

WHY DO WE REJECT THE DOCUMENT, "THE BUILDING OF REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES IN CAPITALIST EUROPE," PRESENTED TO THE TENTH WORLD CONGRESS BY THE MAJORITY TENDENCY?

1. A new justification of the disasters

Before fully taking up our differences with the document presented to the Tenth World Congress by the majority faction it is absolutely necessary to go back to the original source of the dispute, its repercussions on the building of sections in Europe and its relation to the present positions of the Mandel-Maitan-Frank faction. These positions do not flow from an "extension" to Europe of the guerrilla warfare strategy adopted for Latin America. They flow directly from the underlying method of the theses adopted at the Ninth World Congress.

The main resolution, "The New Rise of the World Revolution," in which reference was made to the building of the new revolutionary leadership, was general and contradictory in nature. Thus, it was not possible to see the full scope of the problematic it posed when it was adopted. However, this problematic was made clear when the objectives and the tasks to be carried out were concretized in the December 1969 IEC resolution in the following way:

a) Priority given to winning political and organizational authority within the new vanguard, in order to assure a considerable strengthening of our own organizations and a change (possibly qualitative) in the relationship of our forces to the bureaucratic apparatuses within the working class;

b) With this aim, adoption of a policy of initiatives in action to convince the new vanguard of the need for, and the existence of, revolutionary Marxist organizations, not just on the theoretical level and historic scale but in the on-going practical struggle;

c) Deeper penetration into the working class in the factories and unions;

d) An attempt to build solid bases of support among the working-class youth, on the basis of which struggles against the bureaucracies could be carried out without the risk of these nuclei being eliminated from the unions and the factories. (Building Mass Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe)

The present theories regarding the "stages" in building the party; the "three tactics," the artful justification of entryism, and of the significance of the turn taken with its abandonment, and the adoption of a "tactic of winning the new vanguard" are explained by Comrade Germain in The Place of the Ninth World Congress in the History of the Fourth International:

"At the Third World Congress it was a question of breaking with essentially isolated activity and of becoming integrated in the revolutionary mass movement. At the Ninth, it is a question of breaking with a basically propagandist practice,

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i.e., one that is centered on criticizing the betrayals and errors of the traditional leaderships, even though accompanied by widespread participation in action, and to pass to a phase in which, within as large a mass movement as possible, we are able to take revolutionary initiatives and demonstrate in practice that a revolutionary orientation is possible and beneficial. Our ability to become a pole of attraction within the new and young vanguard and to win hegemony is dependent on this. Because this vanguard will never be won over solely by ideas and programs. It will be won by ideas and programs that are brought to life by organizations that are able to show their value through the actions they lead....

"The break-through of revolutionary Marxism towards the creation of the mass revolutionary party is not yet possible; that will be the task of the next stage. But from this stage a break-through towards the building of a vanguard organization capable of carrying out autonomous initiatives in the revolutionary struggle already is possible. History will show that these initiatives will be able to exercise considerable influence upon the behavior, the activity, and the level of consciousness of much broader masses. In this sense the Ninth World Congress is a congress that is initiating the transformation of the Trotskyist movement from a group of propagandists into a combat organization already capable of effectively leading vanguard revolutionary actions."

In parallel fashion the IEC resolution asserted that "the strategy of transitional demands remains the basis of propaganda and, when the occasion arose, of agitation and of struggle." "Revolutionary initiatives," on the one hand, and abstract propaganda around some transitional slogan, on the other hand, both unconnected to the development of the workers' and peoples' struggles.

The adoption of a line of "revolutionary initiatives in action" launched the European sections of the Fourth International on a "leftist" course since 1969, on a course of activity based on pushing minority-exemplary actions that were counterposed to mass actions under the leadership of reformists, and differentiated themselves from these mass actions in an "exemplary" fashion. Since the Ninth World Congress turn there has been an attempt to win over sections of the vanguard fighters who were breaking with the traditional leaderships. These attempts have taken place on the fringes of the struggles by the class as a whole, with an orientation that didn't correspond to the objective needs posed by the working-class and popular masses. They don't orient these fighters toward accomplishing these tasks, meanwhile denouncing the Stalinists, Social Democrats, and Centrists of every stripe and winning the best of the vanguard to the Trotskyist organization. They have dedicated themselves to pointing out from outside the mass movement which road ought to be followed. Example: Dynamic of general intervention: proclamatory and "abstract propagandism." See the Valentin-Michelet criticisms. May Day splitters of the Ligue Communiste. Vietnam, Ireland.

In the area of youth intervention, an area that offered sections of the Fourth the possibility of leading the mobiliza-

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tion of sectors of the masses, the adoption of the "dialectic of the sectors of intervention" based on the utilization of broad sectors of the student vanguard as a "mass base for the revolutionary initiatives of the organization," has given rise to a superficial activist intervention in this milieu and to the separation of the vanguard of the student movement from the student masses, thus leaving the mass of students involved in reformist and centrist corporatist alternatives, failing to appreciate the role the massive mobilization of youth with a "class united front" perspective can play on the workers' movement as a whole. All of this has had its reflection in organizational forms: these have not been determined in relation to the needs raised by the mass movement of the youth and its relation to the working class, but rather in relation to a "leftist" perspective for building the organization. The Bensaid, Weber, Roger polemic deals with forms of organization of the student movement more concretely.

Flowing from those projections and from the characterization of the "new far left" as revolutionary organizations is the adoption of a line of "unity in action-outflanking" explicitly as "a tactic for uniting the revolutionaries outside the workers' movement" (D.B. Bol. 30, our emphasis), and identifying this with a united front policy suitable for a specific phase of the relationship of forces between reformists and revolutionaries. This expresses once again the refusal to provide an alternative to the struggling workers and youth who are still under the influence of the traditional leaderships, the refusal to fight these leaderships from within the workers' and popular movement itself. They become unable to destroy the centrist and ultraleftist organizations because they adapt themselves to them. Example: "Secours Rouge" [Red Aid], FSI [Indochina Solidarity Front], etc.

On the question of minority violence, in this sense one can speak of the "extension" to Europe of the line adopted by the Ninth World Congress for Latin America. See D.B. Bol. 30 and En Marcha's Combate 16, also the violent minority actions of the Ligue Communiste and the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (En Marcha) during 1973.

But the necessity of intervening within a framework of a rise in workers' and popular struggles that began after May 1968, has caused a crisis for ultraleft sectarian or left-centrist policy, the policy of left flank-guards of the apparatuses, leading the different European sections to make constant corrections, sudden turns, and political changes. These corrections, carried out empirically, after the event, have had a markedly opportunist character, even leading to direct capitulation before the sell-out leaderships. This process is linked to the crisis of the entire "far left" that suddenly developed with the May 1968 struggles (France and Spain). Note the attitude toward the Union of the Left, the German Social Democracy or the English Labour Party, the Popular Unity in Chile, the Vietnamese leadership.

All of this has been reflected within the different European sections to a larger or smaller degree through crises and debates. In all cases the inability to deal with the ques-

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tion of Stalinism and Social Democracy and their relation to the workers' movement and popular movement has been exposed. See the general debate on the Social Democracy (United Secretariat member Walter's document), after which various European sections considered the Socialist parties to be bourgeois parties; Mandel's positions regarding the Stalinist bureaucracy; characterization of the Union of the Left and polemic at the Third Congress of the Ligue Communiste; question of the Commissions Obreras [Workers' Commissions] and of the Spanish CP in Spain; the crisis of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria; the five tendencies in the International Marxist Group; the Italian and German sections.

Specific nature of the ICR's crisis: its greater rapidity and harshness. Greater sharpness of the class struggle in Spain and responsibilities in it. Greater ideological disarmament. Meaning of our crisis: the more blatant bankruptcy of the initiatives-in-action policy during an experience that is no less rich for being brief: behind our development was the tutorial activity of the Ligue Communiste: richer differentiation through our simultaneous confrontation with Lambertism; specific factor of our connection with the Leninist-Trotskyist tendency. Mirror for other European sections.

Despite the fact that this policy, which found initial theoretical recognition in documents such as the December 1969 IEC resolution, has been put to the test and has failed, something that was being proved in a more or less empirical way through experiences like those of the Ligue Communiste's, it is reaffirmed in "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe."

In this document there is no balance sheet of the "tactic" of building sections that was adopted after the turn of the Ninth World Congress, nor are the practical proofs of its failures -- the crises and debates that have jolted the different sections -- taken into account, although "none of these conflicts occurred over questions peculiar to only one European country. They go to the heart of the problems of constructing sections of the Fourth International..." [Mary-Alice Waters, "A Criticism of the United Secretariat Majority Draft Resolution on 'The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe' -- An Initial Contribution to the Discussion," IIDB, X, 3, p. 6]. Where the document touches one of these points, the point is dissolved in a one-sided and superficial way.

The document systematizes and concretizes the dominant positions in the Ligue Communiste, which the Ligue has arrived at after a series of sharp turns. It eliminates the "harshest excesses" and, at the same time, tries to satisfy the different implicit or explicit positions that have been hinted at (four tendencies in the IMG support the document). It is a real "christmas tree" document.

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"The Crisis of the LCR and the 'En Marcha' Split" (Resolution of the Second Congress of the LCR, First of the IC)

In her contribution to the debate, Comrade Mary-Alice Waters pointed out, in reference to the majority faction's document, that: "The document tries to develop a single continental orientation to cover more than 15 countries as different from one another as Finland, Sweden, or Norway from Portugal, Spain, or Greece. This method of deriving a tactical orientation is wrong and unrealistic. It repeats one of the fundamental methodological errors of the Latin American resolution passed by the last world congress -- the prescribing of a tactical orientation on a continental scale."

Comrade P. Frank assailed this assertion in "Two Ways of Constructing the Revolutionary Marxist Party and Engaging it in Action" in the following terms:

"She even begins by denying the need and the possibility for such a document, since no [single] strategy for the building of revolutionary parties could exist that would be valid for the capitalist European countries: [our emphasis]. And he continues: "What an astounding argument. Thus one could not write a document for a continent whose evolution presents a certain degree of homogeneity, one could only write a document for a given country. This argumentation, if it were upheld however slightly, would put into question the existence of the International. If one cannot write a document for a group of relatively homogeneous countries, how could one write a document making an analysis of the world situation? What sense would there then be in documents like "The Dynamics of World Revolution Today" and even the "Transitional Program" that analyze the three sectors of the world -- the advanced capitalist countries (and not solely those of Europe), the colonial and semicolonial countries (and not solely those of Latin America) and the Soviet Union and the other workers states?"

Comrade Frank concludes his criticism by accusing Comrade Mary-Alice Waters of placing a basic slogan of the Trotskyist movement -- The Socialist United States of Europe -- in question by denying the unity of the development of Europe in relation to the other parts of the world.

We are not going to dwell at length of the fact that MAW speaks of a "tactical orientation," while Frank -- employing a confusionist method already much used in the present debate -- answers in terms of "strategy of party building," because we do not believe that this ought to be the axis around which the polemic is centered.

We are going to make an effort to recenter the discussion, in the first place by providing a quick recapitulation of the method employed by the Communist International at its first congresses and by the international Trotskyist movement right

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up to our days.

