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To the Steering Committee of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction

Dear Comrades,

Attached are the following items for your information:

1) A report by a leader of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction in Australia on a recent visit he made to Japan, Hong Kong, and Ceylon;

2) A reply by Jim Percy to the IEC Majority Tendency on Tariq Ali's tour of Australia;

3) A summary of the presentation Comrade Abel made to the Political Committee of the LSA/LSO in Canada on the IEC Majority Tendency "Draft Political Resolution;" and

4) An article by Geoff Mirelowitz entitled "An Initial Criticism of the IEC Majority Tendency 'Draft Political Resolution'" from Young Socialist Discussion Bulletin Vol. XVII, No. 4.

There is an error in the copy of Walter Davis' response to the LSA/LSO Political Bureau that was mailed to you November 30. On page 13 an additional point 33 should be added. It reads, "I at no point called for the PC majority faction to resign from the Leninist-Trotskyist faction."

Comradely,

Mary-Alice

REPORT BY A LEADER OF THE LTF IN AUSTRALIA ON  
RECENT VISIT TO JAPAN, HONG KONG AND CEYLON

HONG KONG

A week before my arrival in Hong Kong, the Seventies Bi-weekly Group, or the Workers and Students United Front, had just suffered a split.

The two comrades who were members of the Chinese section, Comrades A and B, had been asked to leave the group. The reason given was that B had kept his membership of the section a secret. Also leaving with these two comrades were 3-4 others including Comrade C, the former Red Guard from Canton. Relations between the Seventies Group and its former members still seem fraternal and continued cooperation between both groups is possible.

I discussed with the young comrades their future perspectives. They seem agreed to build a Trotskyist youth organization and to publish a journal. My discussion with them centered mainly around problems and tasks involved with constructing a Trotskyist youth organization. Currently the group is forming around a document on the situation in Hong Kong. I invited one of the members to visit Australia and New Zealand in January to get to know the movement in these two countries. The group will initially have 6-7 members. Comrade B has left for another country but may return in the near future.

I gave a report to the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party of China. I reported to the comrades of the Central Committee on the formation of the LTF and our views on a number of questions. They indicated their broad agreement and that they would hold some form of conference before the World Congress and would consider sending someone from Hong Kong itself to represent the Chinese section as well as their IEC member.

I gathered that there was a common outlook in perspectives between the older comrades and the younger ones in regard to building a youth organization and publishing a paper. Headquarters or offices have already been obtained.

A few weeks before I was in Hong Kong Comrades Vergeat and Sakai visited there. I gathered they spent most of their time with D, a young former member of the Seventies Group and former member of the Chinese section. D broke from the section a few months ago and has a group of 4-5 around him which publishes a mimeographed daily sheet which it distributes in a workers district.

With the permission of Comrade E, the secretary of the RCP, I also met with D and his group. They indicated under no circumstances would they rejoin the section which according to them "did not exist."

I also spoke with F, the most important remaining leader of the Seventies Group. He is very friendly to our movement and could possibly be won to us in the future. Obviously we will continue to orient towards the Seventies Group and its periphery with a view to increasing our forces.

JAPAN

During my stay in Tokyo the main source I had as to the views and positions of the Japanese section was via Comrade Sakai.

We discussed the situation in Hong Kong. Sakai sees it as one of the tasks of the Japanese section to aid the development of the movement there. He maintains links with both the section and D.

Discussions with Sakai were important from the point of view of the Australian sympathising group. High on Sakai's list of priorities is the building of the Fourth International in Asia and increasing the collaboration between the various Asian groups.

I do not think that Sakai or other Japanese leaders are part of the secret faction oriented to a FI split. Firstly of course Sakai voted against the IEC majority to postpone the World Congress. Secondly Sakai made it plain that in the event of a split in the Fourth International, he would maintain links with all tendencies.

Sakai's position on the European document is that it is "not continental enough." In general he supports its key concept of "winning hegemony of the new mass vanguard" and the emphasis on dual power.

On Latin America he expressed similar views to those he did at the December IEC. He is currently looking at the PST's program to see whether he can support the LTF viewpoint.

His position on China was unclear. He did not refuse to classify Maoism as Stalinist. The JRCL had always taken a strong position against Maoism. But he did not support, as yet, any of the different views. He was searching for another third position.

On Vietnam he was critical of the Johnson/Feldman article's "method."

Nevertheless he made it plain to me that the JRCL would most likely take independent positions on a number of questions. He considered that the FI was fortunate to have the JRCL to criticise from a different point of view.

He was also justly proud of the efficiency and professionalism of the JRCL. He said the party had 220 members, 40 full timers, and a further 400 youth in 3 youth organizations.

Many of the International discussion items were being translated into Japanese and at the time of my visit the section was preparing for a conference on the international questions to be held late November.

I addressed the Political Bureau of the JRCL on the formation of the LTF and various other questions. The reaction to the views of the LTF on the situation in the FI was to retail a few "scandals" gathered from other sources. There was not a lot of discussion and language difficulties prevented me from getting

the tenor of passing remarks.

I then visited Kyoto where I spoke with Comrades Nishi and Sugimoto who support the views of the LTF. There are another 2-3 around these comrades. Before I left Tokyo Sakai had told me that Nishi had broken discipline and withdrawn financial support to the movement. This charge was repeated by the leadership of the Kyoto-Osaka region to me subsequently.

Nishi's opinion was that he and his followers would not ask to join the LTF at this stage.

Then I spoke to the Kyoto-Osaka leadership of 5 comrades on two consecutive afternoons. They listened sympathetically to my views on a wide range of questions. In an exchange it appeared to me that our views were very similar on the nature of the youth radicalization and our tasks. They specifically said that they disagreed with the concept of the new mass vanguard of the European document.

The Japanese section is in the process of making up its mind on the international questions. They were willing to listen to our views and take them into account when formulating their position.

#### CEYLON

For the views of the LSSP(R) I talked mostly to Bala Tampoe. I was preceded to Ceylon by about a week by Pierre Frank. He seems to have given a report along the lines of the views on political differences in the document: "Let's Discuss Political Differences - Not Old Wives' Tales."

Tampoe, due to pressures of mass activity and his legal defence of the JVP leaders, was not familiar with all the documents. On a few key points we had a fruitful discussion both privately and when I addressed the Political Bureau of the LSSP(R).

He had no objection to the formation of a faction: he did not however fully credit our reasons for doing so.

The CMU took a "sign now" position but I was able to clear up at least some of the misinterpretations of the position of the USFI minority on Vietnam.

On the PST he was under the impression that the PST membership were simply electoralists. We discussed this and I think he agreed that this was a mistaken impression.

He specifically agreed with the SWP approach to the antiwar movement and against the line of Pierre Frank and the above document on how to do mass work.

He is against any super-centralization of the FI.

I also addressed the Colombo membership of the LSSP(R). I was sympathetically received on the European and Latin American questions. The LSSP(R) is in the process of discussing the international questions and will head towards a conference in late December. The membership is certainly open to our political

-4-

positions. The day to day activity of the LSSP(R) puts them close to our political positions in regard to mass work.

Tampoe, like Sakai, was eager to increase the collaboration amongst the Asian sections and groups.

