

March 30, 1976

To the Leninist Trotskyist Faction Steering Committee

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed are the following items:

1. A statement titled "The Present Crisis of the Fourth International and the Tasks of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction," signed by four members of the Communist League of Spain. This document was originally drafted last August. At the LTF Steering Committee at the time of the IEC in February, it was decided to distribute it to all Steering Committee members.

2. A March 7 letter from Joseph Hansen to the European Contributing Editors of Intercontinental Press and a March 16 reply from Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, and Ernest Mandel.

3. A March 12 letter from Joseph Hansen to the United Secretariat.

4. A March 1 letter from the Political Committee of the Liga Operaria of Brazil to the United Secretariat.

5. An application to join the Leninist Trotskyist Faction from eight members of the Costa Rican Organización Socialista de los Trabajadores (OST).

6. A March 11 letter from three members of the OST of Costa Rica to Hugo Moreno.

7. Copies of two letters from the Groupe Marxiste Revolutionnaire of Quebec, one to the Political Committee of the LSA/LSO of Canada, and one to the United Secretariat, together with a cover letter from Colleen Levis of the LSA/LSO.

8. An excerpt from the February 19 minutes of the Political Committee of the British International Marxist Group.

9. A February 11 letter from Michel Pablo to Ernest Mandel.

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For the information of those Steering Committee members who were unable to participate in the faction meeting at the time of the IEC, the following decisions were made:

1. To schedule the next Steering Committee meeting for August of this year in North America.

2. To elect the following comrades as the new LTF Coordinating Committee: Adair, Atwood, Celso, Crandall, Galois, Johnson, Marcel, Martinez, Melán, Pepe, Nemo, Thérèse.

Comradely,

Barry Sheppard

TRANSLATION

THE PRESENT CRISIS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND THE TASKS OF THE LENINIST TROTSKYIST FACTION

As the LTF sees it an ultra left political course was initiated at the Ninth World Congress and continues up to today. This turn expressed an adaptation to such components of the youth radicalization as Castroism and Maoism.

The introduction of guerrilla warfare as the strategy for Latin America implied a dynamic toward generalization of the "turn," geographical as well as programmatical.

The Tenth World Congress sanctioned this turn at the programmatic level, explicitly revising a point in the Transitional Program which was replaced by the resolution on armed struggle.

In the words of Comrade Hansen, the meaning of the Tenth World Congress was that ". . . the ultraleft course on which the international was placed at the Ninth World Congress will be continued until at least the next congress." (Report to New York Caucus of the LTF.)

The August 1974 statement of the LTF, drawing a balance sheet of the events following the Tenth World Congress, reaffirmed this evaluation. Later, at the January 1975 IEC meeting the balance sheet put forth by the LTF stated that the errors made by the IMT on democratic rights fit the pattern of the ultraleft "turn."

Finally, last July, during the United Secretariat discussions on Portugal, LTF members asserted the report given by the IMT carried forward the same ultraleft errors that appeared in 1968-69 on Latin America.

According to this analysis, the positions of the IMT have not undergone any substantial change in the last six years. In our opinion, holding on to such an appraisal incapacitates the LTF in the struggle to resolve the crisis of the Fourth International.

I: THE BANKRUPTCY OF THE LINE OF THE MAJORITY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

1. The "Turn" of the Ninth Congress

The rise of the class struggle during the 1960s brought the crisis of "entrism sui generis" to a head and precipitated its empirical abandonment and the substitution of a new "tactic for building sections of the Fourth International." This was later called "winning hegemony among the new vanguard."

This turn reflected the pressures coming from the youth radicalization. It can be asserted that, in laying out the guerrilla line, the ultraleft youth that Mandel-Maitan-Frank wanted to win over carried more weight than the cadres of our own movement in Latin America.

As the IMT would later explain, this new orientation meant that the politics of the F. I. should be suited to the concerns of the so-called "new vanguard" instead of to the concerns of the masses. That is how adaptation to Castroism, Maoism, etc., took shape. At that time these currents hoodwinked broad sectors of young fighters eager to find an alternative to the Communist parties and the Social Democracy.

Guerrillaism and minority "initiatives in action" took the place of a necessary reaffirmation of the need to build Leninist parties rooted in the masses on a class-against-class line and confronting both the dictatorial forms of bourgeois rule and those based on class collaboration.

As a cover to justify the line adopted, the IMT resorted to a variety of mechanical analyses, all divorced from concrete reality.

Theories about the advent of bloody dictatorships in all of Latin America came along to explain the need for guerrilla war. Likewise, in Europe, "initiatives in action" were justified by theories about the growing trend toward the "strong" state or the "fascistization" of the state apparatus.

The main resolution contained, in addition, a whole series of concepts (the terms "revolutionaries" or "revolutionary vanguard" to refer to centrists, ultralefts, etc.; social-democratization of the CPs; the errors on Vietnam, etc.) that formed a complete methodological unit with all that went before and was subsequently developed, that played an important role in the politics of the IMT. In this connection we must also mention the resolution on the Cultural Revolution. It brought to the fore grave errors about the orientation of the Chinese CP as well as about its character.

2. The "New Orientation and Method" in its Context

At first, the turn threw the sections of the F. I. into "exemplary" substitutionist activity: either in the form of disastrous guerrilla-like adventures or more modest "revolutionary initiatives of the vanguard." In any case, it meant abandoning the real responsibilities essential for progress in constructing Trotskyist parties and a failure to take advantage of the opportunities opened by the worldwide crisis of the class struggle.

But it became evident that this orientation not only came into conflict with the needs that stemmed from the evolving general objective situation, but also with the changes taking place in the concerns of the "new far left."

The rise in workers struggles and the increasing growth of popular-frontist alternatives opened a process of accel-

erated crisis in the majority of the centrist and ultraleft organizations. Rotting away more and more to the right, they had gone from objectively playing into the hands of the reformist apparatuses to capitulating on the essential points of their class collaborationist politics.

This phenomenon was not restricted to capitalist Europe. It was also happening in other parts of the world; Chile, Bolivia and Uruguay being some examples in Latin America. France and Spain signaled the beginning of these processes' development in Europe. The evolution of Castro's politics, the Maoist bureaucracy's abandonment of its "leftist" mask, the negotiations that led to the Paris accords, were all factors that accelerated this dynamic.

The majority of the Fourth International -- which had adapted to guerrillism when the Guevarists were already in retreat -- very soon found itself faced with the consequences of its untimely opportunism. That is why it had to embark on a series of empirical rectifications and zigzags whose common denominator was adaptation to the changing views of the "mass vanguard" it wants to win over.

The fact is that the IMT finds itself confronted with an objective situation in rapid evolution. The very growth experienced by the Fourth International in recent years does not permit it to vegetate for years as a marginal group without feeling the tremendous jolts of the class struggle. This luxury could be enjoyed by MMF in the years of "entrism *sui generis*," during which developments were much slower. Today it would lead to immediate suicide which is something the IMT is not ready to contemplate at the moment. This explains the rapidity of the turns and re-adjustments imposed upon it.

Thus, in the recent period accommodation is made not only to radicalized layers of the youth, but also to sectors of young workers such as those in the French CFDT or in the Spanish workers movement, who are politically organized by centrist formations (the first congress of the LCR clearly expresses this fact).

3. The December 1972 International Executive Committee

The December 1972 IEC represented a key point in this evolution. The IEC majority, faced with the catastrophic result of its line for Latin America and lashed by the minority's powerful criticism began a process of "honorable retreat" from guerrillism, taking its distance from the PRT-ERP. Completely on the defensive, it reaffirmed "in its essential line" the "armed struggle" position, introduced a maximum degree of confusion about the Ninth World Congress documents, and began to launch frantic attacks on the PST.

At the same time it prepared to entrench itself in Europe. But this attempt coincided with the beginning of the crisis in its sections (split in Spain, Third Congress of the French section, etc.). Thus while the IMT was hastily

calling its ranks to order regarding the wilder ultraleft extrapolations (Bulletin No. 30 of the French section, polemics on the worker or bourgeois nature of social democratic parties, etc.), it also began to cover up for theoretical adaptations flowing from the new moves to the right. This came to light mainly in the political propositions that led to the factional struggle in Spain (the "en marcha" faction's positions on the workers commissions, the Spanish CP, the Assembly of Catalonia, etc.) and the IMT documents and attitudes concerning the discussion about the Union of the Left in France (Third Congress and the vote for the Union of the Left and the Radicals in the legislative elections).