The kind of resolutions the Third and Fourth congresses of the Communist International adopted refer to:

a) Resolutions on the analysis of the fundamental tendencies of the period of the death agony of capitalism, the evolution of the relationship of forces between classes on a world scale, and general strategic tasks and perspectives;

b) Resolutions on general tactical principles governing the intervention of communists within the mass movement;

c) Resolutions on the general tactical orientation in specific sectors: unions, youth, women.

Within these resolutions, the great blocks of countries with similar characteristics are in general constituted by the advanced capitalist countries on one hand, and colonial and semicolonial countries on the other. At the same time specific resolutions were introduced on specific countries with a particular and burning special situation (resolution on Italy, Yugoslavia, etc.).

With the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR and the passage of the CI to the side of bourgeois order, the founding congress of the Fourth International defined the crisis of leadership of the proletariat as the key factor in the situation. The transformation of the USSR into a bureaucratically degenerated workers' state placed on the agenda the struggle of the working class for the overthrow of the bureaucratic caste in power, thus opening the road toward socialism through a revolutionary process with different specific characteristics than in the imperialist countries and the colonial or semicolonial countries, which forces one to give it special treatment. At the same time, the document takes into account the peculiar situation created by the triumph of fascism in different European countries, devoting a separate chapter to it.

Since then the international Trotskyist movement has taken into account the specific dynamic of revolutionary development of the three sectors of the world revolution and their interrelationships within the perspective of the World Soviet Republic.

In this sense, if one is going to rearrange countries with greatest similarity into blocs at this time in order to define a general orientation for building sections, surely the similarity is greater between the U.S. and Canada and the countries of northern Europe than between northern Europe and Spain.

Does this mean the rejection of developing a document on the construction of sections in Europe? Absolutely not. We believe that the definition of the broad lines of European social, political, and economic development and the fundamental lines of the intervention by Trotskyists in the mass movement would greatly aid the different sections in developing a strategy and tactical orientations for each country.

Does this mean that we dispute, as Comrade Frank claims,

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the unity that nourishes the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the different European countries and which is found in the perspective of the Soviet United States of Europe? Absolutely not. We continue defending this perspective in the way that Trotsky defined it in 1929 in the Third International After Lenin:

"Defending the slogan of the Soviet United States of Europe, we pointed out in 1915, that the law of uneven development is in itself no argument against this slogan, because the unevenness of historical development of different countries and continents is in itself uneven. European countries develop unevenly in relation to one another. Nevertheless it can be maintained with absolute historical certainty that not a single one of these countries is fated, at least in the historical epoch under review, to run so far ahead in relation to other countries as America has run ahead of Europe. For America there is one scale of unevenness, for Europe there is another. Geographically and historically, conditions have predetermined such a close organic bond between the countries of Europe that there is no way for them to tear themselves out of it. The modern bourgeois governments of Europe are like murderers chained to a single cart. The revolution in Europe, as has already been said, will in the final analysis be of decisive importance for America as well. But directly, in the immediate course of history, a revolution in Germany will have an immeasurably greater significance for France than for the United States of America. It is precisely from this historically developed relationship that there flows the political vitality of the slogan of the European Soviet Federation. We speak of its relative vitality because it stands to reason that this Federation will extend, across the great bridge of the Soviet Union, to Asia, and will then effect a union of the World Socialist Republics. But this will constitute a second epoch or a subsequent great chapter of the imperialist epoch, and when we approach it more closely, we will also find the corresponding formulas for it [pp. 14-14]."

Certainly this perspective justifies the development of a European document. But the document presented by the majority faction does not precisely correspond to this perspective. This is the primary reason we reject it.

In the first place, the document presented by the majority tendency is governed by a West Europeanist conception. The developments of the class struggle in capitalist Europe are abstracted from the reciprocal interrelationships between the three fronts on which the world revolution develops. From there the document tries to develop a Western European strategic schema, without taking into account the complications imposed by its being part of the world revolutionary process.

In the second place, it is not placed within the perspective of the Socialist United States of Europe (SUSE). By abstracting Western Europe from the international context, it is absolutely impossible to come to grips with the change in the relationship of forces between classes on the continent as it is: a point where the new phase of deepening of the combined crisis of imperialism and the bureaucracy is concentrated.

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The characterization of the present situation in Europe and its perspectives is not looked at historically, pointing out the fundamental changes since the war in relation to America, nor in relation to the advance of the revolution in the degenerated workers' states, all of which is basic if one hopes to place oneself in the perspective of the SUSE. Today to be situated in the perspective of the SUSE, as the only solution for the decadent Europe we are familiar with, is inseparable from its link with the triumph of the political revolution in the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe.

In the third place, once Europe is situated within the economic, social, and political evolution and the general context of the world revolution, after looking at the dialectic of the relations between the advance of the revolution on the different fronts that make up Europe, it is possible to sketch more precise predictions and general tactical orientations for capitalist Europe. And within that, one would even have to distinguish between blocs of countries with similar characteristics (Scandinavian countries, countries with military or military-fascist dictatorships, Central European countries, etc.). And this includes devoting special parts to specific questions like the Irish question, etc.

The document, however, analyzes the dominant general tendencies in capitalist Europe in an abstract fashion, and directly from these it comes up with very precise tactics for all the European countries and sections. Nonscientific, abstract, and vague assertions such as "the revolution is again on the agenda in Europe; not only from the historical point of view, but also from the conjunctural point of view" are of little use except to justify a specific line of intervention and of building the revolutionary party. It is only possible to define the tasks for the sections in the immediate future, within the revolutionary perspective of a unified socialist Europe, in terms of a definition of the concrete general perspectives on a European scale (seeing the interrelations and unevenness between the different countries) and in terms of the place the communists occupy in the class struggle, of our real forces and resources.

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"Two Ways of Constructing the Revolutionary Marxist Party and Engaging it in Action," by Pierre Frank

3. Characterization of the Period and the Central Task

A. Joint Crisis of Imperialism and Stalinism in Europe

In line with what was said in the previous section, the European document should have introduced the inability of the European bourgeoisies to solve their crisis in the face of the recuperation of the European proletariat that has taken place

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since the 1960s within the framework of the worsening of the situation of imperialism and the bureaucracy and of the rise of the world revolution. By this we don't mean to say that one has to write a new world document, but rather one has to bring to life in Europe an entire situation that directly affects it and that presents specific concrete aspects.

More concretely the European document does not place itself within the context of the opening up of a new period that is qualitatively different from the period of the cold war. This new period is characterized by a tightening of the three-way counterrevolutionary collaboration, marking a change in imperialism's global strategy.

The European document is governed by an economist method that abstracts the European bourgeoisie's economic impasse from the change in the relationship of social forces that has taken place in Europe. It analyzes the reality of capitalist Europe in the throes of a generalized social crisis: at the base of this crisis' pyramid is a new worsening of European capitalism's economic contradictions. Starting from this deep capitalist economic crisis, the document goes on to touch on the specific cases of the social relations, then the political crisis, etc. Well now, if the economic crisis is one of the principal manifestations of imperialism's general crisis, it is an accelerating factor, as much as it is the product, of the world rise of the class struggle since the beginnings of the 1960s, which resulted from the acute dislocation in the relationship of forces imposed after the Second World War. It is this ongoing change in the social relations since 1960 that molds the political instruments that make economic measures possible (revenues policy, de Gaulle, etc.).

The characterization of the present situation in Europe is not viewed historically within the context of the sharpening interimperialist contradictions, pointing out the changes in the U.S.'s supremacy from the postwar period to today. This context is what is responsible for the worsening of the inter-imperialist rivalry, the new military (NATO), monetary, commercial accords. Flowing from this is the rise in the exploitation of the proletariat of the respective countries; sharpening of the social tensions. Yankee imperialism continues being the biggest, but it calls for greater collaboration from the rest of the imperialist powers, concretely from the capitalist powers of Europe, in all areas.

The beginning of a new phase of expansion, the search for closer collaboration with the Chinese and Russian bureaucracy in the struggle against the world revolution, does not just affect Washington, Moscow, and Peking. The acceptance of the present workers' states for the next historical period, based on the recognition of the role that the USSR and the People's Republic of China can play in applying the brakes to the development of the world revolution, a lesson that is amply confirmed in Vietnam, and the intensification of the penetration of capital into the workers' states, is a strategy with which the imperialist countries as a whole agree and in which they participate. Every one of the minor components of the bloc of imperialist countries and of the degenerated workers' states

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is taking part in this game. Only in this context can one understand Brandt's "Ostpolitik," the normalization of relations on the basis of acceptance of the division of Germany that was imposed after the Second World War, and the struggle of the various imperialist countries to gain the advantage in the markets offered by the bureaucratically degenerated workers' states. On the other hand, the Stalinist bureaucracy's support to the European Common Market begins just at the time when there is a strong worsening of the interimperialist contradictions. All these are questions that are fundamental to the characterization of the present period, and all would have to be taken up in the European document.

The European document would have to more concretely analyze the European bourgeoisie's lines of attack, in a context of [line missing] and reappearance of unemployment, in the face of the greater [word missing] and synchronization of the crises: the constant increase in exploitation, multiplication of the plans to integrate the unions into the state apparatus, restrictions on the civil liberties and rights of the workers, etc. All this is basic for later being able to define some of the immediate slogans of struggle that will have to come to the fore in this phase and that the Trotskyists should put forward. At the same time it would have to analyze the forms taken by the policy aimed at greater penetration of the markets of the colonial and semicolonial countries and the bureaucratically degenerated workers' states.

While speaking of the "crisis of the social relations" the European document should have dealt with the broad features of the dynamic of the rise of the workers' and popular struggles. However, despite speaking of the "generalized social crisis," the document only refers to the working class. This reflects a lack of understanding of the place, significance, and role of the mobilizations of youth, women, etc. It presents a workerist picture of the present upsurge. Meanwhile, in dealing with the workers' struggles, it does not provide a picture of the general tendencies that the massive resistance of the working class against the attacks on wages, on the conditions of work and the standard of living of the masses, on the democratic rights, etc., point towards, but rather excessively projects the importance of struggles that have "deeper motives," that dispute "the whole of capitalist productive relations" [p. 10], an analysis that further on will permit them to make the slogan of workers' control the central perspective of this struggle.

Finally, it should have shown that the deep aggravation of the crisis of the forms of the bourgeoisie's political domination, as a consequence of all of the above, leaves the bourgeoisie with limited political resources. On the level of generalized alternatives, we are in agreement with the European document that the resurgence of fascism is practically impossible without first having inflicted a series of grave defeats on the proletariat. Nonetheless, what the European document no longer says is that the most probable generalized alternative that the bourgeoisie will try to use to crush the proletariat is the alternative of the Popular Front, preparing the arrival of fascism in this way. Although the European document speaks of the possibility that "in a period of 4 to 5 years" "decisive

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battles" will take place, it does not say a single word on the role that the traditional leaderships and the Popular Front policy can play as the last political resources of the bourgeoisie to hold back the march of the proletariat towards power.

