

Notes from the March 17, 1971 meeting of the United Secretariat Bureau by Ross Dowson

(R.D.'s handwritten notes from ring-notebook)

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Mar. 17/71 Bureau

Ernest (*Mandel, FI leader -ed.*) came – nothing – copies of Australian clip on Trials. Starts discussion with me – fraternal but very agitated, impatient. How did it start – French work confrontation with fascists – of course I and south [SWP-US] wouldn't agree – on the contrary I said – said excellent real basis for action – CP policy cuts across feelings of war generation. He presents it as extreme, radical and risky – I presented it as having substantial base for success. He presents other incidents – of course you and US don't agree. I challenged him – what do you mean – why do you assume this French Elections – an electoral farce – (this lead to misunderstandings) I disagreed with tactical orientation – turns out he thinks we and US disagree on the boldness of the action – small cadre movement running for Pres. and by-passing traditional org, opened up discussion on new situation

He sees fundamental change – not just a new wave of radicalization – but in **Europe** there is now a new vanguard numbering tens of thousands who are moving completely outside of traditional org with whom our little cadres have to fuse – this vanguard is revolutionary (in US radicalization has no focus – it's non proletarian) in Europe it is communist, ready for us – why don't you understand this – not little facts – broad development – it is a matter of priorities. I attempted to suggest (--) presented very formalistically – necessary to maintain one's basic fundamental orientation at same time keep in touch with & fuse with best elements of radicalizing forces – **Build cadre.**

What was behind this – had he heard from Livio who I didn't know was in LA [Latin America].

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IMG [International Marxist Group (Britain)]

--Pleased that they bring it up

--Want to talk about pol diff

Comrades indignant that [*Red*] *Mole* [IMG paper] took a public position sharply at variance with the public position of (Canadian) section.

(1) all the more that this position coincided with CP of Canada ML (Maoist)

(2) that the position of the (Canadian) movement well publicized throughout (international)

(*Rouge*) [journal of Ligue Communiste (France)]

Essential statement out in name of (movement) before my arrival at height of crisis

Plethora of material – SWP had Seigal & Mary Alice both there when I arrived – gave full coverage & whether they took our line or natural inevitable consensus but ended up same orientation

I disagreed – **why did you go public**

--Why did they publish CP position – and not CP of Labor & CPC (ML) and spontaneists M4 –

--Why did they publish articles we wrote on the FLQ, John Riddell editor

Why don't you reply formally instead of setting up a situation that your members fill in with their own content

--Why not write up splendid record of (Canadian) Section, arrest of our comrades – **(in) defence** (?) [Reference to the jailing of Quebec comrades during War Measures Act].

(...)

Tariq [Ali] tape

--Reformism on the agenda in LA [Latin America] –don't have a revolutionary situation.

Propagandistic approach & interventionist appeal – this is the basic difference

[End of notes, overseas addresses follow]