A BRIEF REPLY TO THE IEC MAJORITY TENDENCY ON  
THE TARIQ ALI TOUR OF AUSTRALIA

By Jim Percy

It would be difficult to imagine a single paragraph that has been contributed to the international discussion so far that contains so many distortions, slanders and outright lies as the one on Tariq Ali's tour, unless of course it would be any of the other paragraphs in the extraordinary document entitled "Let's Discuss Political Differences, Not Old Wive's Tales" by the IEC Majority Tendency. (IIDB Vol. X, No. 20, p. 20)

At no time were we approached by the CL to make joint preparations for Tariq Ali's visit. The letter to us proposing a parity commission contained no mention of a tour. We heard about this completely informally and in fact this factor was one that contributed to the grave doubts in our minds as to the seriousness of the CL's approach to us about unity.

Tariq Ali did in fact meet with our organisation: this was at our urging and invitation. We met Tariq at the airport on his arrival and made the necessary arrangements.

Tariq Ali was not publicly attacked. A speaker from the SWL gave our views on the Chinese revolution in the context of Tariq Ali calling for, and encouraging debate. As far as we knew there is no official line of the FI on the Chinese revolution. The question of the Cultural revolution and of course the question of Latin America did not enter into the debate. We did in fact discuss the US-China detente (there has been no document adopted on this) and did characterize the Maoists as Stalinists. But again, this can hardly be called a public attack on Tariq. Our speaker did not mention him by name and merely put our positions on the Chinese revolution as is clearly the right of the Australian sympathising organisation to do in Australia.

We made no objections to the IP report. This we presumed was unnecessary since it is well-known just what the status of the SWL is and what the status of the CL is. We would point out for those who have forgotten it that the CL was condemned by the USFI for its unprincipled split from our organisation and was refused status as a sympathising group by the USFI.

Finally we were never approached by the CL to have Comrade Novack address them and nor to our knowledge was Comrade Novack. But we reject anyway the concept of reciprocity implied here. We are the sympathising group, they split away. We are not just two peas in a pod, no matter how much some might make believe that this is the case: or are the decisions of the USFI just dead letters as soon as they are made?

The following is a summary of the presentation of Abel to the Political Committee meeting of November 18 on the draft resolution of the IEC Majority Tendency on the "World Political Situation." The discussion on this report will continue at a subsequent LSA/LSO Political Committee meeting.

This document is so seriously in error that we cannot vote for it. Nor can it be amended adequately. There are many things wrong with it, some more important than others. There are three central errors, each of which is sufficient to require a vote against the resolution. These are its analysis of the detente, of popular frontism, and its line on the "new mass vanguard."

#### Refusal to Recognize the Detente

As far as the resolution is concerned, the detente is no more than "attempts...to renew and strengthen the 'peaceful coexistence' accords." These can "only have a limited effectiveness" according to the authors, because of the new autonomy and power of the mass movement, and the weakening hold of the Stalinist and social-democratic leaderships.

This is a fundamentally one-sided and therefore false view of what has happened. To be sure, there cannot be class peace in the world, whatever the agreements signed in Moscow, Peking and Washington may say. Of course the radicalization is continuing in many key countries, including the development of pre-revolutionary situations. Its own increased weakness is the central reason that has compelled imperialism to opt for detente. But the detente is far from ineffective against the revolution as the Vietnam settlement and the Mideast ceasefire both testify.

The entire draft is based not on a concrete and dialectical analysis of the progress and problems of the world revolution, but rather on a rigid schema of an uninterrupted "new rise of world revolution" which admits no twists, turns or downturns.

One result of this schema is that the authors dangerously downplay the threat of reformism. This leads directly, among other things, to the errors on popular frontism.

The view of the LSA/LSO on the detente was developed in our political resolution adopted by our convention this year (LSA/LSO Discussion Bulletin No. 31) and published in the June 25, 1973 issue of Labor Challenge. To cite one paragraph:

"Confronted with its growing economic difficulties and the military stalemate in Indochina, U.S. imperialism, under Nixon carried out a turn toward detente with the workers states. Through a number of moves such as the opening toward Peking, Washington indicated that it was prepared, temporarily, to accept the reality of the social conquests of the Russian and Chinese revolutions. In return, the bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking were to give guarantees of active aid to the U.S. in its efforts to disarm those forces engaged in the struggle against imperialist domination, especially the Indochinese. A competition in servility to U.S. imperialism opened up between the

Stalinist leaders, reaching new peaks in the spring of 1972."

We also agree with the description of the detente in the April 26, 1973 International Report by Jack Barnes, adopted by the SWP National Committee.

It is a grave error for an international leadership to be so tied to a schema that it cannot recognize a deep change in the world situation.

### Popular Frontism: A Fundamental Breach of Principle

On Chile (section 8), the MMF states that the Allende regime was not a popular front. Their criteria appear to be the statements of the Unidad Popular itself ("It openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on the road of socialism and...it openly based itself on the organized workers' movement.") These are not the criteria Trotsky used to define popular fronts. Trotsky based his analysis on objective criteria: the real goals, programs and function of such formations. By these standards, the U.P. certainly was a popular front.

The Unidad Popular came to office in a prerevolutionary situation, when the workers and poor peasants had the objective possibility of taking power into their own hands and expelling the bourgeoisie. Instead, the misleaders of the class led them into a governmental coalition with the bourgeoisie. This government held office for three years in a pre-revolutionary situation. It restrained to the best of its ability the independent organization and mobilization of the working masses. It preached reliance on the bourgeois state and even on the bourgeois army. All this prepared the ground for the coup and the bloody repression which followed.

In what essential way did this differ from what happened in Spain?

The IEC Majority Tendency suggests that what happened in Chile is not qualitatively different from the standard, daily class collaboration practised by social democratic and Stalinist parties within the labor movement. On these grounds, they consider the popular front designation of the Unidad Popular to be incorrect.

Is this merely a terminological dispute? Is the MMF merely proposing different words to designate the same reality which we have always referred to as "popular frontism?" I don't think so. The difference involves key questions of principle for our movement. We have contrasting political positions on the Union of the Left in France. We draw diametrically different conclusions from the Chilean tragedy.

For us, the chief lesson is that a mass revolutionary party was needed. The workers and peasants could have made a socialist revolution, but they lacked correct leadership. The SP and CP through their policies blocked the revolution and led the workers to the slaughter. There was no party to successfully win the masses to the correct road in time.

But what does the MMF conclude from the experience? The "weakness of reformism" is the main lesson for them! This is



astonishing. It stands reality on its head. As if reformism was not strong enough in Chile to successfully carry out its historic function of betraying the socialist revolution.

Second, the draft generalizes from the Chilean experience to the international plane. Section 14 defends the error of the Ligue Communiste during the French elections, where the Ligue Communiste gave critical support to the Union of the Left, a class collaborationist electoral bloc of the popular front variety. It projects the same course in other advanced capitalist countries.

The draft does this by pointing to the agreements between the social-democratic and Communist parties in a growing number of countries. It coyly refrains from giving specific examples.

Socialist Party-Communist Party formations, says the resolution, "unleash an objective dynamic of unity of action,... they contribute...to the process of raising the combativity and radicalization of the proletariat." The resolution fails to make the distinction between united action fronts, which promote the struggle, and popular fronts, which are the formula for betrayal and defeat. Further, as everyone knows, the real nature of these CP-SP coalitions is popular frontist to the core. By hailing such alliances as progressive, the resolution provides the formula for support of popular frontism -- used by the ex-Ligue Communiste to justify its support of the Union of the Left.

This is not a small question. Such formations could occur in quite a number of different countries in Europe, and in Japan, according to the resolution. In addition, as Chile shows, the "objective dynamic" of the resolution's argument applies to the colonial world where such formations are one of the ruling class's essential tools to forestall the revolution.