These positions were joined at the same time by those supporting the Vietnamese PRG and its program, and reaffirmation of the "independence" of the VCP leadership. Although talk about the progressive aspects of Peking's line was moderated, the basic errors on the nature of the Maoist bureaucracy were not retracted.

Bureaucratic methods in internal relations of the Fourth International were crudely expanded (splits in Spain, Australia, Canada; the letters from the six United Secretariat members to the PRT of Argentina behind the back of the U. Sec., etc.)

4. Formation of the LTT

The fact that the IEC majority clung to the line adopted at the Ninth World Congress even though it had been proven bankrupt in practice was the main reason the minority decided to take a new step in its struggle against the political orientation of MMF: to organize this struggle on the level of the entire Fourth International, calling for the formation of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency.

Let us point out two important points: 1) The central political axis was the struggle against the guerrillaist orientation, correctly seen as the key point at that moment; 2) This central point and other political differences already apparent were explicitly connected with some basic methodological questions:

"It is the existence of conflicting concepts on the methodological level (which includes party-building methods) that explains not only the development of opposing positions on the guerrilla orientation, but to a large degree the development of differences of varying sharpness on various other important questions, such as the nature and role of the Maoist variety of Stalinism, party-building orientation not only for the sections in Latin America and Europe but elsewhere, construction of Marxist youth organizations, the historical balance sheet on 'entrism *sui generis*,' policies in the antiwar movement, and now the assessment of the Vietnam agreement and the nature and role of Stalinism in Vietnam." (IIDB Vol. X, No. 3, March 1973)

5. Period Preparatory to the Tenth World Congress

The period preparatory to the Tenth World Congress showed a strengthening of opportunist positions on basic questions in the class struggle. The same basic line comes through in the vote for the Union of the Left, in joining the Bolivian FRA and in the attitude of the IMT toward the Chilean Unidad Popular, even though the line may be accompanied by ultraleft errors such as the June 21 action in Paris.

With the departure of the PRT-ERP the IMT continued its efforts to move away from its guerrillaist errors but without owning up to them. The document, "Know Our Own Weaknesses in Order to Better Fight the Minority," by Jean-Pierre Beauvais which had wide repercussions in some of the European sections is an important expression of this operation. The pressures of the IMT on Livio Maitan for a partial self-criticism of the guerrillaist policy, which is reflected in the Barzman letter, confirms this process. A step-up in the majority's factional methods accompanied their turn to the defensive on political positions. Barzman's letter unveiled the IMT as a secret faction which subordinated the interests of the Fourth International as a whole to its own particular interests. The danger of split increased. A wing of the IMT continuously pressed in that direction. This wing was germinating the most open and profoundly revisionist positions for which the majority's course had provided both a cover and a framework in which to develop.

The LTT transformed itself into a faction in response to this escalation of bureaucratic and factional methods; not because of some qualitative change in the IMT's political positions but because of the increase in internal tensions and the danger of a split.

The change to a faction would aid the battle to change the composition of the leadership of the F. I. as was explicitly stated in point 8 of the LTF platform, and it would permit us to face the new situation in a disciplined way.

6. The Tenth World Congress

We have already mentioned Comrade Hansen's evaluation of the Tenth World Congress. According to this evaluation there was a reaffirmation of the Ninth World Congress turn in relation to the "strategy of armed struggle" with some secondary self-criticisms. It means spreading this turn to the rest of the world and implied a policy directed mainly at favoring minority violence.

On the theoretical level the adoption of the resolution on armed struggle revised a key point in the program of the Fourth International.

In our opinion, the Tenth World Congress represented an attempt to synthesize and justify steps taken by the European sections, especially the French, in changing their course of mainly ultraleft errors to one that made possible and inevitable more and more moves to the right.

The majority's world political resolution doesn't reflect the projection of an armed struggle line on a world-wide scale. Rather, it elevates to an international level the European line, the axis of which is "transformation of the new mass vanguard into an adequate instrument." In short it consists of abandoning the Marxist conception of the party as the only instrument capable of leading the working class to power and rejecting the Trotskyist method of party building. This is replaced with a policy of adapting to the current supporters of the so-called "new far left" which in turn yields more and more openly to the reformist bureaucracies' politics of class collaboration.

The IMT freed itself from the dead weight of the guerrilla strategy while at the same time refusing to draw a balance sheet of its results and making concessions to its more pro-split wing (one furthest from the Trotskyist heritage). These concessions meant upholding the need for minority violence initiatives in the form of armed actions by the party in opposition to the point in the Transitional Program on the arming of the proletariat.

What is involved here is a serious and explicit revision which we must keep struggling to undo. But we must see it in the context of a more general line which includes at least one other grave revision; abandonment of Marxist teachings on popular fronts and the need to struggle to break the workers movement from the bourgeoisie (the Chile point in the world resolution). This contributes to the disarmament of Trotskyists on the central question of the period.

7. After the Tenth World Congress

What happened after the Tenth World Congress confirms our evaluation of the fundamental character of the IMT's errors. The problems posed by the Union of the Left and the events in Portugal took it by surprise, just as had earlier happened in Chile.

The theory and practice of the IMT regarding France, Spain, Chile, Italy, etc., become as nothing compared to their errors on Portugal and Vietnam.

Adaptation to the MFA-PCP, direct or indirect support to all their reactionary maneuvers (trade-union law, attacks on democratic rights, etc.); theories about the possibility of the CP taking power and that it promotes workers and popular struggles, doubts about the CP's Stalinist character, support to CP demagoguery about workers control, and finally, the refusal to call for a break with all bourgeois parties at the governmental level are the central elements which characterize the IMT's politics in Portugal.

It is true that there have been and will continue to be ultraleft errors. But they have been relegated to the area of tactical questions. Although it is our duty to criticize these errors, we cannot overlook the role they play within the IMT's politics as a whole.

D. Bensaïd's reason for supporting the prospect of fusion with the PSU that was decided at the last congress of the French section was that it was impossible for Trotskyists alone to build the revolutionary party. At that congress, the author of Bulletin No. 30 at the same time that he was singing praises for Santucho and the MIR, did not blush to put forward for a vote one of the most revisionist texts on popular fronts and Stalinism our movement has ever known.

And in Spain, the LCR-ETA VI comrades, in applying the resolutions of the Tenth Congress, carefully explain to us the role played by the democratic assemblies as "organs of struggle;" organs promoted by the Democratic Junta at the price of destroying the workers commissions.

In Vietnam, capitulation to the VCP reached the point of theoretically justifying the need for class collaboration in order to build a "workers state" which, according to the IMT, presently exists in South Vietnam. And we've had to watch the sorry sight of the press of the sections and of the U. Sec. itself using the same arguments used by the Stalinized Third International to justify the VCP alliance with the "third force" or other bourgeois sectors.

Internally, the crisis continued to deepen. It led to continuous changes and vacillations in the practical leadership of the sections, to processes of organic decay, to a slowing of recruitment, to the loss of cadre, to an upsurge of sharp and confusing debates, and to an increase in attacks on the LTF.

Defensive bureaucratic mechanisms were strengthened to meet this crisis. That is the source of the failure to publish the LTF's World Congress documents (or to published them in condensed versions), the reason for the monopoly of international bodies, for the IT split with the participation of the IMT leadership, etc.

8. The January 1975 International Executive Committee

The Argentine question was the central axis of the January 1975 IEC. Initially, the IMT's position was based on its need to provide a safety valve for pressure from its "ultras." That was the role played by the constant attacks on the PST and other sections that support the LTF.

On the other hand, and more important, the discussion on Argentina allowed the IMT to avoid the basic discussion and divert the International's attention from the burning issues of the class struggle, which at that moment were centered around Portugal.

Evidently, the IMT was also trying to create a smoke screen to cover the total bankruptcy of its Argentine section which was in a process of increasing splits and decomposition.