The European document does not even mention the crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the workers' states, despite it being a determining factor in the situation of the imperialist countries, whether directly or through the CPs. Caught between the sharpening of the imperialist crisis and the growth of the class struggle, the Stalinist bureaucracy tries to perpetuate its dominion by tightening its counterrevolutionary alliance with imperialism on all levels: from applying the brakes to and frustrating the proletarian upsurges in the imperialist centers, putting forward class collaborationist solutions in order to alleviate the extremely serious crisis of political leadership that affects a large part of the European bourgeoisies, to various forms of open aid and collaboration in the repression of the mass movements (Polish coal to destroy the Asturias strikes in 1970 and 1973). It is not just a policy of normalization of the respective spheres of influence, but rather a policy of active collaboration between European imperialism and the bureaucracy (cf. European Security Conference, aid to the Common Market, etc.).

Moreover, if the European document is written, as Comrade Frank says, within the perspective of the SUSE, it should have taken up the entire situation raised by the theory of "socialism in one country" and the ever greater dependence of the workers' states on the imperialist market. Let us recall, moreover, that already at the Ninth World Congress there was no analysis of the possibility of the restoration of capitalism in the workers' states. This danger increases in proportion to the persistence of the bureaucracy's power. For years (since the Third World Congress), the Fourth International has excluded this perspective. Today we find ourselves confronted with situations like the one in Yugoslavia where, although it has not been transformed into a capitalist country, this problem is raised in a burning manner.

The fundamental form of the bureaucracy's intervention in the imperialist countries is through the CPs. Their relationship to the USSR, their link with the proletariat that is subordinated to this relationship, and their Popular Frontist strategy of "peaceful coexistence" are the bases of the activity and of the crisis of the CPs.

This active collaboration between the bureaucracies and the imperialists is unfolding in a period in which the mass mobilizations are forcing the bourgeoisies to harden their policy, to increase their pressure and to adopt rigid forms of resistance. This is what causes the decisive worsening in the crisis of the CPs, CPs that are today confronted with a groundswell of broad and radical struggles. This is shown by a series of situations that have swept beyond the CPs, by a deterioration in relations with vast sectors of militant proletarians and in the bonds between the leadership and rank and file. Up to here we agree with the majority document. But we absolutely disagree with the European resolution when it goes on to analyze

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what it calls the "process of Social Democratization" of the CPs. The loosening of the ties between the national CPs and the Kremlin bureaucracy is based on the defense of the CPs's policy of alliances with the bourgeoisie, which directly flows from the bureaucracy's line of intervention. Thus, for example, faced with events like the invasion of Czechoslovakia, some of the CPs had to "disapprove" of the invasion in order to lend credence to the perspectives of their proposals to the bourgeoisie. The patriotic political line of the CPs does not always coincide with the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. This is a contradiction and one of the essential components of the crisis of Stalinism, which is leading to its breaking up. To characterize this crisis as a crisis of Social Democratization of the CPs, of transformation into "Social Democratic" or national centrist parties, as the European document does, even if it is in quotation marks, is a new form of overestimating their capacities and underestimating their crisis. It is very different than saying that factions starting out from the destruction of the Stalinist parties become Social Democrats or centrists (cf. point on the crisis of the CPs in the program that was not approved in the Congress).

With regard to the Social Democracy, one cannot speak, as the European document does, in terms of identity between Stalinism and Social Democracy. In a world structured by "peaceful coexistence", that is by imperialism and Stalinism, the Social Democracy has no independent role to play. Its role is to tie -- whether from the right or from the left -- the sectors of the proletariat over which it has influence to the cart of the Stalinist bureaucracy. [sic].

From there the European document should have raised the generalized alternatives and the strategic goals of the European proletariat. The perspective of the United Socialist States of Europe, despite its utilization to polemicize against our faction, occupies a very secondary place in the majority document. On the contrary, the document should have raised the concept that there is no solution to the capitalist crisis in Europe except the destruction of the capitalist mode of production and the overthrow of the bureaucracy's political domination; that all the capitalists' attempts at unifying Europe will only increase the contradictions of the system, whose cost the working class will pay. In the face of the collaboration and support that the bureaucracies of the USSR and the People's Republic of China extend to the European Common Market, we Trotskyists defend the perspective of a unified and socialist Europe as the only solution capable of fulfilling the needs of the proletariat and the oppressed masses of the European countries.

This does not, by any means, suggest that the revolution will take place uniformly in all the European countries. However, as Trotsky said, it is important to bear in mind the close interrelations between some countries and others. The task of each section is to intervene in every episode in the class struggle in order to transform the struggle of the masses against capitalist attacks into a revolutionary movement to take power and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat.

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B. The Proletariat and its Traditional Leaderships

The mechanical connection between economic crisis-social crisis-political crisis of the bourgeoisie-crisis of the traditional leaderships-revolutionary crisis, without a minimally serious analysis of the role that the traditional leaderships are going to play in offering the bourgeoisie a solution to save it from the crisis (the Union of the Left for example), leads us right to the central axis underlying the whole document: the lack of understanding of the dynamic of mobilization of the masses, of the relations between the working class and its leaderships, about which the document maintains an absolute silence.

If the majority believes, as the Transitional Program asserts, that in the present epoch "the chief obstacle in the path of transforming the prerevolutionary state [of society] is the opportunist character of proletarian leadership: its petty-bourgeois cowardice before the big bourgeoisie and its perfidious connection with it even in its death agony" [p.73], that the "conciliatory politics practiced by the 'People's Fronts' dooms the working class to impotence and clears the road for fascism" [p. 74], that these "are the last political resources of imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution" [p. 74], then why does the document limit itself to making an abstract analysis of the sharpening crisis of the traditional leaderships, without analyzing the policies and mechanisms through which these leaderships continue constituting the principal obstacle to the revolutionary transformation of society in the present stage of the upsurge in the workers' and popular movement?

If "the orientation of the masses is determined first by the objective conditions of decaying capitalism, and second, by the treacherous politics of the old workers' organizations" [p. 74], why does the majority limit itself to analyzing the confrontation between the needs the mass movement has raised and the political orientation of the reformist leaderships, without going on to look at the contradictory relations that this dynamic establishes not only between the mass movement and its leaderships, but also within the organizations themselves between the rank and file and the leaders?

The perspective opened up, under the weight of capitalism's contradictions, is for growing sectors of the masses to go into direct action as the only way of imposing their demands, for

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growing loss of respect for bourgeois legality, and growing loss of confidence in the bureaucratic leaderships. All of this leads towards generalized battles against exploitation and oppression, battles of ever greater scope, whose dynamic will pose the question of power.

Through this process, which thrusts the masses onto the road of direct action, actions sweeping beyond the reformist leaderships, as has already begun to take place, ever larger sectors of the workers' vanguard will understand the sell-out character of the policies of the reformist leaderships and will see that only the class-against-class line defended by the communists responds to the needs of struggle that the masses have raised. We think the majority should be in agreement with this perspective.

But the European document doesn't see, or doesn't want to see, that at the same time the present upsurge taking place in the European imperialist countries is preparing the ground for an upsurge of broad layers of the proletariat, who will go from inactivity to organization in the unions and workers' parties. The document doesn't see that in this first phase of the upsurge the masses of workers will throw themselves into struggle with all their demands and their organizations, even though the proletariat has been led to defeat in prior revolutionary waves under their banner and program. The correct perspective of the rise and spread of soviet-type organizational forms scarcely means in and of itself that the traditional organizations would lose influence within them. They would use their influence within soviet-type organizations to try and derail the revolutionary dynamic of the workers' struggles and subordinate that dynamic to the bourgeois order.

While the masses go towards the traditional organizations, hoping to find in them the best adapted instruments for struggle, the sell-out leaderships exploit the inability of these fighters to come up with a whole system of objectives for their liberation through their own experience alone, to smother any spark of consciousness through the imposition of programs conceived in order to apply the brakes to the class thrust.

In the same fashion, what the majority's document doesn't see or doesn't want to see is the reflection of this dynamic on the vanguard workers. Through those advanced workers the reformist leaderships control the instruments the proletariat has built for struggle. The elevation of the struggles and the pressure of the masses sharpens the confrontations between the activists of the workers' organizations and their leaderships. But rarely are these experiences sufficient in and of themselves to lead the class's organizer cadres to a break with the leaderships that have brought them to political life (cfra. "Trama," "Programatico").

In the context of the present upsurge, a portion of these vanguard fighters break with the reformist leaderships through their own experiences. However, in the absence of Trotskyist parties rooted in the class, part of those fighters are won over by right- or left-centrist organizations or by more or less radicalized wings of the unions. Through these organizations they

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remain within the orbit of the politics of the reformist leaderships or are made to play their game. This break of sections of the vanguard fighters with the traditional leaderships of the proletariat -- which is undoubtedly one of the fundamental characteristics of the present upsurge -- is the only fact that the European document takes into account, isolating it from the entire general dynamic that we have described, the only framework in which it has meaning.

With the base of support that their control over the most important portion of the organizer cadres of the class gives them, the reformist leaderships continue putting forward the bourgeois political line in the workers organizations, playing up to the illusions that crop up throughout the struggles, subordinating the mass mobilizations to a line of conciliation with the bourgeoisie.

From Spain and France in the 1930s to Chile in our own time, long experience shows that at decisive moments Big Capital can only gain breathing space -- in order to prepare the demobilization or bloody crushing of the proletariat -- with the aid of "democratic agents" within the middle classes and counting on the service rendered by the reformist leaderships of the workers' movement, who are ready to turn the working class into a tail for the petty-bourgeois parties and politicians to wag.

The Popular Front line is scarcely mentioned in the document the majority presented. But it has already led to catastrophe for the proletariat time and again. Today the Stalinist leaderships are preparing new defeats for the proletariat through this line.

C. It is necessary and possible to build the Fourth International.

Whatever the maneuvers of the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships to subordinate the proletariat to the politics and interests of the bourgeoisie, they will not be able to prevent the working class, under the blows of worsening exploitation and oppression, from asserting its revolutionary will. "As time goes on, their desperate efforts to hold back the wheel of history will demonstrate more clearly to the masses that the crisis of proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can only be resolved by the Fourth International." [p. 74, TFSR]

Since the European document asserts not only the presence of the revolution on the scale of this period, but also that it is on the agenda in Europe in the present phase, if the majority does not identify the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat with the sell-out politics of the reformist leaders, it would have to acknowledge, with us, that the need to build the party along the lines of the Transitional Program is raised in more burning terms every day. It should acknowledge that building the party is possible right in the midst of the process of struggles that the masses carry out, on the condition that we know how to begin from their present level of consciousness and organization, aiding them to find a bridge between their

present demands and the program of the socialist revolution.

Seemingly, this is what can be drawn from the central resolution of the Ninth World Congress. That document asserted that the opening of a new period of the class struggle in Europe that began with the French May and the Czechoslovak spring, expressing and in turn influencing the sharpening of the crisis of imperialism and Stalinism, signified that "essentially proletarian forces and vanguard political currents carrying on the traditions of revolutionary Marxism and workers' democracy will be in the thick of the fight, that their methods of intervening, of action, and organization will draw much closer to the Leninist norm of proletarian revolutions." [Resolution on the New Rise of the World Revolution, p. 668, IP, July 14, 1969, emphasis added.]

In the context of the present upsurge the development of a vast layer of fighters who are ready for more radical battles, who are ready to go beyond the limits marked out by the reformist leadership, showed much more concretely the need and possibility to take a qualitative leap in building Leninist-type parties by winning over the best of this vanguard to the Trotskyist program on the basis of a line that answers the needs that the worker and popular masses have raised in struggle, confronting the other parties based in the class to launch generalized battles, warning the masses in advance of the possible betrayals and, when these take place, pulling factions of the masses into action under the influence of the Trotskyists, within the perspective of achieving unity of the proletarian front.