The basic error in the argument is to confuse the united front with the popular front, that is, to confuse a front for action for specific and limited goals, with a programmatic electoral bloc aimed at establishing a coalition government with the ruling class.

There is no question that the formation of such coalitions can arouse enthusiasm in the working class, as it did in France. In Chile, the election of the Allende government spurred the masses to press forward their struggles. But such enthusiasm is based on illusions and false hopes. The masses wish to take power through elections, peacefully. They believe such a popular front government would be a workers' government. They mistake the popular front for a genuine, fighting united front. All these illusions are consciously fostered by the reformist misleaders.

Our job is to point out, in the most effective way possible, that these are illusions, that the popular front is based on reliance on the bourgeoisie. We call on the workers to break with the bourgeoisie. To the popular front, we counterpose the demand for a workers' and farmers' government.

For us, opposition to the popular front candidacy of Allende is a question of principle, not a question of tactics. The same principle calls on us to reject support for the Union of the Left in France in 1973.

The draft resolution, if adopted, would put the Fourth International on record as favoring Popular Fronts in key countries.

In passing, we note that contrary to what the document says, these Popular Front attempts are not in contradiction with the attempts of the USSR and China to reach a detente with imperialism. Popular Frontism has always been a tool of Stalinist foreign policy --the term was coined by Stalin. Popular fronts inside the capitalist countries, peaceful coexistence on the international plane -- these are twin prongs of the foreign policy of bureaucrats offering world imperialism their aid in holding back the revolution.

We also note that the IEC Majority Tendency's opportunist error on popular frontism flows directly from their ultra-left views. These views exaggerate the level of mobilization and understanding of the masses, downplay the obstacles before them, and minimize the role of revolutionary Marxist leadership.

#### The "New Mass Vanguard" -- the Global Formula

The third major error of the document is its "new mass vanguard" formula (section 15). This new breakthrough theory replaces that of guerrilla warfare projected at the last world congress. It is the key to the line of action proposed for the sections in the document.

This is a much-debated topic in the world movement, and I will not repeat the arguments. We agree with the critique of this theory in Mary-Alice Waters' criticism of the European document. Earlier this year, our section took up some of these concepts in our Political Resolution (section F).

We find, however, a couple of interesting things in this draft. First, the IEC Majority Tendency states that this vanguard exists "on a world scale" and that this is the first time it has appeared "since the creation of the Communist International," i.e., in over fifty years.

Second, they tip their hat to the concept that we must fight programmatically to win over this vanguard. But much of the rest of the section tells us to follow an opposite course. We are to preach unity in action around (undefined) "common objectives." Our goal is to transform "the bulk of the forces of the new vanguard into a lever" capable of "qualitatively modifying the relationship of forces with the bureaucratic apparatuses" (emphasis added).

It is clear that the MMF is not talking about a transitional strategy, to which we can and must win the best of the new radicalizing elements. Such a strategy is based on the objective needs of the working masses, and on the current level of their struggles. But the masses play no role at all in this section.

Instead, what is involved is their tendency's strategy of "the adequate instrument, the new mass vanguard." This is clearest in the last paragraph, where the MMF speak of the necessity of "initiatives in action" that "galvanize, unite and strengthen the whole vanguard against the reformist and Stalinist apparatuses in the mass struggle." (emphasis added)

This paragraph concerns itself with the danger that this entire massive vanguard, which has now extended itself from

Western Europe to the entire world, may rapidly collapse -- because of a right turn by the Chinese and Cuban leaderships. This vista contrasts with the pattern of ceaselessly rising revolutionary struggles projected by the rest of the document. The crisis of leadership, which gets little attention in the document as a whole, is suddenly introduced in a bizarre form. Our task is to salvage the tottering vanguard: by uniting it around our "initiatives in action."

What program will these actions express? Clearly, one that reflects the "common objectives" -- the interests and concerns of the vanguard.

This passage needs further explanation. "Initiatives in action" is often used as a code word -- a phrase often used when attempts are made to rationalize ultra-left or terrorist actions. Is that what is involved here? Is this vista of the global collapse of the vanguard the basis for an extension of "minority violence" and of ultra-left adventures?

In this line of reasoning, the objective interests of the "vanguard" replace those of the masses; the crisis of leadership of the working class becomes the crisis of leadership of the vanguard.

By the way, Trotsky spoke about our party as the lever. Now the MMF aim to make the bulk of the vanguard into the lever. The problem is that this new lever is already moving the party off its established positions.

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Very briefly, to sketch out the other disagreements we have with the document:

Vietnam: it incorporates the Sterne-Walter position on the accords, which is wrong. The worst part of this position is the manner in which it belittles the magnitude of the betrayal of the revolution by Moscow and Peking. It also implies unwarranted political confidence in the National Liberation Front leadership.

China: on first reading, there appears to be much that is significant in this section, although many of their positions are not made entirely clear. They incorrectly hold that there has been a "spectacular right turn" in Chinese foreign policy since 1970-71. Class collaboration, peaceful coexistence are not new political goals for the Maoists. The authors state that such a turn is part of the "breakthrough if not the triumph of socially conservative layers" but their evidence of a new "breakthrough" is rather thin. I suspect that what is really involved is an attempt to explain that their position of 1969 on China, which failed to account for the main events since then, should not be held against them.

Although it speaks of the existence of a privileged bureaucratic layer, and "bureaucratic degeneration," the draft fails to call for political revolution. This is a giant step back from the position we held in common with Mandel and the others in 1969.

The 4-5 year showdowns: this is now very imminent. It seems the impending economic crisis of 1974-75 will bring it on, unfailingly. We note its general applicability, to at least

Western Europe and Japan.

Errors on Canada and the United States: They think the Watergate crisis is due in part to sectoral divisions in the U.S. bourgeoisie; this is the RMG's line here.

The coming "explosive new thrust" of the radicalization will be "this time centered on workers' struggles." I too hope so, but is it so sure? What is the evidence?

It is incorrect to put the Canadian rail strike on the same plane as the explosive May events in Quebec. They were qualitatively different. The events during the rail strike did indicate a developing radicalization in the ranks of the working class, but one which is maturing slowly. Nor was it the first time workers protested against Parliament's decision to force them back to work through emergency legislation.

In speaking of North America since 1969, the authors omit the Quebecois national struggle, one of the central factors in the Canadian revolution, despite their reference to the Quebec May. Yet the struggle took a decisive turn in that period toward a break with the Canadian federal state.

National Liberation in the Colonial World: Section 7 superficially treats the "class autonomy" of the colonial workers, but avoids mentioning the national liberation struggle.

National Struggle in the Workers' States: Section 13 includes one of the prime forces of the antibureaucratic struggle, the national question, under "demands relating to the concerns of student youth and the intelligentsia." The role of the intellectuals' struggle for greater freedom is unjustly depreciated, as well.

Tasks of the World Movement: This section is above all striking in its lack of concreteness, in its abstraction from the real problems of the International today. And what does the project of "a complete program of the Fourth International" mean? Is it merely the completion of the project Joe H. mentions in his document? The word "complete," and the reference to the Transitional Program as "only a part" of this, seems to suggest that more is involved.

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It is remarkable what the resolution does not contain. It does not deal with the youth radicalization, the real role of the national question, student struggles, or feminism. It downplays, and even largely avoids, the crisis of working-class leadership.

It does not contain a clear affirmation of the main lesson of the events since 1969 or earlier -- the absolute necessity of building the revolutionary party.