A sectarian conception of democratic rights also played a role. We say sectarian and not ultraleft because sectarian-

ism is part of the workerist and economist logic common to Eurocentric currents. For example, rabidly opportunist groups like the Lambertists have repeatedly expressed the same sectarian conceptions with regard to democratic rights, downplaying the colonial revolution and the struggle against national oppression and the movements of oppressed layers (women, etc.), and we cannot characterize them as ultraleft because of this. We cannot even say they make concessions to ultraleftism.

We think it was a mistake to play the IMT's game. It is clear that an incorrect characterization of the political axis of the present struggle and an incorrect setting of priorities by the majority of the LTF comrades has aided the IMT's maneuvers.

On the organizational level, we don't think the bureaucratic methods of the IMT have been relaxed. On the contrary, the IMT's factional maneuvers have reached alarming proportions in the recent period

The coverup of the split in the SWP and the public attacks on the PST and other similar matters are totally in keeping with the maneuvers we saw prior to the Tenth World Congress.

Partial victories have been won, such as PST participation in the United Secretariat (although with obvious limitations); recognition of the LTF's right to choose its own members of the United Secretariat, etc. Nevertheless, the basic concepts and their manifestations remain and set the general mood. Some sketchy serious political discussion in some of the last United Secretariat meetings is more of a response to the pressures of the class struggle than to a predisposition on the IMT's part to carry out an honest non-factional debate. (The class struggle doesn't permit continuous discussion on only organizational matters, it forces political discussion to the fore.)

The IMT's attitude can be proved by pointing to recent examples ranging from the congress of the French section to maneuvers against the Spanish Communist League (refusal to translate and discuss their statements in the United Secretariat despite the proposal for unification). At the moment this attitude finds its clearest expression in the IMT's intervention in the LCI congress.

II. THE DISCUSSION WE PROPOSE FOR THE LTF

1. The Need for a Balance Sheet

At the August 1974 LTF meeting we held to the need to define: a) the central political axis of the discussion in the Fourth International, b) the characteristics of the IMT line and c) the need for an overall characterization of the current represented by the MMF nucleus, and we held to our proposed characterization and presented our point of view on these questions.

In the intervening period the IMT line has demonstrated its bankruptcy. However, the LTF was not prepared. It hasn't been armed to respond to this crisis. Maintaining the original LTF line has left us unable to offer an overall explanation and understanding of the IMT's politics: its opportunistic strategic adaptations and its ultraleft tactics. It doesn't permit us to pose an alternative to its incapacity to come up with a strategic class orientation. We confront the IMT only on its guerrillaist flank this leads to aberrations in documents as basic as our political resolution which foresees only ultraleft errors and leaves the cadre unprepared to fully understand the unfolding of the majority line. At the same time, it opens the door to errors of the opposite type.

The LTT, now the LTF, has been systematically taking up all the differences. However, it has approached each of the political issues in a partial way, each isolated from the others, without putting them together at the political level to form an overall strategic understanding. We believe this step should be taken before defining the class character of the majority line. The need for a new step is evident at the present stage of the debate unfolding in the Fourth International: it is necessary to generalize and correctly order the political level of the criticisms of the IMT positions and our alternative. At the moment, the axis around which it is possible to set straight all the tactical and partial questions, including armed struggle and democratic rights, is the question of class collaboration and the popular front and their opposite, class-against-class alternative, along with the question of Stalinism. The armed struggle question signifies an important revision of a central programmatic point. This was a key point earlier. The problem the cadre of the F. I. have to take on today in relation to the class struggle is not this or that partial aspect of the IMT's line but rather the total bankruptcy of its line. This puts the question of popular fronts on the order of the day.

All discussions now taking place in the sections are centered on these points as the key question in the class struggle today. Inside the sections they are intertwined with the question of democratic centralism. Encompassing all of them is the method of building the party.

The LTF line has made it difficult for us to minimize the costs of demoralization and the loss of cadre which the majority policy implies, and to confront the rise of "intermediate" tendencies between the IMT and the LTF. It also explains the faint response our positions have found in the latest discussions which appear as repetitions of the previous ones, impeding us from winning over the cadres of the sections (the growth of the LTF after the tenth world congress is meagre), and therefore from carrying out the responsibilities presented to us by crisis in the Fourth International today.

This has repercussions in the LTF itself. In fact, this discussion on popular fronts and Stalinism has run through

the LTF, from the polemics on the Chilean Unidad Popular to the important differences on Portugal, and the same kind of problems arise when characterizing the Vietnamese leadership. This constitutes a part of the balance sheet of the LTF. They are problems we cannot ignore and which need to be confronted.

2. The Need for a Characterization of the General Orientation of the IMT since the Tenth World Congress

As the LTF sees it, the adaptation to guerrillaism and ultraleftism, the abandonment of the method of the transitional program, leads to combining opportunistic practices with ultraleftism. All ultralefts capitulate to popular fronts. But support to frontism is not a basic question in characterizing the IMT politically. For example, the vote for the Union of the Left in 1973 and 1974 had as its objective advancing the armed struggle. That is to say, the motivation was ultraleft, and this simply confirms the nature of the IMT's line.

We think this characterization is incorrect. We don't think objective political errors can be confused with the subjective motivations that lead to the errors. The political positions held on events in the class struggle determine the character of a political line, not the subjective factors which can lead to taking these positions.

a) The underlying characteristic of the IMT line is that in the face of the objectively posed requirements for the proletariat it is incapable of providing a strategic alternative, counterposed point by point, to the popular-frontist line of the treacherous leaderships, and that it covers up this impotency with leftist tactics and revolutionary phraseology.

We believe this is what characterizes a left-centrist policy, not a leftist one. Trotsky has left us abundant material on the characterization of left-centrism. The POUM's capitulation to the Popular Front was accompanied by revolutionary phraseology, leftist tactics, and even great honesty on Nin's part. But Trotsky didn't take the leftist tactics into account, nor the phraseology, nor Nin's honesty when it came time to characterize the policy. In defining it he based himself on its objective repercussions in the class struggle, not on subjective motivations. Trotsky also extended these analyses to those who remained in the Trotskyist movement but had a similar policy or simply tried to justify Nin. All the criticisms he directed toward Vereecken, Sneevliet and others ended with this political characterization, because they capitulated or adapted themselves, to a greater or lesser degree, on the "question of questions," frontism in all its variants.

b) But even on the subjective level the IMT's adaptations cannot be identified with vulgar ultraleftism. The subjective mechanism of adaptation is opportunistic. It isn't that of a Castroist, nor is it one of putting the gun above politics, it is rather one of conceding before the

pressure of these currents. This comes about through mechanisms specific to the MMF current. The method lying at the root of these opportunistic deviations is the same one that underlay the "turn" of the ninth world congress and the political mistakes of the last twenty years.

c) However, as against earlier adaptations, today's deviations are characterized by an intermediate link, in this case, the evolution of the "far left."

3. The Need for a Characterization of the MMF Nucleus

If we pose the necessity to clearly define the fundamental methodological pillars of the IMT, and to go on from there to analyze the kind of current it represents, it is because we believe that at this point in the discussion in the Fourth International we must clearly show where the current crisis leads and why the IMT has led the Fourth International to this pass.

We don't think one can isolate the most leftist expressions of the ninth world congress "turn" from the historically opportunistic character of the politics of that current which today constitutes the majority of the United Secretariat.

From the historical perspective, it can be stated that such events are an episode of senile ultraleftism in the history of this current. In the historic sense, the course opened at the ninth world congress is not independent from the orientation that underlay "entrism sui generis" (we note in passing that this is why the IMT was obliged to vote a correction of that orientation at the tenth world congress.)

a) The same method lies behind one or another "tactic" for the construction of the party.

b) The new factor is adaptation to the ideology predominant in sectors of the "far left" which, having broken with the reformist apparatuses, claims to offer an alternative.

c) The expressions of this adaptation are fundamentally support to the popular front, as well as initiatives in action, and initially, guerrillaism. The LTF mistake was to make an absolute of the adaptation's guerrillaist political expression without analyzing it during its evolution and in its entirety.

4. The Methodological Pillars of the IMT's Politics

a) The basic kernels of the International Majority Tendency's revisionism can be seen in: their position on the nature of the bureaucracies in general (USSR, China, Vietnam, CPs, . . .) and the character of their politics, which is not always openly counterrevolutionary. Several IMT documents speak about the "double nature" of the bureaucracy, and draw an overall "centrist balance" of the role played by Stalinism. But, the Stalinist bureaucracy's step from a centrist policy to an openly counterrevolutionary policy was the point of departure for the construction of the Fourth International.