The importance of the phenomenon of the youth radicalization and the break of important layers of the youth with the conservative leaderships opened up great possibilities for the Trotskyist organizations to head up the massive mobilization of broad sectors of the youth, especially the student youth, and to win the healthiest elements to the Trotskyist program and organization. For the European sections it is tremendously important to understand the positive influence that the massive mobilization of the youth could exercise on the entirety of the workers movement, within a perspective of a revolutionary alliance of the proletariat and the youth. See the importance of the April-May 1973 mobilizations in France, their ability to put pressure on the reformist union leaderships, obliging them to carry out common action with the self-organized youth movement, a movement it had fought since its inception.

To different degrees depending on the countries, the radicalization has also reached sectors of the working class and other oppressed layers besides the youth. The outbreak of extremely hard struggles that set in motion proletarian methods of struggle, although in the majority of countries these have still been limited to isolated factories or sectors of production (LIP in France, to cite the most recent example) and that collide with the strong resistance of the bureaucratic trade-union apparatuses, open exceptional possibilities for spreading a line of class independence, permit the introduction and increased rooting of slogans defended by the Trotskyists, and permit Trotskyists to take the first steps towards the development of

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a solid base in the working class.

This possibility for the sections of the Fourth International to go from propagandistic groups to organizations capable of a certain political influence over mass sectors of the youth and of establishing the first ties with workers struggles that are going on, required a) a clear definition of the proletarian strategy, b) consciousness of the place we occupy in the class struggle, consciousness that the deep crisis of the reformist and syndicalist leaderships does not preclude the organizations they control from continuing to be the principle framework of organization of the class.

In fact, to speak of the conjunctural presence of the revolution, requires speaking of a strategy for the conquest of power as the objective response to the requirements of the present phase. It requires the defense of a "class against class" strategic line, based on the revolutionary mobilization of the masses behind a system of democratic and transitional demands, that aims at the destruction of the bourgeois state and prepares the working class for the seizure of power and the installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. SUSE. This will be the culmination of a process in which "all sections of the proletariat, all its layers, occupations and groups should be drawn into the revolutionary movement." [TPSR p. 75]

Opposition to the Popular Frontist line of the Stalinist leaderships that sacrifices the proletariat's long-term objectives and methods of struggle in the name of the alliance with the political representatives of the bourgeoisie, means the assertion of a class united front strategy, based on the pushing and generalization of the proletariat's struggles on the basis of a line of class independence, providing leadership for the struggle of the rest of the oppressed classes and layers, putting forward a proletarian solution to the question of power.

But it also means being conscious that the level of development and implantation in the fundamental sectors of the working class, even of the largest of the European sections of our movement, does not make it possible that the bulk of the fighters who go into action in these battles will come over in one fell swoop to the Trotskyist organization, passing over the parties that are deeply rooted in the class. As the majority document says, "It is illusory, in fact, to think that propaganda groups can transform themselves in one leap into revolutionary parties already possessing decisive political influence over a section of the proletariat -- at least in countries like those of capitalist Europe, where [there] is a long-established workers' movement with a bureaucratic apparatus exerting tremendous weight among the working masses" [IIDB, IX, 5, p. 13] The deepening of the crisis of the reformist leaderships and the sharpening of the contradictions within the mass organizations they control is not going to prevent these leaderships from still dominating the principle organizational structures of the proletariat in the next phase of rise in the struggles.

Although the contradictions of the period and the intervention of the communists in the mass movement can hasten the

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process of breaks, the great majority of the class's organizing cadres will not abandon the old leaderships, because the proletariat does not change organizations the way someone changes socks. It will only do so through its own experience, if through its own experience, through its struggles, the communists demonstrate their right to lead.

That is why a policy based on "exemplary actions on the fringes of the movement" does not work. By themselves simple propaganda and ideological struggle, although necessary, are not sufficient to drive the reformist leaderships from the movement either. This is why, in the course of the struggles themselves, it is necessary to present the whole proletariat -- organized and unorganized -- with an alternative that unifies the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie, one that is counterposed to the collaborationist line that its majority leaderships offer it.

This does not mean that we believe that the present leaderships are the only ones possible. This does not mean delegating all the responsibilities in the class struggle to them. This does not mean propaganda in favor of unity under their program.

As we have already asserted in our Second Congress, "To be fully conscious that our intervention will not be absolutely determining in the next confrontations between classes means to reject any orientation that covers up the fundamental responsibilities that the traditional leaderships betray every day. Our refusal to place the task of pushing a line of class independence, however limited might be its scope at a given moment, under the banner of the united front leads to this cover-up."

"But our full consciousness that today we only constitute the embryo of a communist party, is not an alibi to justify -- whether through new exemplary capers, or through passive propaganda -- the nonfulfillment of the tasks through which we go forward in the building of this party, assuming the responsibilities that already fall upon us in the practical organization of the battles of sectors of the masses, in the struggle to push them forward and to win effective leadership of them. It means that we will not desert -- in the name of leftist subterfuges -- nor subordinate to the response of anyone our duty to carry the struggle as far as possible in order to make the program of class independence pass to the terrain of workers' action in each of the episodes of the period.

"Thus the spread of class objectives and slogans of direct action and of workers democracy to vast sectors of the workers, the youth, and other oppressed layers -- slogans and objectives that will continue to have repercussions in the breadth and depth of the confrontations of the General Strike -- does depend on this combat.

"The maturation of a broad wing of radicalized youth, advanced workers, and fighters from other layers and the conquest of the militant forces and the authority in their midst which permits a growing scope to the development of the methods

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of the united front led by Stalinism and reformism does depend on this struggle.

"The road that neither substitutes for these leaderships, which would free them from their responsibilities in the eyes of the workers, nor subordinates the struggle for the revolutionary program, makes it possible to advance the development of roots in the class and the practical demonstration of the sell-out character of its leaderships in an ever deeper form, even if they still continue to impose their orientations on the movement as a whole throughout the country. In this way we will contribute to sharpening the processes that are breaking out within the traditional organizations, causing growing crises that are already significant, although not yet decisive, which the confrontations of the general strike give and will give rise to. Our systematic work of confronting the fighters who are under the influence of centrism and "leftism" with their impotence when it comes to really combatting the apparatuses will only be effective in this way.

"The constant improvement in conditions that will permit Trotskyist politics and the Trotskyist organization to attract the most conscious and self-sacrificing elements of the workers' and popular vanguard, forging on this basis the iron framework of the Leninist mass party through the collisions between classes unleashed by the fall of Francoism, until we reach the point of becoming the absolutely determining factor of the situation, deciding some of the clashes in favor of the proletariat's seizure of power, definitely does depend on this combat."
(point 7, strategic.)

D. What is the significance of the "tactic" of "winning hegemony within the new vanguard" adopted by the European document as the central task?

For the majority it is not a question of basing oneself on the enormous possibilities opened up by the present rise of workers' struggles, on the processes of radicalization of important sectors of the youth and other layers, in order to lead to a leap forward in building sections of the Fourth International through the pushing of a line of class independence that responds to the requirements of the mass movement as a whole and is counterposed to the reformist bureaucracies' line of collaboration, through showing the vanguard fighters the need to carry out these tasks, winning the best of them to our ranks through this process.

For the majority, once it has isolated the layers of vanguard fighters who have broken with the reformist apparatuses from the processes that are taking place among the fighters of the working class and other classes and layers of the population as a whole, within the framework of the present rise in the struggles what is involved is winning over this "new vanguard," again logically outside of this process.

"A new vanguard of mass proportions has appeared, by and large eluding the control of the traditional workers' organizations. This development marks the beginning of a change in the historical relationship of forces between the bureaucracies

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of the traditional organizations and the revolutionary vanguard ..." [BRPCE, p. 13, emphasis added]

"What chiefly distinguishes this new vanguard from the one we have known throughout the preceding decades is its ability to intervene in the class struggle in its own right, to take political initiatives, and here and there to take the leadership of mass workers' struggles." [BRPCE, p. 13 emphasis added]

"...the central task for revolutionary Marxists in the stage that opened in 1967-1968 is to win hegemony within the new mass vanguard in order to build qualitatively stronger revolutionary organizations than in the preceding stage..." [ibid., p. 13, emphasis in original]

The "new vanguard," according to the European document itself, is composed of on the one hand "unorganized elements" of the working-class and student youth who have escaped the control of the reformist organizations and on the other hand "elements organized in vanguard organizations" among which one must include the Trotskyist organizations. [p. 20]

According to the European document there is a contradiction between the working class masses, who still follow the reformist and peaceful line of the traditional leaderships and who are found under their organizational control, and the "new vanguard," which eludes this control and needs to and is prepared to regroup itself around revolutionary Marxism or other "revolutionary" alternatives of the 'new far left.'" But, the European document very carefully avoids pointing out the contradiction that exists between the proletariat, which is still organizationally contained under reformist leaderships, and these reformist leaderships. In fact in the document, underlying the lack of understanding or toning down of the contradictory character of the relations between the traditional bureaucratic apparatuses and the masses there is an overestimation of the weight of the Stalinist and Social Democratic parties over the workers movement and an underestimation of the revolutionary capabilities of the working class.

Because of this, the majority feels that it is illusory to think that the Trotskyists can go about winning a growing political hearing from factions of the proletariat through its intervention in the struggles carried out by the working class, which is sunk in the pacifism and reformism imposed on it by that stern control that the traditional leaderships retain over it.

But at the same time, the European document asserts that this hearing will only be won when the revolutionary organizations "have demonstrated not only the lucidity and correctness of their program but also their effectiveness in action, if only on a limited scale" [p. 13] in such a way as to permit the establishment of a change in the relationship of forces between reformists and revolutionaries and then present themselves as the true alternative leadership within the movement.

How can this be done if the working class remains a prisoner

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under the influence and control of the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships? Well, the "new vanguard," upon which the title "revolutionary" is bestowed, will provide the mass base of "revolutionary initiatives in action," at the service of which are the "dialectic of the sectors of intervention," and "unity in action--sweeping beyond the reformists." Through this practice of revolutionary initiatives of the "new vanguard" it is transformed into "an adequate instrument for regenerating the organized workers' movement," [p. 14] on the basis of a change in the relationship of forces between "reformist apparatuses and the vanguard," after which a change in the relationship of forces between "reformist apparatuses and masses" will be possible [cf. p. 19]

But to win political hegemony within the "new vanguard" is no easy task. It requires that the sections of the Fourth International center their efforts in "organizing national political campaigns on carefully chosen issues that correspond to the concerns of the vanguard, do not run against the current of mass struggles, and offer a chance for demonstrating a capacity for effective initiative, even if still modest, by our sections..." [ibid., p. 24, emphasis added]

The revolutionary Marxist organization, built on the basis of this activity, will be able to present itself in a second stage, to approach the tasks of building Trotskyist parties within the activity that the masses develop, and to win political influence over important factions of the proletariat, which will permit it to play a determining role at the time of the revolutionary crisis.

Let us examine each of the aspects that make up the orientation for building the European sections of the Fourth International proposed by the majority faction.