Much of the general analysis is correct. But the tasks set out in the document have little to do with the general analysis that precedes them. Rather they flow from preconceived schema. Where reality cuts across the schema, as with the detente, the authors simply deny the reality.

The only axis of work projected for the sections is the orientation to the "new vanguard."

The approach of the resolution, even its tone, is "trium-

phalist," to use the French comrades' word. Yet the triumphalism is dishonest, for it avoids one of the key questions, the crisis within the Fourth International. The resolution, amazingly, manages to say nothing about the guerrilla war adventure adopted four years ago, and which has cost us so heavily. It says virtually nothing about the balance sheet of the Fourth International since the last world congress.

It also avoids questions on which the IEC Majority Tendency is itself divided, like the minority violence line of Jebracq. It has many "elliptical and synthetic formulations" also.

This is not the resolution the Fourth International needs today.

The Leninist-Trotskyist Faction now faces the task of drafting a counter-Political Resolution.

AN INITIAL CRITICISM OF THE IEC MAJORITY TENDENCY "DRAFT POLITICAL RESOLUTION"

By Geoff Mirelowitz, Brooklyn Local

The "Draft Political Resolution" presented by the IEC Majority Tendency for adoption at the coming world congress of the Fourth International is an unacceptable document. It represents an extension of the incorrect methodology and ideas presented in the document entitled, "Building Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," as well as other IEC majority documents such as those on Vietnam. It is unbalanced in its analysis, especially in underestimating the need and role of a vanguard party.

The Fourth International needs a document at its coming world congress that can help guide its intervention in the developing class struggle. One that presents a balanced view of the political situation that takes into account the many positive developments in the class struggle over the past few years, yet does not minimize the setbacks and defeats which have been suffered, such as those in Vietnam and Chile. The Leninist-Trotskyist Faction is currently preparing such a document which will be presented as a counter-political resolution at the world congress.

This contribution aims to point out some of the major weaknesses in the resolution submitted by the IEC Majority Tendency. Virtually every section of the resolution contains important political errors. I do not intend to deal with all of them but will rather pick out some that are central and discuss where the IEC Majority Tendency goes wrong.

The Vietnam Accords One Year Later--Whose Assessment Stands Up?

The differences over Vietnam first emerged clearly before the entire world movement at the last meeting of the International Executive Committee, held in December, 1972. At that time, the Kissinger-Tho agreements had been announced, and although a final agreement had yet to be reached, the outline of the content of the Paris accords was already clear. The IEC meeting had the responsibility to assess the situation at that new turning point of the Vietnamese struggle and the international relationship of forces affecting it. We found that there were significant disagreements on these questions.

At that IEC, the majority viewed the accords as formalizing a more favorable relationship of forces and were thus to be considered a step forward for the Vietnamese revolution. While maintaining that this was not the final victory, they insisted that the accords helped advance the Vietnamese revolution. In our opinion they viewed the accords in a one-sided way. They stressed the concessions made by imperialism, such as the withdrawal of US ground troops, and de-emphasized the difficulties facing the Vietnamese struggle as a result of the officially ratified preservation of the Thieu regime backed by US imperialism, while Moscow and Peking choked off aid to the liberation fighters.

The minority at the IEC stated that, taken as a whole, the Vietnamese struggle had received a setback. This was the same position that the YSA adopted at our 1972 convention. We did not say that the Vietnamese revolution had suffered a decisive defeat, but that the accords, far from advancing the socialist revolution in Vietnam, represented an obstacle on that road and should be judged and acknowledged as such.

We agreed that the US government had been forced to include certain concessions within the accords. We agreed that both the withdrawal of US ground troops and the halt to the US air war over Vietnam were important concessions wrested by the Vietnamese. We further agreed that the accords would leave a highly unstable situation between the contending camps in South Vietnam.

However, we insisted on viewing the accords in a broader context. In an article in the February 9, 1973 issue of The Militant, Barry Sheppard explained our position as follows:

"Under the combined pressure of Washington's military attack, Moscow and Peking's refusal to provide adequate aid, and political pressure from Moscow and Peking, Hanoi finally accepted the cease-fire accords under terms they had previously rejected.

"These accords leave the Thieu regime in control of the major cities, keep Vietnam divided, and contain other conditions Washington has forced on the Vietnamese.

"The next stage in Vietnam will be marked by instability. The accords reflect the fact that the liberation forces have been unable to achieve national liberation and reunification, and also that they have not been crushed. Two powers continue to exist in South Vietnam--the Saigon regime of the landlords and capitalists, and the liberation forces based upon the peasants and workers. Such a situation is inherently unstable. One or the other of these forces must eventually predominate. The outcome can only be decided by struggle." (Reprinted in "The Meaning of the Vietnam Accords," Pathfinder Press.)

The Vietnamese struggle also had to contend with the obstacle of Moscow and Peking treachery, as well as the inadequacy of the Vietnamese Stalinist leadership itself.

In short, we felt that while imperialism did not achieve all of its original goals, the accords as such did represent a formula for the maintenance of capitalism in South Vietnam. While not deciding the issue definitively, the accords unquestionably strengthened the hand of the landlords and capitalists and legitimized their continued rule. We re-

jected the notion, expressed in "The Sterne-Walter Resolution on Vietnam," adopted by the majority of the IEC, that "The current situation in South Vietnam is one of dual power from top to bottom" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 6, p. 22).

We expected that as events unfolded in Vietnam, the incorrect view put forward by the IEC majority would be exposed and that our position would be confirmed. In any case, we were willing to let the test of events decide.

Almost one year has passed since the signing of the accords and the last meeting of the IEC. Since then our view of the situation and line of development in Vietnam has been confirmed. Although the situation has remained unstable and could change quickly, South Vietnam has definitely remained capitalist and the bourgeois state apparatus has not been destroyed. Nor is there substantial evidence that the Thieu regime has been greatly weakened in the past year. The withdrawal of American troops has not been accompanied, as some expected, by the rapid collapse of the Thieu regime.

It is true that within South Vietnam significant sections of the country are controlled and administered by the Provisional Revolutionary Government. However, this is only part of the picture. Since the signing of the accords, the Thieu regime has consolidated its hold on the areas it controls, which includes all the major urban population centers as well as sizable rural areas. Today we are again told by the IEC Majority Tendency's political resolution that, "For an entire period, the situation will remain one of dual power from top to bottom in a large part of South Vietnam" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 6).

This assessment is overly optimistic. Furthermore, to state that there is "dual power from top to bottom," while asserting, as the resolution does, that "this dual power has yet to be extended to the country's principal cities," is to muddle up the very concept of dual power. A situation in which the capitalists control all the large urban population centers--the major working class areas--while the revolutionaries control areas of the countryside and small towns is not dual power in the precise Marxist use of the term.

Within the government controlled areas there is no dual structure of power. No soviet-type formations exist as a potential alternative structure to the governmental organs of the capitalist state. Under these conditions, the talk of "dual power from top to bottom" is inaccurate. Although continuous skirmishes take place and certain "no man's lands" exist, dual power, which implies an imminent contest for power between two alternative governmental structures, does not exist. It is politically more precise to characterize the present situation as one of civil war. This has existed for many years and remains at an intense, though reduced, level since the signing of the accords.

Why does the IEC majority insist on characterizing the situation in South Vietnam as one of "dual power from top

to bottom?" The fact that there is a military situation of civil war in South Vietnam leads them to believe the almost automatic conclusion that a political situation of "dual power from top to bottom" has arisen. This is not the case. Their error in this regard duplicates and extends the error that was first made in the last world congress resolution on Latin America. They elevate military considerations above all else. They deemphasize the importance of the degree of political organization of the working class and omit from consideration entirely the weakness of the subjective factor in Vietnam, that is, the absence of a Leninist party and leadership that can be counted on to lead the revolution to its consummation.