The historical origins of this revision can be found in the events following the Second World War. The fact that some of Trotsky's tactical predictions were not fulfilled confronted the Fourth International with serious theoretical problems, all of them related to Stalinism. The objective base is found in the victory of the USSR, the changes in the East European countries, the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions and the growth of Stalinism's influence on the European working class. This favored the growth of the idea that Stalinism can play a positive role in spite of its bureaucratic methods, and put strong pressures on the cadres of the Fourth International.

On the other hand, they had to explain how a Stalinist leadership was able to lead the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions. As subjective factors we can mention the isolation the Fourth International was submitted to and the existence of some leadership cadres, mainly in Europe, with large gaps to cover, and they are the ones who remain as leaders.

The pressure of Stalinism led to revisions of a theoretical nature, which were codified at the third world congress in the resolution on the "Rise and Fall of Stalinism." It will be necessary to look more concretely at how these questions were developed and modified in subsequent congresses.

The political repercussions of this revision:

In relation to the bureaucracy of the workers states, the statement that a bureaucracy of a workers state is an agent of the bourgeoisie is avoided. This is related to the present failure to consider the dangers of restoration and the constant refusal of the IMT to propose a struggle for the United Socialist States of Europe against both imperialism and the bureaucracy at the same time as is traditional in our movement.

In relation to China, the characterization of the Maoist bureaucracy as centrist is maintained in obvious contradiction with the call for a political revolution, which they accepted in 1969. The same method is utilized in the case of Vietnam, although ultimately the political expressions may be more dangerous.

Along with the theory of the "double nature" it is affirmed that the national CPs correctly organize the struggle around elementary questions and only betray at the moment of revolutionary crisis. (For example, the tenth world congress and the last congress of the French section of the Fourth International). They do not see the role of the CPs within the popular fronts as that of the most resolute promoters, but rather as they who "contaminate" the scarce bourgeois forces with their working class character. This is where the assertion that these are not class collaborationist bodies, because of the decisive weight of the CPs, comes from.

b) The revision of such a fundamental point as the

nature and character of Stalinism leads the IMT to a lack of understanding of the dynamic of revolutionary mobilization of the masses, totally confusing the working class and its organizations, on the one hand, with the traditional leadership, on the other. The IMT thinks that when workers swell the ranks of the traditional parties, they do so knowing that the politics and leadership of these parties are counterrevolutionary and traitorous. The IMT does not see the contradiction that arises (and which it is our task to sharpen) between the working class combativity this process reflects and the policy of betrayal the leaderships offer it.

The thesis that the working class "is spontaneously Stalinist" and that "its consciousness is inconsistent with communism," explicitly defended by the French section and by the LCR-ETA(VI), is not confined to these sections. The European document identifies the fundamental contradiction as not between the working class and its leadership, but between the masses who follow the reformists and the "new vanguard" that is oriented toward the "revolutionary alternatives" of the "far left," one component of which are the Trotskyists. What is involved here is an overestimation of the influence of the Stalinist and social democratic leaderships on the working class and an underestimation of the ongoing crisis that is shaking these parties, a crisis provoked by the contradiction between their politics and the dynamics of the mass movement. For the most recent period, we must add the underestimation of the degree of influence the Stalinist and social democratic parties have in the entire far left, which capitulates to frontism. This shows open skepticism, a profound lack of confidence in the revolutionary capacities of the masses. Let us point out in passing that an ultraleft current is characterized by just the opposite error, that is, an excessive confidence, an underestimation of the weight of bourgeois ideology and the obstacles which the traditional leaderships place in the way of the proletariat.

c) If the reformist apparatuses are the natural political expression of the struggles of the working class, or if the class is tightly controlled by the reformists with no cracks in sight, the IMT must logically conclude that it is impossible to build the party in the heart of the mass struggles. This is what prompts the constant search for shortcuts that can break through the "situation" and resolve the party problem by a much shorter path than the one taught in the transitional program. The IMT has only two possibilities: "initiatives" or tailending existing leaderships.

The party building tactic called "winning hegemony in the new vanguard" in capitalist Europe and the "strategy of guerrilla warfare" in Latin America mean an explicit renunciation of the construction of the party according to the method outlined in the transitional program, in the heart of the mass struggle. Theorizing about bypassing the "classical variant" of the revolution, eliminating the necessity of a Leninist party, and substituting for it some kind of

adequate instrument is cover for renouncing party building.

This revision of the transitional program method of party building is the fissure through which non-proletarian class pressures continually penetrate and all the adaptations, which vary according to the dominant surrounding pressures, follow. Today the pressure is from the far left.

The next step leads to liquidation of the central strategic task of the Fourth International. The party is replaced by "adequate instruments" such as the "red" bureaucracy in Vietnam or the "new far left" in other places.

d) All of the above is inseparable from the analytical distortions and the programmatic revisions (armed struggle and others) made by the IMT. The purpose is to theorize and rationalize the different tactics for party building. These analyses can change more or less rapidly depending on the evolution of the class struggle, but the underlying method that inspires and encourages the new ones never varies (for example, just six months after their congress, not one of the resolutions adopted by the French section remains standing, and now the work of the leadership centers, naturally, around "correctly concretizing the method of the European document").

e) It is true that the leading nucleus has until now always drawn back from the logical consequences of its course. It broke with Pablo and was not willing to follow the PRT-ERP to the end. The result is that it isn't tied to any specific current at the moment. But the leading nucleus still holds to the same profound revision of the method of party building that time and again brings it to adapt to the milieu and to make serious revisions of other programmatic points which in the present period greatly increases the danger of the destruction of the Fourth International.

f) These positions are accompanied by and are reflected internally in a formalist, technical conception of democratic centralism. This has various implications:

-- In the first place, the Leninist organization ceases to be the work of programmatically conscious Leninists. It becomes a category into which the most diverse "revolutionary forces," from Tito to Ho-Chi Minh, can be more or less correctly assimilated.

-- On the other hand, this formalism -- already present in the Fourth International before the entrust turn and the split of the 1950s -- is responsible for the recourse to organizational formulas and leadership methods which abstract from the situation of the Fourth International in the class struggle, its ties with the class struggle, and its internal maturation. One of the most fatal manifestations of this grotesque "Cominternism" is the imposition of tactics on an international scale -- tactics elevated to the level of strategy -- and bureaucratic intervention in the national sections to carry out the "world political line"; this has

had an uninterrupted course, from entrist to guerrilla warfare. Hence, the organizational question has constituted a fundamental chapter in all episodes of the crisis of the Fourth International: in 1952-53 and in 1969-74.

-- Secret factionalism and bureaucratic measures, always present in a latent form as a consequence of the revision of the methods of party building, are multiplied to the degree that the class struggle disproves the political line and the danger arises that it will meet with opposition from sectors of the Fourth International.

-- This logic determines the relations of the center of the Fourth International with the different sections, and relations between certain sections and others (the French CL and the LCR), and enters into the functioning of each national organization, becoming a terrible means for the mis-education of cadre.

-- This provokes antibureaucratic reactions of all kinds. In many cases, incapable of replying with an overall alternative method, comrades end up exalting the worst anti-Leninist retrogressions.

From all of the above, we can determine the stable traits of this current, which we have characterized as a centrist current of Trotskyist origins. This current has not yet gone so far as to cut all ties with the Trotskyist program, but it continues to preserve the method which gives rise to new "leftist" and opportunist actions.

Finally, we would like to point out that today it is possible and necessary to draw a balance sheet of the IMT's attitude toward the reunification. Such a balance sheet is pending. We believe that the overall balance of the principled reunification promoted by the SWP comrades is very positive. It has permitted the development of the discussion and a clarification of the Trotskyist program, in relation to the various errors of MMF, within a unified and therefore strengthened organization during the rise of the class struggle. The tenth world congress was proof of this in spite of its limitations. In addition, the fact that the sects that didn't accept the reunification of the majority of the Trotskyist movement -- such as Healy and Lambert -- are today in total crisis and have to maneuver in order to try to recuperate and to participate in the discussion in the Fourth International, confirms that evaluation.

