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Draft Resolution on White Supremacy

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The purpose of this resolution is to clarify the position of Love and Rage on the white supremacist character of US society. It is to establish our position for the purposes of our mass work and to guide the Production Group in making editorial decisions regarding the political content of the newspaper.

1. The particular social structure of the United States is rooted in its history of conquest, colonization, genocide, and slavery and is distinguished by the system of white supremacy.
2. The foundation of the system of white supremacy is the system of white skin privilege, which grants significant material benefits to the white working class in exchange for its loyalty to the system as a whole. This system of white skin privileges has taken different forms over the course of US history but, it continues to function to this day.

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3. These are not “petty” or “apparent” privileges, but rather significant concrete differences in the material conditions of life experienced by different sectors of a racially-divided working class. In many cases, these differences are matters of life and death, as is reflected in differences in infant mortality rates, life expectancy and causes of death between whites and people of color in general and Black people in particular.
4. Since the 1960s, a significant section of the Black community has been economically marginalized and excluded from the process of production. This section of the Black community is regarded by capital as intransigently rebellious and therefore disposable. The dramatic expansion of the prison system, the complete collapse of social services in urban centers, and policies that deliberately encourage the drug trade in the Black community constitute a pattern, that at the very least, has genocidal implications. The survival of the Black community in the US is threatened and must be defended,
5. The system of white skin privilege in the US is similar to the global inequalities that exist between the imperialist countries of Europe, North America, and Japan and the imperialized countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. These inequalities are reflected in a gulf between the standards of living of the workers of the imperialist countries and the workers and peasants of the imperialized countries.
6. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between the US racial system and global imperialism. Imperialism depends on colonial oppression, a system in which the ruling class of a colonized nation (a class which can be of any “race”) rules for the benefit of the imperialist nation. On the other hand, white supremacy in the US depends on racial oppression, a system in which one section of the working

class — whites — subordinates the rest of the working class for the benefit of capital and in exchange for material and psychological privileges. Thus, while a social hierarchy of the “white” race (however defined) over the “Black” or other “non-white” races (however defined) is a part of both colonial and racial forms of oppression; it operates differently in each form. The result is anti-colonial national liberation struggle in imperialized countries and anti-racist struggle in the US.

7. The system of white skin privilege and the profound inequalities in the standards of living between the imperialist and imperialized countries constitutes the material foundation for the loyalty of white workers and workers in the imperialist countries to their respective ruling classes. This loyalty expresses itself as racism, imperialist patriotism, and as fascism under different circumstances.
8. Any revolutionary movement in the US must stand for the overthrow of the system of white skin privilege and the global system of imperialist privileges. This will mean a quantitative reduction in the standard of living for many workers in the imperialist countries in general and for white workers in the US in particular. Winning privileged workers to this necessity is a daunting but no less crucial aspect of revolutionary work in the US.
9. The white left in the US has historically ignored or denied the profound differences that exist between the material conditions facing white workers and Black workers. It has tended to fight for a program of “multi-cultural unity” or “Black and white unite and fight.” The assumption of this program is that class unity and the improvement of the material conditions of people of color are best achieved by fighting for programs that raise up the conditions of “everyone” or “all workers’

rather than strategies designed to specifically aid people of color, foster their self-determination, or abolish white privilege. This has been a tragic error of the American left. White privilege must be confronted directly, not subordinated to “more primary” matters of class. In the US at least, the struggle against white supremacy and for full Black social equality is not merely a prerequisite for working-class unity, in a certain sense it is the class struggle. When the walls of racial privilege tumble, the foundations of capital are threatened as well.

10. The struggle against white supremacy means supporting self-determination for Black people, Native peoples, Puerto Ricans, and Chicanos. This includes support for reparations. The principle of self-determination and the struggle for reparations by these and other oppressed communities must be respected by Love and Rage.
11. A still predominantly-white organization like Love and Rage must take this history of white leftists’ chauvinism into account when it addresses questions of concern to the Black community and other communities of color. Love and Rage must scrupulously avoid the racist practice, followed by so many predominantly-white organizations, of attempting to provide leadership for Black and other liberation movements. The primary obstacle to multi-racial working class unity is white supremacy and not the narrow nationalist errors of this or that group based among racially or nationally oppressed peoples. Accordingly, our task now is to smash white supremacy, not criticize forces in racially oppressed communities. Therefore, public statements by Love and Rage members, particularly in the pages of our publications, should reflect the actual extent of our roots as an organization in those communities.