What are the dangers of the mistaken assessment made by the IEC Majority Tendency? Revolutionaries must explain the situation in Vietnam as it actually exists, not as we might like it to be. To describe setbacks as victories disorients both the masses in Vietnam and the antiwar activists all over the world who have fought to defend the Vietnamese revolution.

#### Stalinist Misleadership in Vietnam

Another major weakness of the resolution tied to the above is that there is no real criticism of the Stalinist leadership in Vietnam. One of the fundamental problems of the Vietnamese revolution is that it is headed by the Vietnamese Communist Party which is a Stalinist party.

Of course, we should continue to emphasize as we have done that the primary responsibility for the unfavorable features of the accords lies first with the imperialists and second with the Stalinist bureaucracies in Moscow and Peking which collaborated with imperialism to force these accords on the Vietnamese. But the Vietnamese Communist Party is not faultless. Although they may have been forced to sign the accords they are wrong to describe the accords as a victory for the Vietnamese struggle and a defeat for US imperialism. This embellishment hinders the political preparations for mobilizing the masses for further struggle--a struggle which can only be successful by breaking the restrictions imposed on the liberation fighters by the accords.

To put it simply, the IEC Majority Tendency resolution does not discuss the problem of the Vietnamese leadership because they do not think it is much of a problem. The implication is that once an armed force is employed, revolutionary politics goes with it. They do not believe the Vietnamese Communist Party is Stalinist. They believe that although the VCP leadership has faults it is basically revolutionary--in theory and in practice. Comrade Sterne, a leader of the IEC Majority Tendency, expounded this view in his document entitled, "The Debate on Indochina."

Comrade Sterne states, "For the majority, a Stalinist party is a party that subordinates the interests of the socialist revolution in its country to those of a bureaucracy in a

degenerated workers state." So far, so good. But then he goes on to say, "This is certainly not the case of the VCP which has had to carry on a struggle against the orientation set by the Kremlin and today by the Kremlin and Peking." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 7, p. 9, emphasis in original).

However, this is a one-sided view of the problem. The VCP itself heads a deformed workers state in North Vietnam and has many times subordinated the interests of the revolution in the South to its own bureaucratic needs and policies. True, the VCP does not always abjectly follow the lead of the bureaucracies in China or the USSR, but neither do the Stalinists in Yugoslavia or Rumania. The policy followed by the VCP after the signing of the 1954 Geneva accords was clearly a Stalinist policy. The stated program of the VCP has been and remains: for economic construction in the North; for democratic liberties while preserving capitalism in the South.

What has come out in this discussion is an adaptation on the part of the IEC Majority Tendency to the VCP because it has been at the head of armed struggle. This too is a one-sided view. The fact that Stalinists are at the head of an armed struggle does not mean either that they are leading it along correct revolutionary lines or that they cease to be Stalinists. The civil wars in Spain in the 1930s and Greece in the 1940s are two good examples of this fact.

The failure of the IEC Majority Tendency resolution to criticize the Stalinist leadership in Vietnam and to point to the need for a Trotskyist party there is another major weakness of their document.

This dispute has already received a fuller explanation than can be devoted to it here. For further information several articles comrades can refer to include: "The Nature of the Vietnamese Communist Party," by Fred Feldman and George Johnson (ISR, July/August, 1973); "On the Differences Over Vietnam," by Gus Horowitz (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 15); and "An Evaluation of the December, 1972 IEC Plenum," by Jack Barnes (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 9).

#### Chile--The Betrayal of Popular Frontism

The lessons of the Chilean tragedy are very important. Allende's Unidad Popular became the world model for travelling the peaceful parliamentary road to socialism among the Stalinists and Social Democrats, as well as other political currents on the left. Allende was hailed by Moscow and its supporters throughout the world. Mitterand, the French Social Democrat and aspirant to the presidential candidacy of the Union of the Left, visited Chile to solidarize with Allende; so did Castro. The Stalinists and Social Democrats saw the Chilean model as a fine example of their popular front policy.

But this policy led to disaster in Chile. Only the Trotskyist movement can draw the correct lessons from this defeat. Yet the assessment of the Chilean events put forward

in the IEC Majority Tendency political resolution is not adequate. One major defect is its incorrect and misleading notions concerning popular frontism. In fact, it refuses to characterize the Allende regime as a popular front.

A popular front is a specific form of class-collaboration. The Trotskyist movement has used the term to describe an electoral or governmental front between working class parties and sectors of the bourgeoisie. The Stalinists, who coined the expression, and who are the most vociferous advocates of popular frontism, claim that popular frontism can lay the groundwork for the construction of socialism. But these fine words mean nothing. The practical policy of popular frontism is to preserve capitalism, while granting some concessions under pressure to the working class and poor masses which can be withdrawn or erased by reaction at the next turn of events.

The IEC majority political resolution misses these essential points. Their resolution states:

"Of course the Allende regime possesses several features of a Popular Front government, of collaboration with bourgeois parties. But from the start, it differed from a classical Popular Front regime by the fact that it openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on the road of socialism..

"What was revealed in Chile is, therefore, more a new demonstration of the bankruptcy of reformism, i. e., of the attempt to arrive at socialism by the 'legal' and 'peaceful' road, within the framework of the institutions of parliamentary bourgeois democracy, without the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus, than an experience of coalition government with the bourgeoisie." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 10, emphasis in original)

This is a wrong definition. Part of the error is related to the use of journalistic terminology which introduces confusion, in place of precise Marxist terminology, which helps achieve clarity.

Where has there been a "classical" popular front? In France in the 1930's, where the Radical Party, a major bourgeois party, was a decisive component? Or was it in Spain, where bourgeois representation was only a "shadow," as Trotsky called it? Was it in France, where the "peaceful road" was followed in upholding capitalist rule, or was it in Spain, where armed struggle was carried out in defense of bourgeois democracy? What about the provisional Kerensky government of 1917, which was never elected, but came to power as the result of a mass insurrection? Yet all of these regimes, despite their differences, were labeled popular fronts by Trotsky according to his Marxist analysis. They were class collaborationist electoral or governmental coalitions. That was the essence of the matter.

The only hint of what the IEC majority means by the "classical" form is indirectly given in the statement that the Allende regime "openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on



the road to socialism..." Here at least is a negative if partial definition of what the IEC majority means by a "classical" popular front--one that does not "openly proclaim its resolve to enter on the road to socialism."

But what about the popular front in Ceylon? It has stated its goal to be socialism. Has that pronouncement kept it from being a popular front? This example is not very unusual. Many popular fronts in the colonial world have declared their goal to be socialism. Even bourgeois nationalist regimes in the colonial world often declare their ultimate goal to be some sort of "socialism"--for example, those of Sukarno, Nkrumah, or Nasser. They "proclaim" this as their goal "openly" and often with great verbal "resolve."

Allende's rhetoric about socialism did not change the political reality of his regime. The criticism to be made of the Chilean Communist and Socialist parties was not that they had a strategy to overthrow the bourgeoisie but made the mistake of trying to do it by peaceful means; the fact was that they had no strategy to overthrow the bourgeoisie at all. Despite the lip service they paid to socialism, their policy was to collaborate with the bourgeoisie, to subordinate the interests of the working class to the preservation of the bourgeois order. They taught the working class to rely on a multi-class governmental coalition with pro-bourgeois elements in a popular front. The workers were left unprepared politically to combat the capitalist class, and that is why they were unprepared militarily.