But we also believe the balance sheet that must be drawn of the attitude of the MMF nucleus concerning reunification will show that they supported it without changing their presuppositions and that they have not shown any desire to do so. They haven't in the least rectified the methodological bases and the political problems which led to the split ten years earlier. The Domingo letter's revelation about "progressive assimilation" of the nucleus that came from the International Committee, fits into the

framework of their entire course. And it is because of this that the same essential problems which were at the base of the split are once again on the table, because the MMF nucleus has changed absolutely none of its positions.

IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE LTF

We will try to lay out in a systematic way the basic area of the tasks we think the LTF should adopt for the following period:

1. To pursue our analysis and debate on the crisis of the Fourth International and our tasks and see if we reach agreement on the need for making changes and readjustments in our platform along the following lines. The first is to put in the forefront the fight against class collaborationism in general and popular frontism in particular. This involves a discussion on Stalinism. Another important point is to conduct a discussion on democratic centralism in order to take on the IMT within the internal framework of the Fourth International. On the methodological level, we should deepen the polemic over the method of building the party. Finally, we need to include an overall characterization of the IMT's orientation since the Tenth World Congress as left centrist. Moreover, we should also characterize the IMT as a historical current along the lines we have indicated before.

2. To discuss the political resolution that the LTF submitted to the Tenth World Congress as approved in the meeting in August 1974.

3. To draft regional documents on the basis of this resolution. We think that the objective situation and the subjective situation of the Fourth International itself poses an urgent need for a European document. With regard to this, we wish to indicate that we do not propose a document dealing with tactical questions for a great variety of countries that have important structural differences.

We think that the congresses of the Communist International offer a correct methodology that can help us to solve this problem. In these congresses resolutions were presented on the world situation and its sectors. Following this, a series of specific points were made for blocs of countries with similar characteristics. And, finally, more concrete resolutions were adopted for individual countries,

This method can be used to present a more concrete alternative in what is one of the vital centers of the class struggle in this period and the main bastion of the IMT.

4. We can extend this to deal with individual countries, beginning with concrete balance sheets of the course of the sections and trying to advance class struggle alternatives at this level. Balance sheets on points such as Portugal, Spain, France, and Italy obviously take priority here.

The coming world congress raises the need for developing a concrete balance sheet of the IMT's orientation. While the IMT's positions on Latin America took two or three years to be disproved, it has taken less than a year for the European document, which was presented as the supreme contribution to the Fourth International, to come into conflict with every single aspect of the class struggle.

5. To begin work on a balance sheet of the reunification, not to settle accounts with the 1950s but so as to be able to identify more precisely the inner mechanisms at the

roots of all the IMT's political errors.

6. Finally, simply to point out the need for bringing the functioning of the LTF more into line with our needs. This involves more regular meetings of the leading and coordinating bodies, as well as periodic meetings of the LTF nuclei in Europe with a view toward an exchange of experiences that in the present situation would be very helpful for us.

Carmen, Melan, Raul, Roberto
Communist League of Spain
20 August, 1975

COPY

Intercontinental Press
New York
March 7, 1976

To the European Contributing
Editors of Intercontinental Press

Dear Comrades,

At the February 15 meeting of the United Secretariat, representatives of the International Majority Tendency maintained that the editor of Intercontinental Press had made a grave error in publishing Tony Thomas's report to the National Committee of the Socialist Workers party on the situation in Angola (in the January 26 issue). They contended that this initiated a public discussion on the interpretation of events in Angola that had not been previously agreed upon.

In a separate letter, I will take up that question; in this letter I will confine myself to the warning that was addressed to me. Comrade Mandel, one of the contributing editors, said that if I committed a similar offense "once or twice more," the three contributing editors in Europe would resign, with a joint letter declaring that Intercontinental Press is a publication of the Socialist Workers party.

In the subsequent discussion I asked twice whether such a letter had already been drawn up. No forthright answer was given on this; however, it was quite clear from the preciseness with which Comrade Mandel outlined the letter of resignation that the content had already been decided upon.

Since I have no way of knowing in advance what new "errors" of mine might cause the three contributing editors in Europe to decide to mail the threatened letter, I think it is necessary to take at least one anticipatory step. Resignations over an issue like the publication of a document dealing with Angola would be deplorable, in my opinion. However, I realize that the IMT leaders are not likely to pay much attention to my views on this. Nonetheless, I hope that the letter--if it is ever sent--will be adjusted to avoid a misrepresentation; that is, the assertion that Intercontinental Press is published by the Socialist Workers party.

The leaders and members of the SWP have been strong supporters of Intercontinental Press since its inception, viewing it as one of the main achievements of the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement in 1963. In fact their interest was decisive, in my opinion, in making it possible to build the circulation of Intercontinental Press to such a point as to make the magazine financially viable. But the SWP is not and never has been the publisher of Intercontinental Press.

In view of the circumstances, I think that it is now advisable to indicate in the masthead who the actual publishers are. As soon as the necessary details are taken care of, we will go ahead with this change.

While the change in the masthead may seem to be a minor matter so far as you are concerned, it is actually of some importance in the United States from a legal standpoint.

cc: PF, LM, EM

Comradely yours,
s/ Joseph Hansen
Editor

* * * *

Intercontinental Press
New York
March 12, 1976

United Secretariat

Dear Comrades,

A protest was lodged at the February 15 meeting of the United Secretariat over the publication in Intercontinental Press of Comrade Tony Thomas's report to the National Committee of the Socialist Workers party on the situation in Angola. It was argued that the editor of Intercontinental Press had made a "grave error" in doing this since it initiated a public discussion on the interpretation of events in Angola without previous agreement.

It appears to me, after checking the facts, that the charge lacks substance. Without going back further, the question of policy in relation to Angola was referred to in the article "For a Correct Political Course in Portugal" (IP, No. 36, October 13, 1975, p. 1383), which Gerry Foley, George Novack, and I submitted in reply to the article "In Defense of the Portuguese Revolution" (IP, No. 31, September 8, 1975, p. 1167) written by Comrades Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, and Ernest Mandel. The reference, of course, was made in conjunction with our position on the key issues of the Portuguese revolution and did not deal with the Angolan question per se. We merely pointed to the failure of the majority of the United Secretariat to initiate a campaign on the basis of immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Portuguese imperialist troops from Angola, analyzing this failure in conjunction with the policies they sponsored in Portugal.

Following this, the editor of Intercontinental Press received a communication from Comrade C. Gabriel, sent via the Bureau of the United Secretariat, asking that we publish an article he had written polemicizing with our reference to the failure of the majority to launch a campaign on withdrawal of Portuguese imperialist troops

from Angola. Comrade Gabriel's article, which injected a number of issues involving the Angolan struggle in contradistinction to the subject matter of the Portuguese revolution, was published in the December 8, 1975, issue of Intercontinental Press under the title "On the Question of Angola."

The accompanying letter from the Bureau of the United Secretariat, dated October 26, 1975, and signed by Comrade Duret, was as follows:

"Enclosed please find an article on Angola which was received by the Political Bureau of the U.Sec. The Bureau has decided to recommend to you that this article be published in Intercontinental Press under the suggested title 'On the Question of Angola.' A fraternal observer from the USA was present at the Bureau meeting at which this was decided.

"Please let us know in which issue the article will be appearing."

In addition to this, it should be noted that Comrades Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, and Ernest Mandel publicly referred to the differences they have with us over the struggle in Angola in the final section (pp. 1839-40) of their article "Revolution and Counterrevolution in Portugal" which was published in the December 22, 1975, issue of Intercontinental Press (No. 46).

From the above, it is quite clear that the decision to publicly discuss the differences over Angola as a separate subject was taken by the Bureau of the United Secretariat and that this decision was not in contradiction to the position taken by Comrades Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, and Ernest Mandel but in consonance with it. Evidently the members of the United Secretariat had forgotten these precedents when they took up the subject at the February 15 meeting.

In view of the above, it is obvious that the publication of Comrade Thomas's report did not represent a unilateral decision on my part to "initiate" a public discussion on the Angolan struggle. It came within the framework of the polemic already begun in the pages of Intercontinental Press. If blame is to be assigned for this, the first to be placed in the dock ought to be the members of the Bureau of the United Secretariat. As for myself, I think these comrades should be commended for starting a public discussion that can help to clarify the issues involved in the developing class struggle in Angola.