1. The characterization of the new vanguard

"The phenomenon that the resolution tries to deal with under the label of the 'new mass vanguard' is genuine and important. The crisis of imperialism on a world scale, deepening class struggles in all three sectors of the world revolution, the crises that have repeatedly shaken the Stalinist parties internationally, the increasing integration of the Social-Democratic parties into the bourgeois state -- these and other factors have combined to produce in the last decade a significant international radicalization of broad layers of youth -- both workers and students. To a large degree these layers have escaped the control of the Stalinist and Social-Democratic organizations. There are today, in some countries of Western Europe, tens of thousands of anticapitalist, revolutionary-minded young people who want to be part of the struggle for a socialist world. This is a development of decisive importance to the Fourth International. Our prospects depend on our ability to win the best of these youth and to educate them as revolutionary Marxist cadres.

"The term 'new mass vanguard,' however, is a confused and disorienting label for this phenomenon. It lumps together several very distinct components under a single designation,

components moreover that are constantly shifting, developing, and changing. Instead of clarifying the characteristics of these forces, the label 'new mass vanguard' as used in the resolution tends to obscure the real problems and options before us and camouflage the differences that exist between various countries." [Mary-Alice Waters, p. 6]

It is necessary to break down the "new vanguard" into its components in order to demystify this category and to raise the real problems that the sections of the Fourth International are confronted with. According to what is said in the European document itself, within the "new vanguard" one must differentiate between:

a) The Trotskyist militants, members of the sections and groups of the Fourth International.

b) Young students and radicalized workers, who are unorganized (if they are not in mass organizations like unions), shaped in the struggle against capitalist society and with broad determination to reject the policies of the sell-out leaderships of the workers' movement. A portion of this vanguard remains a prisoner not only of "spontaneism, sectarianism, ultraleftist infantilism, apolitical workerism, or primitive syndicalism" [p. 13], as the European document states, but also of Stalinism and reformism. Although the layers of the radicalized worker and student youth are inclined to reject the old leaderships of the working class, since it is the left and right-centrist organizations that exercise the greatest influence on them, these youth remain very sensitive to the pressure that the dominant currents in the working class exert. This influence of the traditional leaderships of the workers' movement is exerted either directly, when they place themselves at the head of broad mass mobilizations or campaigns, or through Stalinist organizations that are not a part of what the European document calls "new vanguard," like orthodox Maoism.

c) "The new far left," "the conscious enemies of revolutionary Marxism, whether they call themselves Communist, Maoist, left Social Democrat, anarchist, or even 'Trotskyist'" as Mary-Alice Waters says. [p.7] The term "new far left" like the "new vanguard" is an amorphous and confused category, made up of different components with different characters, which go from openly counterrevolutionary organizations to right-centrists or ultraleftist organizations that are evolving. The place that the European document bestows on them as "fundamental organized elements of the new vanguard" confers on them, as a bloc, progressive features and a fundamental role to play in the face of the reformist workers movement, despite their "limitations and confusions."

The politico-organizational reality that the European document tries to analyze under the name "new far left" is not, as one would deduce from this document, a permanent reality, a static and irreversible feature of the period. Very much to the contrary, with differences depending on the countries, the simple ultraleftist and spontaneist currents that got a strong push after May 1968 have, with some exceptions, undergone a progressive crisis of weakening. At its inception this current

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has its social base in the radicalized youth, independently of the fact that the more advanced segments of it are incorporated into currents or organizations of the workers movement.

The crisis of the ultraleftist and spontaneist currents that arose with May 1968 has also benefitted, again to different degrees depending on the country right-wing type semi-Maoist orientations (a minority around the orthodox sects, a majority around semi-Maoist groups that have taken some distance from the Chinese bureaucracy, but that draw towards its positions in revitalization of the theory of revolution by stages, popular fronts, etc.). In terms of their program and the place they occupy in the class struggle, these organizations are openly counterrevolutionary.

As another result of this crisis, although in a greatly reduced form, a certain revitalization can take place of anarchist groups that don't have any connection with the working class (intellectual anarchists, petty-bourgeois terrorists, etc.).

In a general way, a strengthening and consolidation of the currents claiming to be part of Trotskyism is taking place, at the same time that the outbreaks and crises in the international regroupments is sharpening (OCI, LO in France; IS, SLL in England).

These organizations as a whole have expressed and are expressing in a different way the break of one wing of militants with the Stalinist apparatus, a wing that, given the pace of the crisis of Stalinism and the delay in the building of Trotskyist parties, can reach a relative numeric importance. The role that various organizations play is different. While the Maoist organizations keep this wing of militants under the influence of Stalinism, even though it might be Stalinism with a left covering, the ultraleftist organizations, the evolving left-centrist organizations, and the sects and opportunist tendencies of Trotskyist origin freeze the break of these wings of militants within the framework of ideologies that are nothing but the subproduct of the backwardness imposed by Stalinism within the workers movement. They fix their evolution, preventing a definitive and consistent break with the reformist apparatuses. The role they play is left cover for the Stalinist and Social Democratic apparatuses.

The "new" vanguard with a mass character" is not a political vanguard, nor is it a social vanguard (cf. Mary-Alice Waters).

2. An overestimation of the weight of the reformist, Stalinist, and Social Democratic apparatuses on the workers movement.

The basis of both the "tactic" of winning hegemony within the "new vanguard" in order to build sections of the Fourth International and of the renunciation of building Leninist parties right within the workers' and popular struggles is an overestimation of the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships' domination over the workers movement, and tied to that is an underestimation of the revolutionary capacities of the working class. At specific times these underlying concepts have

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gone so far as to theorize the rejection of the revolutionary role of the working class, a role that has been bestowed on sectors of the petty-bourgeoisie in view of their capabilities for exemplary violence. (Is the Question of Power Posed? Let's Pose It!, IIB no. 6 in 1975)

3. A policy defined in relation to the interests of the "new vanguard."

In order to win hegemony within the new vanguard, the European document proposed that the sections of the FI develop their political activity in terms of the "concerns of the vanguard" as long as that does not "run against the current of mass struggles" (!!!).

"The starting point for revolutionary Marxists is not our own subjective concerns or the immediate outlook of the 'vanguard.' We start with what is objectively in the interests of the broadest working masses and what must be done to advance the class struggle nationally and internationally. We never start with the vanguard and then try to make its interests and concerns compatible with the needs of the working class. We do just the opposite. We start with the objective needs of the masses. We then mobilize and organize the broadest forces we are capable of reaching and influencing and lead them in struggle to win concrete demands that correspond both to the needs and consciousness of the broad masses, and that can move the struggle forward and thereby heighten their level of consciousness. We employ methods of struggle that increase the confidence of the masses in themselves and teach them to rely on their own independent power.

"The difference between these two starting points -- the concerns of the vanguard or the objective needs of the working masses -- is neither minor nor hair-splitting. From the two different starting points flow two divergent courses of action. One tends toward maximalist demands and so-called "militant" actions that presumably reflect the level of consciousness of the 'vanguard.' In reality they are adaptations to its political backwardness. The other is firmly based on the method of the Transitional Program, which aims at mobilizing the masses in struggle, whatever their level of consciousness, and moving them forward toward the socialist revolution.

"Even when we are not yet able to mobilize the working masses behind our own banner (or the banner of a united front in which we participate), even though only the 'vanguard' is following us, we still organize that 'vanguard,' large or small, in actions that speak to the needs and consciousness of the masses, not the concerns of the 'vanguard.' We do not proceed according to a two-stage theory -- today we win the vanguard; tomorrow the working class. The two aspects of our intervention are totally interrelated and proceed simultaneously. To win recruits to our sections from vanguard elements we must convince them of the correctness of our program for the working masses." [Mary-Alice Waters, p. 8]

What is the significance of this method, which orients the activity of the Trotskyists to the concerns of the "vanguard?" It means and leads to an adaptation to the politics of the pre-

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dominant organization or organizations within the so-called "new far left," the organization or organizations that politically structure the "new vanguard." The history of the ICR (Sympathizing Organization of the Fourth International) from the time of its birth around the end of 1972 is a continuous adaptation first to ultraleftism, then to left centrism, finally ending up in adapting itself in some aspects of its intervention directly to Stalinism.

4. Two stages in party building

In summary, for the majority, it is a question of building the party according to two clearly differentiated stages. In fact, the IEC majority faction believes that the present revolutionary rise raises the perspective of revolutionary explosions over the short run. "If a new revolutionary leadership is not built in the time remaining to us, after successive waves of mass struggles (some of which will surpass even May '68 in France), the European proletariat will experience new and terrible defeats of historic scope" [p. 14]. It is clear that the majority faction feels the need to build a party capable of intervening in the approaching revolutionary crisis. Nevertheless, its deep lack of confidence in the revolutionary capabilities of the working masses, its overestimation of the weight the reformist leaderships exert on the working class, leads it to assert that there isn't time to build the party according to the "classical" method, the method of the "Transitional Program." Thus they look for a shortcut that will let them "build the organization" separate from the development of the movement as a whole. Since the Ninth World Congress turn, this has meant "winning hegemony within the new vanguard" separate from the actions that the class carries out. The "organization" built in this way will mean a change in the relationship of forces vis-à-vis reformism. This will permit it to play a determining role at the time of the revolutionary crisis, which is the starting point for the decisive advance in building parties capable of leading the working class to power.

We suppose that the IEC majority faction thinks, as Trotsky says, that this situation will make it easier for "a weak party [to] quickly grow into a mighty one provided it lucidly understands the course of the revolution and possesses staunch cadres that do not become intoxicated with phrases and are not terrorized by persecution" ["The Class, The Party, and The Leadership" in The Spanish Revolution, p. 362]---Or that, as Trotsky also said, "the class consciousness advances rapidly, is converted into the most dynamic element of the situation, and the party has the possibility of leading the immense majority of the proletariat to the assault for power." [ibid.]

But in this same document Trotsky says the precondition for this possibility is that "such a party must exist before the revolution, since the formation of cadres demands a considerable period of time and the revolution leaves no time for it." And this party can never be built unless it is through the development of the mass movement itself, starting from its current level of consciousness and organization in order to push it forward through a series of democratic and transitional objectives and methods of struggle and organization that lead to

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raising the seizure of power.

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4. A Class United Front Strategy or a Line of Initiatives in Action

We have already pointed out in the previous section that the need to define a program and a revolutionary strategy for taking power, a need that is more sharply posed as the confrontations between classes increase, was the first precondition that should have governed the building of the Fourth International's sections. In this sense, once the European Document defined the features of the on-going character of the revolutionary process in Europe and the relations between classes and their contradictions, it should have more concretely analyzed the general dynamic of the upsurge that opened up since the end of the 1960s and the perspective of revolutionary crises, pointing out the interrelations and the unevenness existing between the various countries. Within this analysis it should have brought to life the historical experiences of the European proletariat's struggle and the lessons the international revolutionary movement has learned. It should have defined a system of alliances, the link between the tasks and objectives of the revolutionary process in Europe, pointing out the specific features of blocs of countries and even individual countries. This would give the European sections of the Fourth International the fundamental axes from which they can go on to analyze and define the more specific and complex tasks for each country.