The IEC majority's refusal to characterize the Unidad Popular regime as a popular front can cause great confusion in the Trotskyist movement by blurring the distinction between a popular front and a united front. This confusion has already been spread by Tariq Ali, one of the top leaders of the IEC majority. In a newly published pamphlet by the IMG, he has referred to the Unidad Popular as a "reformist united front dominated by two large working class parties" (There is Only One Road to Socialism and Workers Power).

A united front is fundamentally a method of class struggle, not of class collaboration. It can certainly include the participation of reformist workers parties, but is formed for the purpose of carrying out specific actions in the interests of the working class. We do not use the term united front to describe a situation in which two reformist working class parties get together to counsel the workers to vote for and rely upon a class-collaborationist electoral coalition and regime.

By pointing to superficial differences between Allende's regime and the popular front governments in Spain and France during the 1930's, the IEC majority reduces the most important lesson to be learned from Chile to be that socialism cannot be achieved without armed struggle.

It is true that socialism cannot be achieved by parliamentary means. This is a key lesson, confirmed to the hilt by the Chilean defeat. But the failure of the Stalinists and reformists in Chile to organize the effective armed struggle of

the masses was a derivative of a more fundamental betrayal. Their advocacy of class-collaboration with nationalist sectors of the bourgeoisie disarmed the working class politically, which led, in turn, to their being unarmed militarily.

The process of arming the masses follows logically from a correct class-struggle program applied in all spheres. But a correct class struggle program does not necessarily accompany a recognition of the need for armed struggle to take power. This is precisely what the default of the Castroists in Latin America consists of.

Reducing the paramount problem to one of armed struggle lets the ultra-left and centrist organizations off the hook. Many such groups in Chile and around the world opposed the "peaceful road" and called for armed struggle. But at the same time they also taught the workers to support Allende's popular front government.

The Castroists current, for example, including the "focista" Debray, the Tupamaros, the ELN, and Castro himself, gave political support to the Allende regime. In Chile, left centrists such as the MIR and the left MAPU called for armed struggle and denounced the peaceful road to socialism. But at the same time they advocated support to the bourgeois Allende government as a "popular government"--and thus cut across the possibility of mobilizing the working class independently on all fronts, including the front of armed struggle. We should keep in mind that in order to establish a workers state, the armed struggle would not only have had to block a rightist coup against Allende, but would have had to end up in overturning the Allende regime from the left, just as the Bolsheviks acted with regard to Kerensky.

These currents, even though they called for armed struggle, also bear a share of responsibility for the defeat in Chile--though of course, to a degree not comparable to the betrayal of the Stalinists and Social Democrats. But the IEC majority's treatment of armed struggle as a political panacea has blinded them to the need for such criticism; and it is not surprising that their contribution says nothing about the role of the centrists.

The IEC Majority Tendency document commits another basic mistake in relation to the events in Chile. Nowhere does the document discuss the need for a revolutionary party in Chile. Nor does it point to the absence of such a party as one of the reasons for the success of the generals' coup.

In reply to a letter from a comrade from Sweden printed in the November 5, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press, the editor explains the importance of a revolutionary party and what such a party could have meant in Chile.

"Against the counterrevolutionary moves of the generals, a revolutionary party would have defended the popular front government while opposing it politically. When the generals were defeated, it would have moved to topple the Kerensky of 1973 and replace his regime

with a workers and peasants government. But the Chilean workers lacked such a party. They had no way of effectively applying the policy advocated by Trotsky and practiced by the Bolsheviks in 1917.

"In Chile, because of the treacherous role played by the Social Democrats and above all the Stalinists, the task of building a revolutionary party was not undertaken. The Chilean workers were thus left disarmed politically. It must be added that those who thought that guerrilla war could be counted on to provide a shortcut, obviating the need for a revolutionary party, must likewise share political responsibility for this failure. Insistence on assigning political responsibility, let it be repeated, does not deny the heroism of individual members of these currents who took up arms in a desperate struggle against the counterrevolutionaries; nor does it deny the positive role that their heroism can play in a future upsurge of the class struggle in Chile.

"After seeing what happened in Chile, many who held illusions about Allende will now agree that the 'peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism' proved once again to be a deadly trap. It is to be hoped that they will also draw the still deeper lesson--the need to build a revolutionary party in time." (IP, Vol. 11, No. 39, p. 1280, emphasis in original )

However, this lesson is not made explicit by the absent-minded authors of the IEC Majority Tendency political resolution.

The IEC majority resolution, by failing to characterize the Allende regime as a popular front or a bourgeois government leaves unclear whether they consider the question of giving support to such a government a tactical question or a principled one. To consider it only a tactical question would be wrong.

This is a fundamental issue for the Fourth International because in many parts of the world the organizations of the world movement are faced with the problem of how to orient to popular front type formations. Because of the lack of clarity on this question within the International, in more than one case comrades supporting the IEC Majority Tendency have taken the wrong approach.

One example is the mistake made by the POR (Combate), the Bolivian section of the Fourth International, in joining the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front (FRA) in Bolivia. The FRA has a class-collaborationist political program. Although the FRA, like Allende and the Unidad Popular, verbally calls for socialism, its program, if carried out, would result in a coalition regime with elements of the bourgeoisie. The FRA finds no contradiction in combining its hailing of the previous Torres regime with calls for armed struggle against the present Bolivian government.

The POR (C) supports the FRA because the FRA calls on paper for "armed struggle" and "socialism." However, the

FRA's call for armed struggle and its verbal endorsement of socialism does not change the fact that it is a multi-class coalition with a pro-bourgeois program that aspires to establish a bourgeois government.

Another aspect of this same problem within the world movement is the orientation taken by the comrades of the now-banned Communist League of France in supporting the Union of the Left in the March legislative elections. In the second round of those elections (after the Communist League had run its own candidates in the first round) the French section called for a vote en bloc for the candidates of the Union of the Left. The Union of the Left included bourgeois elements, the Left Radicals, and had a popular front perspective.

In a letter on behalf of the Political Committee of the SWP to the Political Bureau of the Communist League, Comrade Mary-Alice Waters explained what was wrong with the orientation of the French comrades:

"The problem with the Union de la Gauche was not simply the presence of the Left Radicals, ... Even if the Left Radicals had not joined the Union de la Gauche, we believe it would have been an error to call for a vote for it per se.

"The key question was not when some section of the bourgeoisie, or as in Spain some 'shadow' of the bourgeoisie, might decide to participate in the Union de la Gauche. From its very inception it represented a projected electoral bloc with bourgeois forces, the ultimate goal being a coalition government. Its essence, its purpose was to prepare for this.

"Under these circumstances a vote for the Union de la Gauche per se did not represent a vote for independent working-class political action. It was a vote for a petty-bourgeois electoral bloc with a popular front perspective." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 14, p. 15, emphasis in original )

Furthermore, in the first round of the elections the Communist League called for votes for other organizations of the "far left" on the basis of their "rejection of the peaceful road to socialism." While it may have been correct to have attempted to work out an agreement whereby the Communist League and these other organizations would not have run candidates against each other, to call for a vote for these organizations because they are for "armed struggle" ignores the fundamental programmatic differences of our party with these organizations. There are many organizations which may be for "armed struggle"--for the purpose of carrying out an incorrect pro-bourgeois program--such as the FRA in Bolivia. Here again the gun is given precedence over Marxist politics by the supporters of the IEC majority.