Comradely yours,
s/ Joseph Hansen
Editor

* * * *

March 16, 1976.

Dear Comrade Hansen,

We have received your letter of March 7, 1976. It is based upon a misapprehension. There exists no letter of resignation "already drafted" by Livio, Pierre and myself as contributing editors of I.P., nor have we decided to resign. Even less have we any intention of creating legal problems for the SWP by claiming that it is publishing I.P.

What we did try since a long time--and it seems in vain--was to explain to you that you place us in an increasingly intolerable position by accumulating accomplished facts, systematically refusing to consult us on any move which might provoke controversy, acting as if the contributing editors were non-existent and some secret editorial board was operating in their place, and generally tending to transform I.P. into a public faction organ, which is contrary to the purpose for which the magazine was founded, contrary to the rules and traditions of our movement, and contrary to the interests of the F.I. and I.P. itself.

We just remind you (among other items) about the following decisions you never cared to consult us about beforehand, although certainly no "pressure" arising from the weekly publication of I.P. could have prevented such a consultation:

1. The decision to include Spanish language material in I.P. and Spanish language comrades on I.P. staff itself.
2. The decision to invite comrades exclusively selected from the international minority faction of different countries to work temporarily on I.P. staff;
3. The refusal to implement the USEC advise to put comrades sympathetic to the views of the leadership of the F.I. on I.P. staff (we have proposed a concrete candidate at a recent meeting);
4. The decision to publish, during the decisive months of the revolutionary process in Portugal and Angola in 1975, a long series of articles on these countries written on a line contrary to that of the leadership bodies of the F.I. and to present these articles not as minority contributions to an ongoing discussion but as "line" articles, which compelled us to public polemics in order to eliminate the wrong impression created by these publications as to what the line of the F.I. on Portugal and Angola really was;
5. The decision to publish a highly factional article on the split in the Mexican L.S., publication of which, in our opinion, does a serious disservice to the F.I. and tends to discredit our movement;
6. The decision to devote large space of I.P. to polemics with sectarian groupings, with a typical internal bulletin contents.

In view of this drift we warned you that, if you would continue to act in such an uncomradely and biased way, we would have no choice but to dissociate ourselves publicly from I.P., because we could not bear the responsi-

bility, which we consider detrimental to the F. I.

Instead of rectifying your factional course, or showing any willingness to return to a more principled way of operating, you now announce in your March 7 letter a new accomplished fact: "to go ahead with a change of masthead," without even suggesting that we could be consulted about the proposed formula, leaving us to learn it when it appears in print in I. P.

We again request you to change this irresponsible course and to return to the normal habit of elementary collective consultation and decision-making between editors of a magazine, before important moves are made

for which no "pressure of time" can justify this systematic refusal of prior consultation.

We have no wish nor intention to provoke a public break with I. P., a publication which could have been used, and should have been used, as a means to consolidate the unity of the movement, in spite of the existing political differences, and act as a means to provoke additional frictions and divisions. But if your policy of accomplished facts and deliberate provocations is escalated, you will finally bear the responsibility for our escalated reaction, one form of which could be us dissociating ourselves from a magazine which would no more serve the interests of the F. I.

Fraternally yours,

Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel

TRANSLATION

Sao Paulo, March 1, 1976

To the United Secretariat of the Fourth International

Comrades,

The Political Committee of the Liga Operaria (Brazil) has the responsibility to clarify for all member parties of the Fourth International and the United Secretariat the following:

1. that it does not endorse the document sent to the International Executive Committee in February of this year and signed by seven member parties among whom was included the Liga Operaria. This document reports the separation of these parties from the Leninist Trotskyist Faction and calls for the formation of a new Faction.

2. that the document referred to above was actually signed by one of our comrades who was in Argentina and is a member of our Political Committee. He signed the document in a purely personal capacity.

3. that this document does not express the position of the Liga Operaria regarding the manner in which to overcome the differences that exist today inside the LTF on the Portuguese situation and the tasks of the Fourth International and the LTF itself.

4. Our position is that the break with the LTF and the call for a new faction should only be made if it becomes clear that there is no possibility to arrive at a common position on Portugal. In our view it is necessary to seek such an agreement by means of a meeting that should take place as soon as possible of all the parties, organizations, groups or individuals that compose the LTF, a meeting where all positions would be openly and fully discussed with the objective of resolving the differences and strengthening the LTF.

5. that given the latest events (the appearance of new differences between the Argentine PST and the SWP, the break with the LTF by six parties, the call for a new faction) the Liga Operaria Political Committee decided to organize a full discussion in the entire organization of the main document relating to the Portuguese revolution presented by the Fourth International, including the document sent to the IEC by the six parties that have left the LTF, and that this discussion will take place prior to our National Congress which will decide which road to take regarding its remaining in the LTF or not.

6. In addition the Liga Operaria considers it necessary to express its concern about the recent splits that have occurred in member parties of the Fourth International, considering that these splits do not contribute to the task of constructing Trotskyist parties in all countries of the world, nor to the strengthening of the Fourth International. It also insists on the importance of the unity of the Fourth International in order to carry out the tasks the Portuguese revolution presents to us.

For the victory of the Portuguese Revolution!
For the Unity of the Fourth International!

Liga Operaria (Political Committee)

TRANSLATION

To the International Steering Committee of the LTF

Dear Comrades,

After having intensely and attentively read, studied and discussed all the documents in our possession regarding the differences in the Fourth International since 1968, the undersigned members of the OST [Organización Socialista de los Trabajadores] of Costa Rica (which has already applied to become a sympathizing group of the International), whereas we have fulfilled all of the prerequisites to be considered members of the Fourth International, ask that we be accepted as members of the LTF on the basis of the following points:

1. We subscribe to all the points of the Platform of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency that was issued March 4, 1973.

2. We subscribe to every one of the 10 points of the platform of the LTF issued August 17, 1973 (especially the eighth point for a change in the leadership of the Fourth International, which continues to be more valid than ever).

3. We entirely subscribe to the political positions expressed in the document entitled "Key Problems of the Portuguese Revolution," which was issued in August 1975 after a discussion in the LTF.

In addition to the above points, we want to point out that our position on the question of Angola, to our knowledge not yet debated in the LTF, is, in its general lines, the same as that of the T. Thomas article, "Angola: Behind the Civil War." At the same time, within the general context of our association with the LTF we want to stress our repudiation of the way in which the TM of the Mexican LS carried out its convention as well as to condemn all the actions against the rights of the minorities and democratic centralism committed by the TM in Mexico. Similarly we condemn and want to completely disassociate ourselves politically from the signing of an electoral platform with Stalinism in the way it was carried out by the TM of the Mexican LS.

In our request to join the LTF we would like to express our position on the necessity of the LTF opening a serious political debate, which would broadly analyze and characterize the political positions taken by the Argentine PST. In view of the fact that, except for the material regarding the problem in Mexico, nothing has been written or published internally, there is a danger of the question becoming a whisper campaign that would deform and sidetrack the necessary political debate.

Finally, and in anticipation of our membership being approved, we are naming a committee responsible for defending the positions of the LTF and establishing direct contact with you. We don't know if, for administrative reasons, the real names of the comrades should be given. Until we hear differently, we prefer to use pseudonyms.

The provisional committee of the LTF is made up of all the signers of this letter. We preferred that other members of the organization who also wanted to sign do this at a later date, with a greater understanding of the questions, which we feel they have not studied sufficiently, especially the positions of the IMT.

Signed: Sara, Virginia, Rodrigo, Laura,
Patricia, Andrés, Ernesto, Carlos
Garabito.

Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter as soon as possible.

TRANSLATION

March 11, 1976

Comrade Hugo,

We extend our warm revolutionary greetings to you and your party, our solidarity with the class struggle which you are faced with, and we hope for the greatest success for the Argentine working class and the PST.

