been hustled

What is left?

After the sad futile maneuvers

After the shrill and barren laughter

After the contraband emotions

What is left?

After the murderburgers and the
goon squads and the tear gas

After the bulls and the bullpens
and the bullshit

What is left?

I mean, like, after you know that
God can't be trusted

After you know that the shrink is
a pusher

That the word is a whip, and the
badge is a bullet

What is left?

After you know that the dead are
still walking

After you realize that silence is
talking

That outside and inside are just an
illusion

What is left?

I mean, like, where is the sun?

Where are her arms and where are
her kisses?

There are lip prints on my pillow

I am searching

What is left?

I mean, like, nothing is standstill
and nothing is abstract

The wing of a butterfly can't take
flight

The foot on my neck is a part of a
body

The song that I sing is a part of
an echo

What is left?

I mean, like, love is specific

Is my mind a machine gun?

Is my heart a hacksaw?

Can I make freedom real? Yeah,

What is left?

I am at the top and bottom of a
lower-archy

I am in love with losers and
laughter

I am in love with freedom and
children

Love is my sword and truth is
my compass

What is left?

Assata Shakur

FREE ALL BLACK LIBERATION FIGHTERS

Assata Shakur
Defense Committee

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