The confusion and mistaken notions of the Communist League in regard to their orientation towards the Union of

the Left underscores the importance of the question of popular frontism for the Fourth International.

A political resolution for the Fourth International should help to clarify our approach to the question of coalitionism, not blur it. On this score the IEC Majority Tendency resolution is unacceptable. Coalition politics with elements of the bourgeoisie leads to defeats for the working class. The Fourth International must reaffirm the time-tested position of Marxism on this score.

#### The United States--Is the Current Radicalization an Obstacle to Mass Workers Struggles?

The IEC majority resolution contains less analysis of what is occurring within the United States than any recent political resolution of the Fourth International. The analysis that is presented is inadequate and inaccurate.

What have been the key features of political life in this country over the past ten years? The antiwar movement, the Black struggle, the student movement, the women's liberation movement, the Chicano struggle, along with other struggles of the oppressed have all been components of a continuing radicalization which we have assessed to be the deepest of this century in the US. This generalization comes in for only passing notice in the IEC Majority Tendency resolution.

Instead we are told that the key factor of political life here has been a negative one: the absence of workers struggles such as those which are currently taking place in Europe. This is a one-sided and inaccurate way of analyzing the class struggle in the United States. However, we are assured that mass workers struggles are on the immediate order of the day.

"Consequently, the most probable variant for the immediate future in the United States is neither the prolongation of the present temporary decline in the mass movements of revolt, nor the rapid evolution of the country toward a military-police type dictatorship, even of the fascist type. It is, on the contrary, that of an explosive new thrust of the mass movement, this time centered on workers' struggles... The revolt of important sectors of the proletariat against the union bureaucracy's policy of class collaboration, against its acceptance of successive wage freezes and of the incomes policy, will stimulate this resumption of workers' struggles, will give them a more pronounced character that is both anti-capitalist and anti-bureaucratic, and will deal heavy blows to the bourgeois two-party system, again placing the creation of an independent, mass labor party on the order of the day." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 8 )

This is projected as an immediate perspective. The scenario described above will take place as a result of "the recession that will follow... in 1974 or 1975..." (Ibid., p. 3).

Of course such struggles by the working class will take place in the foreseeable future, and perhaps even within a short space of time, but it is hazardous to predict so specific a date as a guide to action.

In this connection the IEC majority thinks that a big theoretical problem is posed in dealing with the United States. The resolution states:

"Of all the important imperialist countries, the United States is the only one in which the proletariat is not yet participating in the spectacular resurgence of struggles of the last years. Revolutionary Marxists should give particular importance to the theoretical and political analysis of the causes of this delay..." (Ibid., p. 8.)

The IEC majority resolution gives some correct reasons for this delay (though not nearly as rounded as our own analysis). But then it goes on to say later:

"The absence of a centripetal thrust of the working class also explains the sectoral fragmentation of the radicalization, which, in the absence of a solution of a total socio-economic alternative to monopoly capitalism, in turn delays a massive entry of the proletariat onto the political arena." (Ibid., p. 8 )

In other words, the radicalization has acted as a brake, delaying the entry of the working class into struggle! Fortunately for the class struggle in the US, exactly the opposite is the case. The present radicalization has not only developed around important political issues which are of deep-going concern to the working class but has helped and will continue to help draw sectors of the working class into struggle. The nationalist struggle of the Chicano people, for instance, has been a major factor in promoting the organization of farm workers into trade unions. The women's movement has inspired the formation of women's caucuses in the factories and unions. Similarly for the Black movement.

The tremendously changed political climate in the US that has developed as a result of the radicalization has made it much, much easier for the working class to radicalize on a massive scale, not more difficult. To belittle the recent forms of social struggle or to see them as a block to the advance of massive working class struggles leads to sectarian conclusions. Movements like the Black struggle, the Chicano struggle, and the women's struggle will propel the advance of the more massive and ultimately decisive working class struggles yet to come.

The treatment of the United States in the new IEC majority political resolution stands in sharp contrast to the analysis in the political resolution that was adopted by the Fourth International at its last world congress. In that 1969 document there is a much more thorough and realistic treatment of the political situation in the US.

One big difference can be seen in the way that the Black liberation struggle is discussed in the two resolutions. The 1969 resolution contains a thorough discussion of the Black struggle and correctly assigns it a central role in the developing class struggle in the US. The current IEC majority resolution barely mentions the Black struggle and virtually ignores the national question in this country.

The American Trotskyist movement has recognized that the American revolution will be a combined revolution of the working class against capitalism and the oppressed nationalities for self-determination. The IEC majority resolution's silence on this point is as revealing as it is wrong.

The American supporters of the IEC majority have a position on the Black and Chicano struggles that is the opposite of the position in Ernest Germain's document, "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International." The Germain document, which was previously officially adopted by the IEC Majority Tendency, included a judgment that Black and Chicano nationalism are progressive, and indicated agreement with our call for an independent Black party. But the recent counter-political resolution of the Internationalist Tendency in the SWP took the position that Black and Chicano nationalism are not progressive, rejected the SWP's call for Black and Chicano parties, and essentially rejected the SWP's basic analysis of this key aspect of the coming American socialist revolution. Because of the global importance of the American revolution, these questions are important for the entire world Trotskyist movement.

But the IEC majority political resolution avoids taking a clear stand on these vital issues. That is not a principled way of proceeding.

The error of the IEC majority's political resolution in belittling the national question in the United States is paralleled by a similar error in respect to Canada. While talking of the maturation of the class struggle in Canada, they omit reference to the Quebecois national struggle, a central factor in the revolution in Canada. The big working class upsurge in Quebec in May, 1972, for example, was intimately linked to the national liberation struggle there.

Another important consideration that is unnoticed by the IEC majority resolution is the relatively favorable relationship of forces on the left in the US. In this country Trotskyists do not face the obstacle of winning the leadership of the working class away from mass Stalinist or Social Democratic parties such as those which exist in Europe and elsewhere. As a result of the work that the SWP and the YSA carried out in the antiwar movement and the other movements of the current radicalization, we hold as much political influence today as any of our opponents in the radical movement. This is probably the most favorable relationship of forces confronting the Trotskyist movement in any major industrial country in the world, and certainly should

be taken into account in any analysis of perspectives for building Leninist parties capable of leading the socialist revolution.

#### Once Again: The "New Mass Vanguard"

In the document entitled, "Building Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," supported by the IEC Majority Tendency, the concept of the "new mass vanguard" was developed at length and an orientation to it was projected. This concept and orientation is now extended on a world scale in the IEC Majority Tendency political resolution:

"The appearance on a world scale of a new vanguard of a mass character for the first time since the creation of the Communist International constitutes one of the principal features of the new rise of the world revolution since 1968....

"This new mass vanguard can be characterized in the most succinct fashion as the totality of forces acting independently and to the left of the traditional bureaucratic leaderships of the mass movement." (*Ibid.*, p. 16 )

This definition is very broad. Yet the IEC majority proceeds to treat the "new mass vanguard" in some ways as if it were a homogeneous grouping. This is unwarranted.

If the "independence" of the "new mass vanguard" is conceived only in the narrow organizational sense (that is, being formally outside of the mass Stalinist and Social Democratic parties), this risks leaving out of consideration other important forces that the Fourth International must win to its banner.

For example, there are many radicalizing young workers who are members of the Communist or Socialist parties and who currently follow the leadership of these parties, but who are also in the forefront of important class struggles. This is the case with regard to the Communist Party in Spain. Another example is the important development of radicalizing youth in the German Social Democracy. These forces must also be won to Trotskyism.