As you know, our small organization first came into serious contact with the LTF at the Ohio convention in August 1975. After that convention, Comrade Tuny visited us. He told us:

1. That differences existed between the PST and SWP around the methodology of building the party and the very conception of the revolutionary party.
2. That these differences were known to the SWP and PST.
3. That during our stay in Ohio, neither the PST nor the SWP wanted to talk with us about this matter because we had just arrived and they did not want us to have a bad impression.
4. That these differences consisted of:
 - a. That the PST had a conception of party building based on intervening in the class struggle, and that the SWP had a merely propagandistic conception.
 - b. That regarding the LTF, the PST thought that it had to have an organized and democratic leadership that was proportionally based on the numerical size of each organization, and that the SWP did not think so, and that at each meeting more members of the SWP attended than of any other group, giving the SWP the votes, although this did not in any way reflect the SWP's relative numerical weight in the LTF.
 - c. That the PST had as a norm sent their cadres to each country where the class struggle is particularly sharp while the SWP, in spite of immense economic resources, was incapable of the least assistance of any kind.

As was to be expected, our first response was to ask for clarification from the SWP. Comrade Caroline Lund responded, for the SWP. According to the SWP's response:

1. To the knowledge of the SWP, at that point no clearly stated differences existed between the PST and SWP over either party building or the functioning of the faction.
2. That they had not characterized the PST as "activist," nor, to their knowledge, had the PST openly characterized the SWP as "propagandistic."
3. That the SWP considered that if such differences existed, that they should be brought to light in political documents and not in the whispers and "gossip" of Comrade Tuny.

4. That the SWP considered that such a discussion would be more fruitful if the leadership of the PST decided to carry it out openly and clearly.

At that point, it became clear to us that something was amiss in the LTF. Was it that the SWP did not want to tell us the truth??? Was the leadership of the PST maneuvering in order to discredit the SWP in a dishonest and back-handed way??? Were these merely the personal positions of Comrade Tuny or did they represent the line of the PST's leadership and follow the instructions emanating from it???

In face of this dilemma, we decided to continue observing the development of events and to maintain our motion toward the LTF on the basis of our political agreement with positions expressed clearly in public documents.

During the weeks prior to the arrival of Comrade Tuny, we learned of the differences between the PST and the leadership of the GMI of Colombia. To the extent that these differences were expressed to us by Comrade Otto in personal letters to a comrade of our organization, it seemed to us that Comrade Otto took a position that was hardly correct. According to him, he was afraid of foreign comrades of a high political level and solid training coming to Colombia and exercising a leadership role in practice. We thought (and still think) that foreign comrades can enormously help the development of an embryonic organization and that the question of playing a leadership role ought to be resolved through the election by the organization of its leading members and not in the fact of having a greater political level or coming from a larger party. When Tuny arrived, things appeared in a different light. Tuny explained to us that the intentions of the PST were to fuse the GMI with the Bloque Socialista for which, if necessary, they would remove the existing leadership of the GMI. Immediately we expressed our strongest condemnation of this type of position to Comrade Tuny. In a public debate we could observe that in front of a leading member of the IMT Comrade Tuny did not defend the positions of the LTF on Portugal and back-handedly expressed some criticisms of the SWP.

Such actions by Comrade Tuny seemed to us to be in violation of the discipline of the faction, but we did not attribute this to the leadership of the PST, but rather to Comrade Tuny's low political level. Nevertheless, it was still clear that something was wrong, because it seemed doubtful that Comrade Tuny would venture to take such positions openly without the expressed or tacit authorization of the PST. During the same visit Comrade Tuny told us a strange story according to which Comrade Warshell of the SWP had been won to the positions of the PST by an Argentine comrade and that the SWP had subjected him thereafter to political ostracism.

Two months later we attended the convention of the Liga Socialista in Mexico. As soon as we arrived in Mexico, and before having any conversation of any kind with the members of either tendency, we read the tendency documents, and from the way the dispute was presented in the documents, we felt completely in agreement with the TBL. Although neither of the two positions satisfied us completely, it was clear to us that:

1. The positions of the TBL were principled and were based on building the party on the basis of a class-struggle program.

2. The positions of the TM threw on the scrap heap the program, rank-and-file control over the leadership, and democratic centralism.

In this situation, it would be hard to have any other position.

As the congress went on, we were able to note that behind the expressed political positions there were other important facts:

1. That the PST openly defended the positions of the TM, speaking to us in favor of the TM.

2. That the SWP did not try to influence our position in any way.

3. That the leadership of the FBL had committed a grave political error before the congress and that this error had been used by the TM to win support from the delegates, diverting the political debate.

4. That all the resolutions of the congress would clearly lead to a situation in which the incoming leadership would be provided with a docile rank-and-file with which it could carry out any kind of maneuver without the rank-and-file of the organization being able to exercise any control. At the same time, the incoming leadership was provided with an organizational structure that would allow it to purge the less docile elements of the FBL.

5. That, regardless of the error committed by the leadership of the FBL, the TM did not have any right at all to prevent the minority from placing whomsoever the FBL chose on the leading bodies of the LS. The TM's veto of the FBL's being represented on leadership bodies by the political leadership it freely chose was a brutal act of disrespect for the rights of the minority.

6. That the transformations carried out in the internal structure of the LS and the way in which the incoming leadership acted showed that the LS emerged from the convention a different organization than it had been before, that it had broken with the positions of revolutionary Marxism on the construction of the party, and that the presence of the FBL within the party as an internal faction subject to

the discipline of the party was untenable.

For all these reasons we solidarize ourselves with the line carried out after the convention by the FBL, which is not to say that we approve of each and every one of their actions. Please excuse this lengthy recital of events, but we consider it necessary to make our positions clear.

During the convention, the attitude of members of the leadership of the PST was to stimulate, incite, lead, and counsel each one of the reprehensible acts carried out by the TM. The problem presented to us is the following: If on one hand we condemn the line and methods employed by the TM in Mexico, we cannot say that the political line of the PST and its differences with the other parties of the LTF are faithfully expressed in the political positions of the TM, (or can we?) What is the PST's famous party-building line? DOES IT EXIST? Why then has it not been expressed in politically clear documents? How is it that one of the most brilliant leaders of the international, such as you, has still not expressed them clearly after all this time? What meaning does the PST's membership in the LTF have? Are you or were you searching for an unprincipled bloc in the face of the IMT? Are you now setting out to form a bloc with the IMT? Based on what positions?

Nevertheless, in the midst of all these unclear things, something clear already exists that we must take a position on. It is really "immoral" (to use the terminology, it seems, of the PST) to raise international differences through personal positions taken by PST members without any political foundation, without a single document on which one could make a judgment, without raising debates in question on a leadership level, etc. These things have nothing to do with revolutionary morality--a political leadership that will not take responsibility for the line taken by its militants in fraternal parties, under the pretext of their not being leadership cadres, when these same militants are found to be carrying out a consistent line and strategy, probably provided by their leadership, from Portugal to Mexico, from Italy to Greece, from Spain to Colombia and England, etc. (We would say: it is incorrect. But it seems that for you correct and incorrect are called "moral" and "immoral.")

It is evident that all these circumstances force us to raise serious questions about the confidence we can have in the PST leadership. But we have every aim of regaining complete political confidence in you. We know how much interest you can have in gaining our political confidence--a small, newly-formed group. Nevertheless, regardless of the interest you might have, it is our duty to demand, with our small voice, political positions that we consider to be correct. For this there is only one road. It is clear that differences exist. LET'S NOT HIDE THEM! LET'S NOT COVER THEM UP! Let's not leave them to negotiations in the corridors at the international meetings! Let's not raise them in a back-handed or surreptitious way THAT

WOULD LEND ITSELF TO MANEUVERS AND MISUNDER-
STANDING OF POLITICAL POSITIONS!

Comrade Hugo, we are asking you to express in a revolutionary fashion, in documents, a complete analysis of the differences in the way you characterize the other sectors of the Fourth International and their respective political lines for party-building; criticize them until you draw blood and express the political alternative that you offer to the world proletariat.

In such a polemic, if the decision is made to start it, we pledge to state our views based on what we consider to be a correct political line. None of what you have said or done before would prevent us from supporting you if your stated positions were the most politically well-founded ones. We have learned much from you during the past months, above all, unfortunately, we have learned some positions that a revolutionary party should not take and methods that it should not employ in developing differences. We have the firm hope of receiving more positive lessons from you in the future.