Instead, the majority document offers us an ultrasimplified schema of the mechanism of the upsurge and an intellectualized and bookish model of the revolutionary crisis. It doesn't collect the experiences or raise the real perspectives that have arisen in the course of the European proletariat's fundamental struggles over the past years. Moreover, consistent with what is a constant feature of the entire document, it in fact side-steps everything relating to the general question introduced by the crisis of revolutionary leadership. Here we again come upon a repetition of what Comrade Novack raised as characteristic of the approach to Latin America: "schematic, dogmatic and one-sided--in a word, undialectical. It offered an oversimplified diagram of the complex and variable interactions of the class forces at work in Latin America and the possible range of their political manifestations." [Two Lines, Two Methods," IIDB, X, 3, p. 32]

The process of radicalization that the working masses of

capitalist Europe are going through, with greater or lesser intensity, is characterized in its general features by the breadth and increasing scope of the workers' struggles, by the continually greater utilization of the most radical methods of battle, by the passage of broad sectors of the masses over to direct action, by the beginnings of the workers movement sweeping over the limits imposed by the bureaucratic leaderships and setting up democratic mass forms of organization, by the ongoing incorporation of other oppressed layers and classes into action on the side of the proletariat, opening the perspectives of generalized struggles of ever greater breadth, of mass strikes, which as the majority document itself says, raise the question of political power not only objectively, but also as an urgent necessity" [p. 12]

In a situation where there is a crisis of working class leadership, the bourgeoisie, as the document also explains, possesses different resources with which to confront the explosions of generalized struggle. These resources range from the strengthening of state power and the increase in selective repression (which in some countries does not exclude a military coup) to the formation of coalition governments with the workers' parties in order to contain the revolutionary upsurge of the masses and to give itself the breathing space necessary to undertake the armed counterrevolution. "...the vast political experience of the European bourgeoisie has taught it that as long as it retains state power and control over the main means of production and exchange, it can rapidly take back any concession granted during a time of acute revolutionary crisis. The main thing is to preserve these two basic instruments of domination intact, that is, to see that the mass movement recedes and breaks up." [p. 15] The Stalinist leaderships are also very conscious of the fact that the dynamic opened up by the workers' and popular mobilizations raises the question of power in concrete terms. They know that the bourgeoisie increasingly requires their services, that it is therefore time to redouble their offers to collaborate with Big Capital, which requires that they channel the mass movement into the limits of a Popular Frontist strategy, whose objective is to form a coalition government with the bourgeoisie in order to save capitalism and the bourgeois state from the tumultuous attacks of the mass revolutionary movement. It is a strategy that involved the definition of a class collaboration policy of alliances in the name of which the proletariat is subjected to the program, the legalistic and pacifistic ways suitable to the bourgeois politicians.

To be conscious of the requirements raised by the sharpening of the crisis of capitalism and Stalinism and the culmination of the mass struggle, to be consistent with the assertion that "the nature of the period not only imparts an objectively political thrust to mass struggles, but also carries with it an urgent need to raise the question of political power" [p. 12], to fight in a consistent manner to win leadership of the proletariat, a task the Fourth International is compelled to carry out, requires that a document dedicated to building sections in Europe defines a revolutionary strategy for taking power, a strategy that is counterposed on all levels to the Popular Frontist line of the Stalinist leaderships. That means the definition of a Class United Front strategy, concretized for the present European situation, that would define a policy

of revolutionary alliances of the proletariat with the other oppressed sectors of the population, a network of objectives, forms of struggle and organization that are capable of pushing the independent mobilization of the class towards the establishment of a proletarian solution (a Workers' Government) to the bankruptcy of the governments of Big Capital, a situation that will confront the proletariat with the tasks of destroying the bourgeois state and installing its dictatorship.

The document does not do this. The European document offers us the perspective of social explosions that will open the way to a situation of dual power as the dislocation of the present unstable equilibrium of forces unravels. But when it concretizes a list of preconditions for transforming a revolutionary situation into a revolutionary victory, it completely forgets the question of political power, in spite of the fact that it deals in minute detail with some questions (for example that we must take over banks).

As a strategic alternative the European document offers an ultrasimplified schema that dissolves the complexity of the entire period, centering attention around a pair of fundamental elements of the program: workers' control and elected committees subject to recall. But when they are abstracted from the framework of class contradictions, alliances, tasks, and objectives that must make up the revolutionary program and strategy as a whole, these are converted into pure fetishes.

Is Workers' Control the Center of the Revolutionary Strategy?

The European document converts the slogan of workers' control into the central slogan around which all the other demands turn, and to which they point.

In the first of the ten points that refer to the tasks of the Trotskyists in the present stage, the European document raises this slogan as basic:

"a) Systematic intervention in all agitation among workers, in all strikes and campaigns around economic demands, striving to link up these actions to the general approach outlined in the transitional program -- that is, to propagandize for a series of demands (essentially around the axis of the demand for workers' control) that objectively lead the workers to challenge the authority of the bosses and of the bourgeois state and to create organs of dual power." [p. 17]

In the second and third points, they introduce a distinction between "modest and 'reformist'" demands and "'qualitative' demands", centering attention on the latter, because, they explain, these confront the capitalist organization of work and point towards the perspective of workers' control.

Finally, in the fifth point, it again asserts:

"e) Conducting a systematic propaganda campaign in the organized workers' movement around transitional demands and helping in the regeneration of this movement by getting these demands -- especially the demand for workers' control -- adopted by radicalizing factions in the trade-union movement and in the

traditional workers' organizations." [p. 17]

Thus, although the same European document raises the near perspective of general strikes and correctly asserts the "urgent need to raise the question of political power", when it then goes on to define the tasks of the Trotskyists, the question of power remains in the second plane. Governmental slogans like one for a Workers' Government are absolutely secondary in the European document. To find antecedents for these positions see E. Mandel's attitude at the time of the May 1968 general strike in France and the difference with the basically correct positions of the CI (FSFI) which called for a Government of the Unions. See also Mandel's speech of May 16, 1971 in Paris in homage to the Paris Commune. And Mandel's speech during the legislative election period in France in March 1973. In precisely the same way, the POR (C) was not able to raise an alternative of power in relation to the Popular Assembly.

As Comrade Waters says, "The basic program for any class-struggle tendency in the factories and trade unions today would have to include propaganda advocating workers' control, but it would have to be much broader and more politically rounded. Workers' control is a fundamental concept of our transitional program, and a goal toward which we are trying to lead masses of workers in struggle. It is not the beginning and end of our class-struggle demands." [p. 16]

To raise the slogan of workers' control as the center of the revolutionary strategy, detached from the other slogans and from the development of the mass struggle, can lead to grave opportunist errors. In his struggle against the Brandlerites, Trotsky made clear that "workers' control is a transitional measure, under conditions of the highest tension of the class struggle and conceivable only as a bridge to the revolutionary nationalization of industry." [The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany]. And then he asserted that this nationalization can only be accomplished with workers' power and the soviets:

"Speaking in general of control is conceivable only during the undoubtable preponderance of the political forces of the proletariat over the forces of capitalism." "The slogan of workers control over production refers in particular and in general to the same period as the creation of the soviets." "They [the Brandlerites] condemn themselves when they cite the fact that for a number of years they have repeated a slogan that is only sustainable in a revolutionary period." [ibid.]

This type of error has been repeated more recently, especially since the middle 1960s, by some centrists (Gorz, Basso, etc.) who believe in the possibility of achieving "anticapitalist structural reforms" under the domination of the bourgeoisie.

The European document should thus have raised the slogan of workers' control within the perspective of the rise of the present confrontations between classes to a higher level, in which broad masses of workers will understand the need to struggle not only against the consequences of capitalist chaos, but also against the very basis of the system. It should have raised the slogan in intimate connection with the emergence of elected

committees subject to recall and the installation of a Workers' Government, the only one capable of guaranteeing workers' control, at the same time that it prepares the nationalization of industry. Its defense against the attacks of the capitalists will put the insurrection and the installation of the Socialist Republic on the agenda.

From now on we Trotskyists should prepare this perspective. But this doesn't mean pushing fleeting revolutionary experiences of control in isolated factories, exemplary experiences designed to make the class as a whole conscious, as the majority faction tries. This perspective can only be prepared through pushing generalized struggle of the masses for immediate economic and democratic demands, using proletarian methods of struggle, spreading the experience of elected committees subject to recall, which will be the instruments of workers' control and the basis for a new form of power.

An Abstract and Ultrasimplified Strategic Schema

Instead of defining the tasks of the Trotskyists in the following way: pushing a program of mobilization of the masses in which basic economic and democratic demands of the masses are combined, pushing forms of direct struggle and democratic organization of the masses, beginning from the present level of consciousness and organization of the proletariat and leading it to the seizure of power, the European document raises a set of tasks that have no internal connection with each other and are raised in an abstract way outside of the dynamic of mass mobilization. At the same time it forgets some of the fundamental slogans that communists should put forward.

We will sketch out the set of central tasks that we believe the European document should have raised and within them we will include, only as an example, some of the demands or type of fundamental slogans that the documents completely left out.

The European document, taking up the experience of the workers' struggles of the past few years, should have proposed the pushing of the struggle against the basic areas of capitalist exploitation, defending various slogans of the kind that unify the class in the area of salaries, jobs, conditions of work. Some of them, such as equal pay raises for all, are already taken up by the workers movement as a whole in countries like Spain, while in other countries their popularity is growing in the face of the percentage raises defended by the reformist leaderships and the union bureaucracy. Closely linked to these demands, inflation and unemployment raise the need to put forward transitional slogans such as the sliding scale of wages and the sliding scale of hours of work, on the basis of indices established by the trade unions.

In parallel fashion the European document should have raised the struggle against the terrible conditions of life that capitalism imposes in the fields of education, medicine, housing, transportation. In all the European capitalist countries mobilizations of the student youth, sections of the teachers, etc., have taken place against running education on

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the lines of capitalist profitability, re-raising the need for communists to provide correct alternatives and perspectives for the struggles of these sectors of the population. It has shown how important it is for the working class to assume the leadership of this struggle because it is the only class capable of forging a solid front against ruling class education and the only one capable of providing a durable solution to the issues raised in this field.

From this, the European document should have taken into account that in those countries with democratic rights the struggle for these demands is directly tied to the need for total independence of the unions in the face of the bourgeoisie's desire to integrate them into the bourgeois state apparatus through the workers' bureaucracy. Demands relating to workers' democracy within the mass organizations, etc., also flow from this.

In countries where there is a military or military-fascist dictatorship, this dynamic raises the need to struggle for all the trade-union rights and civil liberties and against repression.

In the European document the waging of struggles against repression is approached in a separate chapter that basically deals with selective repression against the Fourth International's sections and, more generally, against the "far left." However, in the part dedicated to the central tasks of the Trotskyists it forgets to devote even one point to pushing a mass response against each of the repressive measures of the bosses or the bourgeois governments, whether against the working class or against other oppressed sectors or classes of the population. Linked to them, is struggle against all the repressive corps and special legal bodies. In countries like Spain, Portugal, or Greece, these take on special importance because they possess great potential for centralizing all the discontent of the masses around central political slogans like: "Down with the dictatorship!"