If the "independence" of the "new mass vanguard" is conceived in the political sense, then care must be taken not to view this "vanguard" as a homogeneous grouping. Most of the forces of the "new mass vanguard" which are "acting independently and to the left of the traditional bureaucratic leaderships" supported the Union de la Gauche in the French elections. They supported Allende's regime in Chile. Many support Mao's regime in China. Many are uncritical of the Vietnamese Stalinists. Their "independence" from Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships is only relative. Many of these forces are also uncritical of Guevarism.

The proposed orientation towards the "new mass vanguard"

in Europe has meant in practice bending our political program and our political actions to cater to the moods of a layer of radicalizing youth.

One of the ways proposed by the IEC majority political resolution to orient to this "new mass vanguard" is to take "initiatives in action." The resolution does not clearly spell out what this involves in practice. However, we do have evidence of what is meant by examining some of the actions that are hailed as exemplary by supporters of the IEC majority.

One such "initiative in action" carried out by "revolutionary Marxist militants," according to a report in Rouge, was the firebombing of the Argentine embassy near Paris in August, 1972, following the massacre of political prisoners from Trelew prison in Argentina. A similar "initiative in action" was carried out against the Honeywell-Bull offices in France for their complicity in the US war effort in Vietnam. "Initiatives in action" denotes activities such as these.

However much such ultraleft actions may impress some radicals, they should not be organized or supported politically by the Fourth International. Actions of this kind indicate the real meaning of "initiatives in action" purported to win over the "new mass vanguard."

It should be noted that the actions referred to above are defended by Comrade Pierre Frank, a central leader of the IEC Majority Tendency in his article entitled, "Two Ways of Constructing the Revolutionary Marxist Party and Engaging It in Action." Comrade Frank writes:

"In our opinion, the crime of Trelew required an immediate response and, as everyone knows, one cannot always summon up mass demonstrations. Thus the question of a vigorous action was posed, and we were of the opinion that the Trelew crime required more than a telegram or a customary gesture. But in the question of Honeywell-Bull, one finds a problem posed that Comrade Mary-Alice didn't seem to suspect. Why did revolutionary militants attack this American firm if not because it made material used against the Vietnamese revolution? We are for the defense and victory of that revolution, of the workers state of Vietnam. On this question we are not just for mass actions but also for the sabotage of the capitalist troops and of their armament..."

"The action against Honeywell-Bull, symbolic as it had been, fell into this category... and one can simply regret that there weren't more of them and more vigorous ones." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 14, p. 10 )

In their answer to the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction declaration entitled, "Let's Discuss Political Differences, Not Old Wives' Tales," the IEC majority again indicates what their real intentions are. They state, "... the minority

actually denies them our sections the right to take any action on their own, including, of course, any action of minority violence" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 27).

No one, least of all ourselves, denies the right of sections to take actions on their own. However, we do reject the political concept behind the theory of "minority violence," whether it's called "initiatives in action" or some other term signifying ultra-left adventures.

There is another side to the problem of the proposed orientation to the "new mass vanguard" on a world scale that directly concerns the YSA. In focusing almost completely on orienting towards this amorphous grouping, the IEC majority deemphasizes the student radicalization. While recognizing the existence of the youth radicalization, the IEC majority projects no orientation towards its student component. This can lead to many missed opportunities.

The recent student struggles in Thailand, South Korea and Greece reinforce the importance we have assigned to the student movement both as an objective force in the development of the world revolution and as a source of recruitment for the Fourth International. The orientation proposed in the document entitled, "The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International," a document which was adopted unanimously in 1969 by the United Secretariat, has evidently been shelved by the IEC majority. For us, that orientation is still completely valid today as Comrade Andy Rose has demonstrated in his article entitled, "The Red University Strategy vs. the 'Irreversible Turn'" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 19).

#### How Important is the Detente?

The IEC majority makes a major mistake in underestimating the effects of the detente that has been worked out by Washington with the Soviet Union and China. In addition, the resolution ascribes to the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction and its supporters views that we do not hold. They write in their resolution, "... it is entirely improper to speak of a new Yalta, in the sense of the ability of Washington, Moscow and Peking to divide the world into spheres of influence and to maintain the status quo" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 5).

No one maintains that Washington, Moscow and Peking have the ability "to maintain the status quo." They have never enjoyed this ability no matter what their intentions or how strongly they have sought to do so. Did the Yalta agreements "maintain the status quo?" The post-World War II period saw the overturns in Eastern Europe and the immense upsurge of the colonial revolution which included the historic landmark of the Chinese revolution. The Yalta agreements were only an attempt by the wartime allies to maintain the status quo. However, capitalism, with or without the cooperation of the bureaucracies in the two most powerful workers states, cannot solve the problems confronting the oppressed all over the world. In the long run the status quo cannot be maintained because the oppressed will continue

to fight against their oppression.

However, it must be recognized that the agreements worked out between the imperialists and the bureaucrats in the workers states in their attempt to contain the world revolution, will, as in the past, have extremely harmful effects and form a framework in which the class struggle will continue to develop, and will affect its development. These effects can already be seen in both Vietnam and the Arab East.

Comrade Jack Barnes summarized our view of the detente and its effects in his report to the April, 1973 plenum of the SWP National Committee. He explained:

"What the detente entails, of course, is a shift in all international political relations; among the imperialist powers and the workers states; among the workers states; between imperialism, the colonial and semicolonial countries and the workers states.

"The agreements between Washington, Moscow and Peking are made on the basis of the current world relationship of forces; but the agreements themselves affect this relationship....

"The important thing to remember is that while the class struggle on a world scale unfolds within this new international political framework, it continues to assert its presence. In just the brief period since the detente began, while the new relations are still being worked out, we have witnessed many confirmations of this....

"The class struggle has not been halted, reversed or annulled by Nixon, Breznev and Mao; it continues but within an altered set of conditions.

"The problem is not the combativity or the revolutionary potential of the working class and its allies. The problem remains the crisis of proletarian leadership." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 12, pp. 5-6 )

The IEC majority resolution rejects these implications of the detente. The resolution also fails to analyze accurately the factors leading to it. It states: "The economic crisis that the Soviet Union is today undergoing... was the determining factor in leading the team of Breznev-Kosygin-Podgorny to seek a rapprochement with American imperialism..." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 11).

There is some truth to this observation. The economic problems plaguing the Soviet Union may have been a factor in causing Moscow to seek a detente with US imperialism. But there is a deeper reason, which the IEC majority misses. The Kremlin has followed the policy of seeking detente since the inception of Stalinism, with its theories of "peaceful coexistence" and "socialism in a single country" which were proclaimed by Stalin with the death of Lenin and the exile of Trotsky in the late 1920 s.

The major new development behind the US detente with both China and the Soviet Union is a change in US policy. It stems from the need of US imperialism to preserve its strength in the face of an increasingly unfavorable international economic, political and military situation.

In addition to the many mistakes within the IEC Majority Tendency resolution, the document is also unacceptable because of other important points that it leaves out and does not discuss. The national question, for example, which is a pressing problem of the class struggle in every sector of the world revolution, receives just passing notice. The women's liberation movement is virtually ignored although its growth has been one of the more significant recent developments on a world scale. There is almost no balance-sheet on the most successful campaign carried out by the Fourth International in the recent period, the movement against the war in Southeast Asia. For all these reasons, it should be clear that a completely new document is needed for the guidance of the world movement in the next period.

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