To be where the class struggle is sharpest? To build organizations, send militants, to give political and monetary help to the class struggle in key countries? BRAVO COMRADES! Nothing is more Leninist, nothing is more Trotskyist, nothing is more revolutionary!

But precisely doing this commits the party that upholds such a line to adopt the clearest, most open, most politically honest political positions.

We hope that this letter serves the purpose for which it is intended and that you don't condemn us or break contact with us because of it. We need your open, frank, hard

criticisms in the way that only Bolsheviks can make them. We promise not to be diplomatic with you.

Attached to this letter is an internal document from our organization, which, if you take the time to read it, you will see offers you some good material to criticize and tear apart as Bolsheviks.

Here in Costa Rica we are distributing Revista de America and have set plans to expand its circulation. We want to continue doing so because we think it is the best revolutionary Marxist magazine in Spanish, with the broadest information and analysis of Latin America. Nevertheless, its distribution for us is a political task, not a commercial one, and this is the way it should be. Lately we have noticed some articles in Revista de America that do not coincide with our own political positions. Concretely we are referring to your analysis of Spain, Angola, and Portugal. We believe therefore, that it is our most elementary democratic right to use explanatory inserts inside the copies of Revista de America clarifying our own positions. You will receive copies of them. We suppose there is nothing wrong with this inasmuch as your positions will be available at any rate to those who get the magazine.

We very much appreciate the invitation extended to us by the PST to attend your cadre school. As we explained to Comrade Exposito our finances made it impossible for us to attend.

In view of the needs that our external work has placed before us, and after many debates, and while still remaining dissatisfied with the results, we have decided to adopt Organizacion Socialista de los Trabajadores (OST) as our political name. Awaiting your reply, we send you revolutionary greetings,

s/ Sara Rodrigo Virginia

cc: LTF, SWP, LS(FBL), GMI, Hugo Blanco, LC

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Montréal
March 11, 1976

SWP National Office
New York

Dear comrades:

Enclosed are copies of two letters received by us recently from the GMR. The letter dated March 2, sent to the USec was not received until yesterday (March 10). We have also heard several rumors about internal debates and tendencies within the GMR which may explain the references in the letter by François Cyr.

Comradely,
s/Colleen Levis

* * *

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(we received a poorly reproduced photocopy)

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Montreal, 2/3/76

FROM GMR Political Bureau

TO: United Secretariat of the Fourth International

Comrades,

We hereby bring to your attention still another deviation from the decisions of the USFI by the comrades of the official section of the FI in Canada and in Quebec, the LSA-LSO. Contrary to the letter and the spirit of the USFI resolutions of October 1975 and especially of December 22 and 23, 1975, a delegation from the LSO last weekend attended the congress of the Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec [Quebec Socialist Workers Group], which is affiliated with the so-called Comité d'organisation pour la reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale (Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International).

You understand that, in addition to dealing a blow to the discipline and democratic centralism of the Fourth International, this gesture, following up the LSA-LSO's decision to invite a large delegation from the GSTQ to its own convention during the holidays, makes the privileged relationship between the LSA-LSO and the GMR, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, increasingly difficult. Therefore we ask that you take the steps that are called for.

s/Khaldoun
for the GMR Political Bureau

cc: RMG (Canada), LSA-LSO

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March 1

LSA Political Committee
Montreal

Dear Comrades,

In a short time the Groupe Marxiste Revolutionnaire will hold a Political Pre-conference. Given the provisional character of the decisions we shall make there, because of the nature of the discussions we are presently conducting, the Political Bureau of our organization has decided:

- a) to invite no contacts and very few sympathizers;
- b) to invite no delegations of observers from other organizations, except our comrades of the RMG leadership.

Very probably we will hold our First National Political Conference during May or June. When the date is definitely set, we will send you an invitation.

We are certain, comrades, that you will not interpret this decision as a sectarian action on our part.

Please transmit this decision to the SWP.

Militant greetings,

s/François Cyr
for the GMR Political Bureau

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Excerpt from IMG Political Committee minutes, Feb. 19, 1976

10) Letter to the USEC:

Jones resolution: "That the following letter be sent to the USEC" carried 6-0-2.

Text of letter:

"We have received the minutes of the November meeting of the United Secretariat. We noted the resolution passed regarding the distribution of the IIDB containing the correspondence concerning the attendance of the OCRFI at the SWP convention.

"As the resolutions on these questions have been passed by the USEC we have of course carried it out. We however wish to protest in the strongest possible terms against the motivation contained in this resolution which introduces a new and unacceptable principle into organisational relations in the International. We refer to the statements which call for the deletion of the correspondence from this bulletin "in order to teach the international minority a lesson." This is quite unacceptable. All decisions regarding organisation, or other questions in the International, must be decided by the objective criteria of the statutes, the interests of the working class, etc. They cannot be introduced to "teach a lesson" to anyone, least of all a minority in the International. If the deletion of this material had been decided on because its inclusion had not been authorised, it would be possible to have a serious discussion on the merits or otherwise of this decision. The present motivation, however, attempts to introduce a principle which is completely unacceptable and, which, if seriously defended, would cast into question the democratic norms and functioning of the International.

"We call upon the USEC to withdraw the resolution on this question and to redecide the question of the circulation of this material on a correct organisational basis.

"As we consider this question an individual error, and not a sign of a deeply wrong policy by the International leadership, we have every confidence that this decision will be reversed and wish to take the matter no further. In the unlikely event that this is not done, however, we request that this letter, together with the resolution referred to, be placed in the IIDB."

TRANSLATION

"Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme"
Revue de la Tendence Marxiste
Révolutionnaire Internationale
Paris, February 11, 1976

Dear Comrade Ernest,

We are confirming in writing for your convenience the main points we discussed in Brussels.

Proceeding from our evaluation of the present conjuncture in Europe, we stressed the need to build united revolutionary Marxist organizations in time that have a serious mass base and are armed with a transitional program that is correct also in relation to the traditional Socialist and Communist mass organizations. This task is particularly urgent in countries such as Portugal, Spain, Italy, France and Greece. We stressed our assessment--which we believe you share--of the European situation, where for the first time in a long while, real possibilities are shaping up for revolutionary openings that could lead to the victory of the socialist revolution. We mentioned the case of France, where there is presently the PSU on one hand and on the other the LCR, which approached the PSU with a request to open discussions with a view to eventual unification, a perspective we support.

However, we see this eventual unification in the framework of a new organization that would not at the outset be part of any international formation, but would admit tendencies supporting the idea of joining one or another international organization at the proper time. This point, it seems to us, is essential to really clearing the way for both discussions about unification, and unification itself. Looking at it realistically, we cannot in the short run succeed in building an organization that would be revolutionary Marxist in its entire program. Rather, what is possible are organizations rapidly evolving toward such a program, especially in the context of an objective situation favorable to such an evolution.

We believe that the conditions of long-term crisis of European capitalism in particular favor such a perspective. Therefore, we insisted that questions of principle

of an organizational character that would obstruct the discussion and unification should not be raised, if our common goal remains creating in time substantial united organizations of the type to which we refer.

If we take the revolutionary perspectives in Europe seriously as well as the Portuguese experience, which was disastrous from the point of view of the state of preparation of the revolutionary left, we must lose no time in seizing the opportunities for such a regroupment in various European countries, beginning with France.

We also stressed our more general interest in the development of the Fourth International, from which we were so rashly expelled in 1965, and on the way the crisis within its ranks is evolving.

We emphasized that on important questions of assessing situations and of tactics, we feel ourselves to be closer to the tendency known as "European" but that we have no intention whatsoever of exploiting your internal differences, hoping rather that the Fourth International as a whole will come to correct positions. We repeat: our approach at this stage is conditioned by the urgency of the objective situation in Europe.

We have also stated that we are prepared as an international tendency--over and above more exhaustive and deepgoing discussions about forming revolutionary Marxist tendencies with a serious mass base everywhere--to consider all forms of practical collaboration among forces that are converging ideologically, without raising any prior conditions of "principle."

We hope that the contact begun at Brussels will be continued, even if for the time being it is only at the level of joint practical work as in the campaign we are conducting through the Russell Foundation Committee for the freedom of Portuguese prisoners, support to Angola and Mozambique, etc. . . .

With fraternal greetings,
Michel Pablo