In this part of the European document as well as in other parts, it totally ignores the struggle for democratic demands, the struggle against all forms of oppression, downplaying the fundamental role that the proletariat should play in defending all these demands that are integrally and until the end linked to the struggle for its economic and social demands. The national question and the battle for self-determination of the oppressed nationalities has no place in the central tasks of the Trotskyists, according to the European document, despite the burning way this is raised in Ireland and in the Spanish state. Similarly the slogan for the Constituent Assembly based on universal suffrage, the highest form of bourgeois democracy, is ignored. This slogan will be raised in coming times as one of the mass aspirations that the decadent bourgeoisie long ago abandoned in Spain, Portugal, and Greece. In addition to all this there are no democratic slogans relating to the church, the army, etc., etc. Undoubtedly this is linked to the positions Comrade Germain has put forward regarding democratic demands and especially regarding the national question, positions that lead to a revision of the theory of permanent revo-

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lution (cf. "In Defence of Leninism, In Defence of the Fourth International").

The European document doesn't even say a single word in regard to the defense of the progressive demands of the poor peasantry, its exploitation and oppression by Big Capital, even though the poor peasantry is still one of the fundamental allies the proletariat must win over in order to take power.

In the same way, there isn't a single word relating to the struggle of other oppressed layers like the youth, women, etc. (cf. Mary-Alice Waters)

In addition to the internationalist tasks dealing with solidarity with the antiimperialist struggle, the struggle of workers against exploitation and oppression, and the anti-bureaucratic struggle, the European document should also have included a series of demands linked to the slogan of the United States of Europe; struggle against the European Common Market; for abrogation of all military cooperation treaties with imperialism (NATO); against the European security conference.

The European document should have continuously related the Trotskyists' advocacy and participation in actions that lead the working class forward through these immediate democratic and economic demands to the struggle to extend and to generalize these actions, to the pushing of forms of proletarian action and of democratic mass organization -- elected committees subject to recall whose activities are coordinated (precursors of the forms of soviet centralization), to the pushing of forms of mass self-defense and their adoption. However, the European document raises these as tasks that are not linked to the development of the movement as a whole. And in the case of self-defense, this task refers exclusively to the workers' vanguard.

The progress of the struggle of the masses for their elemental economic and democratic rights through proletarian methods of struggle and organization will be the best lever through which to get the masses to go into action around transitional-type demands in all fields. The generalization of all economic demands, for example, can be raised around the slogan of workers' control over production. This is the dynamic we are talking about. The European document should have placed the need for the installation of a Workers' Government at the center of all the transitional-type demands and it should have raised this as a prerequisite for their being achieved.

In summary, the European document substitutes abstract ideological theorizing on the situation of dual power and soviets for revolutionary strategy. Instead of a framework of programmatic slogans with an extremely combined and uneven character, closely linked to the development of the workers' and popular movement as a whole, the resolution elevates a single slogan into a fetish by abstracting it from the context and the dynamic in which it plays a fundamental role.

In fact it could not be otherwise. The European document is not trying to define a strategy for party building, at least not in this stage. Rather it is providing ideological cover for

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a line of adaptation to the "new vanguard." So "build the organization" you don't need a strategy governing Trotskyist intervention in the mass movement. All you need is a series of "initiatives," "dialectics," "tactics," and "techniques" aimed at winning the "new vanguard" on the fringes of the development of the mass movement.

Within the schema of the European document the elements of the revolutionary program serve as a theme for carrying out propagandist actions or campaigns of an exemplary character. See the use made of workers' control or armed struggle.

When the proletariat is divided, the pushing of the struggle of the working-class and popular masses in defense of the needs of life and in the strategic perspective of the installation of their own government requires that the Trotskyists adopt a united front tactic. This is based on the need to respond to each of the capitalists' attacks with united action of all factions and groups of the proletariat, around a class-against-class line, in opposition to the reformist leaderships' line of collaboration. The united struggle of the masses against each of Big Capital's aggressions will increase the cohesion in the ranks of the proletariat, increase its confidence in its own forces and its own methods of struggle, expand its ability to sweep over the orientations imposed by its conservative leaders, spread the lack of confidence in them, and through this dynamic oblige them to go further than they would otherwise want to.. Through this dynamic growing sectors of working class fighters and fighters from other layers will also understand the sell-out character of the present workers' leaderships and the need for a new leadership.

The hearing and the ability to lead massive mobilizations that the Trotskyists are able to win in sectors such as the youth in the present phase increase the scope of the united-front tactical methods that are raised in the perspective of the need for the working class to place itself at the head of the activity of all the oppressed.

On the other hand, for the European document it is a question of taking "credible steps to initiate unity: steps toward immediate unity of the entire vanguard in action around goals for which this unity of action is objectively necessary and possible, despite the various political and ideological differences running through it (cf. funeral for Pierre Overney in France); propaganda for a united front with the traditional organizations once a threshold in the relationship of forces within the workers' movement has been crossed; propaganda for a united front of the traditional organizations when the objective necessity presents itself" [p. 18, emphasis added]

That is to say, according to the European document, that we cannot defend and push, to the extent of our forces, a united response against each of the attacks by capitalism through concrete objectives, tactical and organizational proposals "since our relationship of forces with the apparatus does not permit it." For the International Majority Tendency it is a question of pushing "revolutionary initiatives of the vanguard" on the fringes of the whole workers' movement that is today

controlled by reformist leaderships. This means refusing to present an alternative for the fighters of the working class and other layers who are under the influence of these leaderships. It means refusing to expose them right in the course of the struggles. It means they limit themselves to differentiating themselves from these leaderships in an exemplary manner.

"The line of initiatives in action is based on two tactical categories: "the dialectic of the sectors of intervention" and the "unity in action of the revolutionaries."

"In the same way as we must attach a prime importance to the dialectical relationship between the 'radicalization of the vanguard and of the broader masses,' so too the dialectical relationship between the radicalization of different layers of the population ready for revolutionary action takes on a great importance for building our organizations." [p. 19]

Thus there is an attempt to use the combativity of sectors like the youth as a mass base for the "initiatives of the vanguard" within the framework of a policy of "building the organization" and ignoring the fundamental role that the massive youth movement can play in the face of the workers' movement as a whole within the strategic perspective of the class united front. In practice, the dialectic of sectors of intervention has only isolated the vanguard youth layers from the mass mobilizations that have taken place, especially in the student milieu, permitting the spread and the rooting of reformist and centrist student politics alternatives that serve a class collaboration policy.

It would also be necessary to look at the analysis of the youth radicalization made in the European document, which contradicts the Ninth World Congress resolution (cf. "The Uneven Development of the Radicalization" in the European document and MAW's critique).

Finally, the tactic of "unity in action-going beyond the reformist leaderships," the other foot supporting the line of "initiatives in action," responds to a specific characterization of the "far left" and is closely linked to the political plan to convert the "new vanguard" into an "adequate instrument for recomposing the organized workers' movement" [p. 14], a plan based on the International Majority Tendency's deep lack of confidence in the possibility of building a mass Trotskyist party.

Thus the European document states that "the revolutionary Marxists struggling for political hegemony within the new vanguard cannot reject all of this organized far left as simply 'ultralefts.' They continue to advocate unity in action by revolutionists for precise objectives and at precise moments... when these objectives coincide with the real interests of the working class and its vanguard. The revolutionary Marxists are striving, as the political differentiation develops, to become the principal pole of regroupment for the far left...." [p. 21, emphasis added.]

"At the same time, the revolutionary Marxists are deliberately trying to bridge the gap that developed in the preceding period between the far left and the organized workers' movement. In this they have a dual objective: To reduce the risks of the far left finding itself isolated in the face of repression by the bourgeois state...and to bring the weight of the far left to bear in order to radicalize the organized workers' movement that is in the process of regeneration." [p.21]

This policy of becoming the principal "pole of regroupment for the far left," of playing the role of an "axis" between the "new far left" and the organized workers movement, on the fringes of the development of the workers' and popular struggles, where does it lead? Inability to fight the centrist currents that one is trying to regroup. Inability to fight consistently against the reformist leaderships.

Against the line of "unity of the revolutionists" we Trotskyists must push a line of unification of the ranks of the proletariat against every attack by Big Capital, a line based on a class independence line. This line also includes the centrist and ultraleftist organizations, and through this we confront them with the need to make a real break with reformism. This is the only way to battle the "new far left"'s tendencies to capitulate to Stalinism. It helps make the militants of these organizations understand more easily the impotence of the politics of their organization and to see an alternative in Trotskyism. This is the only possible attitude to take in regard to the "new far left."

In conclusion, the European document feels that the united front is only a tactic we push as a function of our strength in relation to the traditional organizations and "when the objective need presents itself" (!). See also DB 30 and the positions of "En Marche."

Our position, which we systematically put forward in all the resolutions at the Second Congress, is that whatever the strength of the Trotskyists, we put forward a proposal for united mass activity against every attack by Big Capital or its government. We even put these proposals forward when, because of our relationship of forces vis-à-vis the apparatuses, they remain limited to propaganda. Whatever the size of the Trotskyist organization, it must develop an independent dynamic of agitation and organization of mass actions in order to show the workers' organizations and militants what they must do. This permits us, however limited our audience, to show a segment of the workers who still have confidence in these leaderships what they can do themselves in the daily struggles of the masses. Where we have some strength we do not await the response of the reformist leaderships in order to push for struggle for the real needs of the workers. We try to drag them into action. The traditional leaderships of the workers' movement will see themselves forced to take steps forward in the field of the organization of the struggle to the extent that they are pressured by the mass movement. We Trotskyists devote ourselves to increasing that pressure, while warning the mass movements of the possible sell-outs and maintaining at all times our freedom to criticize before, during, and after the action (Question

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of minority violence: cf. Waters' critique of the European document, and Appendix "Debate in the LC." "Open Letter to the Comrades of the LCR" in Combate 19, para. VII and VIII, "self-defense and revolutionary violence in the twilight of Fracoism," Combate 16 of the LCR "En Marcha").

All of this has its repercussion in the field of the organization. (See Waters on the discussion on the youth organization in her critique).

Bibliography

European Document

Waters' critique

"'Strategic' Resolution" (Second Congress LCR[SOFI])

Documents dealing with the polemic on the "Union of the Left"

On Latin America

Note: Here we are not going to make an outline of the whole discussion on Latin America, but rather we will look at the connections this discussion has with the one taking place regarding Europe; thus, we will bring together the basic errors of the line for Latin America and deal with the features that are shared with the European document, while showing the methodological (or amethodological) unity between both resolution, both lines.

1. The errors in Latin America

a. The analysis and the political perspectives

As is done in the European document, it converts what is a deepgoing and general tendency into a conjunctural analysis that defines the tasks of the revolutionary Marxists. Abstracting it from the world context of the crisis of imperialism and Stalinism, from the increase in the mass movement all over the world, and without taking into account the different specific situations, it projects for us an immediate apocalyptic perspective for the whole Latin American continent, the product of a mechanical link of imperialist crisis, political, social, and economic crisis. In this way it converts its predictions regarding the perspectives that are open to the bourgeoisie and imperialism in Latin America into leftist dogmas that only leave one possibility open (dictatorial regimes), underestimating the more concrete analyses of the situation in each state and the corresponding specific features they have.

At the same time, and separate from any analysis (that would not be sociological) regarding the mass movement, its organizations, its leaderships, the different processes of radicalization, the role of the youth, it defines the -- only-- perspective that is open to the movement and its vanguard: armed struggle and nothing else. That is the only realistic perspective.

Thus the sharpest revolutionary explosions were on the

agenda throughout the Latin American continent since four years ago -- just as the European document predicts today.

Nonetheless, these leftist, dogmatic, and abstract analyses cannot be taken as the root of the errors in the line that was adopted. They have constituted a cover for the adaptation to the vanguard (to Castroism). At no time have these elements been of any use to the Latin American sections in orienting themselves in their political tasks. Rather they served to confuse the sections and prevent them from differentiating between the various conjunctural situations in which they might find themselves and from which they might have benefitted.

b. The line adopted. The strategy of armed struggle of long duration on a continental scale: urban or rural guerrilla warfare.

In contrast to the European document, what is involved here is the conversion of a tactical question into a strategy for an entire period and an entire continent. In Europe they convert what is really a strategic task from an end (winning of the vanguard) into a tactical axis, which occupies an entire initial phase and substitutes for the strategy of building the revolutionary party.

By converting guerrilla warfare into the central strategic orientation, into the fundamental task of the revolutionary Marxists in all of Latin America, it denies the need for building the party as a central strategic task and as a result the method of the Transitional Program no longer has any relevance. The strategy of guerrilla warfare and building the People's Revolutionary Army is substituted for building the party and the method of the Transitional Program.

The program is hidden from sight and is replaced by maximalist propagandism (they counterpose the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat to every concrete question and every alternative of power) on the one hand, and on the other hand by the single objective of arming the masses separate from the needs of the masses at any moment, from the situation of the movement and from a program that relates the arming to the masses. Arming is transformed into a question in itself. The transitional, democratic objectives (Constituent Assembly, agrarian question) disappear, as do the governmental alternatives (Workers' and Farmers' Government). In the best of cases the program is transformed into a stream of unconnected slogans that fall into populism (ERP, milk, medicine, pencils and cemetery reforms, etc.).

It is obvious that when one denies the central strategic task, the method of the Transitional Program is never raised: the method of mobilizing the masses around a system... a class united front strategic orientation, not even intervention in the different movements, in their organizations... from the beginning the only mass work of the heroes will be to "stimulate" the masses, to "educate them by the example" of "violent and minority actions."

II. The Origin of the Errors

Both in the line for Europe as well as for Latin America, the underlying methodological error is the nonunderstanding of the laws of revolutionary mobilization of the masses, a lack of understanding of the contradictory relations the masses maintain with their leaderships. This is concretized in a deep lack of confidence in these masses. The difference is that in Latin America it has been made much more categorically explicit and has led to reprimands (it has not had the slightest inconsistency). Already the 1969 resolution on Latin America said that the proletariat would only play the leading role in the revolution in a historical sense, not as a real and effective force. That force would be basically made up of the peasantry and students, who are much more able to integrate themselves into the People's Revolutionary Army (let's remember Bensaid). The POR (C) took it upon itself to make it even more explicit: "There are still those who maintain that the direct action of the masses has triumphed in the face of the armed struggle, calling Torres' government a victory." "The October crisis shows the limits of the direct action of the masses. The general strike can only lead to workers' power if a Revolutionary Army exists at the same time, which necessarily arises during the armed struggle. When this Workers' Army does not exist, the mass mobilization only serves to boost a sector of the bourgeoisie if it doesn't end up in a bloody massacre" (the paragraph speaks for itself).

Beginning from there, this means the explicit rejection of building the Leninist-type party in the very course of the mass struggles. No to "the classical road." The central task ceases to be the building of the party; in the 1969 resolution the party had some well defined tasks: to aid in the political development of the revolutionary Marxists while they did not have arms that would permit them to leave for the mountains to fulfill their historic task; to mount some mass mobilization to distract the repression and see that it did not fall on the guerillas. In the actual activity of the ERP (C) and PRT (C) the role of the party has remained even less than that.

The revolution is not yet a mass task, but rather the task of a guerrilla vanguard; the central strategic task is guerrilla warfare and the building of the People's Revolutionary Army, which is the instrument of the revolution. This is the new way, the new "shortest road," to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership and specifically to get around it.

In Europe what is involved is winning the new vanguard and building the apparatus (separate from the masses) so that at the moment of the revolutionary crisis we can present ourselves in the face of Stalinism and other sell-out leaderships and sweep them away because the masses then will know that we are the "revolutionaries." As long as this does not take place we will leave the masses with their leaderships, which are the ones they deserve, in Europe and Latin America, and we will dedicate ourselves to providing them with "examples" through our "initiatives." The guerrilla warfare line in Latin America, which also aimed at winning this vanguard in order to send it to the mountains (far from the influences of the masses), is by turns a powerful element of propaganda with action for the new vanguards of the rest of the world. But while in Europe as well

as in Latin America one cannot win the vanguard (new or old) except through a mass policy, in Latin America this had clearer and more dramatic consequences, and therefore, as a direct result of the much greater distance from a mass line that the Ninth World Congress resolution codified, the revolutionary Marxists are much less able to win this vanguard over.

In Latin America the abandonment of the central strategic task pointed out in the Transitional Program and the abandonment of the Transitional Program's method lead to adaptation to the very vanguard you want to win over: A vanguard that at the time of the Ninth World Congress was fundamentally influenced and permeated by the Castroist currents on the rise during the 1960s. But this adaptation developed at the very time that Castroism itself was abandoning this current, which was causing a crisis within the Latin American vanguard. Dissolution of OLAS; maintenance of the Guevarist and ultraleftist influence in the European youth vanguard.

Similarity with "deep entryism" and the Pabloist theses.

The consequences of the abandonment of the Transitional Program and the adaptation to the Castroist vanguard are clear: ultraleftism and opportunism. Together with the ultraleftism of minority actions, separate from the masses, they abandon the responsibility of revolutionary Marxists to win leadership over the daily struggles of the masses and push out the opportunist leaderships. In the second place, when the masses make their appearance on the political scene with important mobilization led by opportunist leaderships, we see complete bending to these leaderships: the ERP's support to Peronism, the POR's support to the FRA. If the ultraleftism and separation from the masses has led our sections to liquidation, their opportunism and adaptation to the traditional leaderships has, in the eyes of the masses, made our sections accomplices to the sell-outs of these leaderships (Bolivia).

III. On the methodological questions

We have to clarify the political, historical, and theoretical bases that give rise to this current's errors, and then characterize it on this basis.

1. Lack of understanding of the process of revolutionary mobilization of the class, of the contradictions that develop between the masses and their leaderships, how these affect the vanguard militants, and how this process develops before and during the revolutionary crisis. This is what we have defined as the basis on which one judges the method of party building contained in the Transitional Program.

This lack of understanding is linked to the overestimation of Stalinism and it leads to a total lack of confidence in the masses. Either they radicalize and force their leaderships to move to the left, or they are naturally reformist. An identification develops between masses and leadership.

This leads to the impossibility of building a Leninist mass party, which means that one has to seek "new forces" that

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substitute for the party or that constitute the basis for the "organization." In deep entryism, and now with Vietnam, it means granting the Stalinist bureaucracy a revolutionary role that takes the place of the revolutionary party; in entryism "sui generis" or in the initiatives in action it means that some "new forces" -- by definition centrist -- inside or outside the traditional parties take the place of the revolutionary party, serving as an adequate instrument.

They begin, in either case, from the impossibility and renunciation of building the revolutionary party -- through the "classical way" -- and in the first case (deep entryism) develop a direct adaptation to Stalinism and the Social Democracy, and in the second a direct adaptation to the centrist currents -- Castroism or the new vanguards -- and an indirect adaptation to Stalinism.

2. This leads to the revision of the Transitional Program and its method.

The central strategic task is replaced by the "red" bureaucracy or the "new vanguards." The method is replaced by the quickest shortcut, whether this be entryism, "initiatives," or switching from one mechanically conceived shortcut to another.

The strategic theorizing, whose basic function is to cover up for the line that is adopted on an a priori basis, to justify the adaptation, collides with revolutionary Marxism. Because these strategic theories have their own dynamic depending on the line adopted, a dynamic that differs according to the adaptation, the revision is much greater and is seen much more clearly; for example with Latin America: the adaptation to Castroism leads to the explicit rejection of party building and of the need for the party to carry out the proletarian revolution and the theories are much crasser -- prolonged civil war, the People's Revolutionary Army is the basic element for the civil war, the masses can only pick up the gun, etc.

3. The basic theoretical error is the analysis of Stalinism, of the -- always progressive -- role it is forced to play at any given moment, which means a revision of the fundamental principles of revolutionary Marxism.

Ever since Pablo -- who initiated these theories -- the schema has been maintained. See Mandel's theories regarding the dual nature of the bureaucracy and the "bureaucratic centrism" of the Stalinist parties that took power, like the one in Vietnam.

These theories are indissolubly linked to the lack of understanding of the relationship between the mass and its leaders. This leads to the overestimation of Stalinism, which has two ramifications:

--assigning it the role of substitute for the revolutionary party, and saying it is on the left.

--seeing it as omnipresent, "apparatism" comes into play

which, while eliminating the most glaring features of adaptation to Stalinism, attempts to build the "organization" outside the class, which is considered spontaneously Stalinist and dominated by Stalinism.

In reality we see a reflection of the objectivism-subjectivism dialectic here, which is established to resolve the contradiction into which they are drawn once they discard the possibility of building the revolutionary party. Objectivism (masses equal leaderships, leaderships become "red" under the pressure of the masses) basically predominates during deep entryism, while the weight swings to subjectivism with entryism sui generis or with initiatives (maintaining the schema that masses equal leaderships, the apparatus that is not built within the class, an apparatus that will be indispensable even for the outbreak of the revolutionary crisis, having to play the role of "stimulant" and "exemplary teacher" of the class). You see, this dialectic does not have phases -- you don't have objectivism in one phase, subjectivism in another. It is combined. Right now we have the new vanguards and the initiatives on the one hand, and the positions on Vietnam on the other.

See in this regard the commonality of the Mandelista current with other "Trotskyist" currents; Pablo's objectivism and Lambert's extrapolated objectivism.

4. The historical basis. After the Second World War the nonfulfillment of a series of Trotsky's tactical predictions, Stalinism's postwar hegemony, the Fourth International's isolation in terms of the masses and the workers' movement -- remaining an International of cadres, the nonexistence of steeled and educated cadres, moreover with important theoretical gaps, gave rise to a series of pressures (basically the weight of Stalinism) that were translated into revisions of a theoretical type (which were not immediately reflected in deviations and political errors).

This revisionism was concentrated in one area: Stalinism, its nature, its role in the class struggle. And connected to this was the ignorance of the contradictory relations between the masses, the vanguard, and the leaderships of the workers' movement. Its political manifestation was to open the way towards loss of confidence in the masses and in the possibility of building the mass revolutionary Marxist party.

This revision, which began with Pablo, has since persisted within the Fourth International. It has been continued by Mandel, Maitan, and Frank, and has also made its mark on Lambert. See in this regard the Lambertist fixation regarding the Social Democracy, the bases it has. While Mandel corrected the most glaring errors this methodology had led to with Pablo, he did not eliminate the method and the revision. That is why it is natural that the same type of deviations would reappear (Vietnam). Without abandoning the fundamental error, Mandel has tried to look to other places for success (the centrist currents within the traditional workers' parties, the new vanguards).

52.

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