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Draft for Revision of the European Perspectives Document: 'The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe'

Presented by the Compass Tendency in the GIM (German Section of the Fourth International)

Introduction

The Position of the GIM Compass Tendency on the European Perspectives Document:

1. We agree with the initial premise of the "European Document": that it is both necessary and possible to work out a perspectives document for capitalist Europe as a whole. Above and beyond the possibility of presenting a general analysis for this world sector proceeding from the existence of a common capitalist social order, a common history, civilization, culture, etc.; we believe that the combined and uneven process of increasing internationalization of capital on the plane of capitalist Europe has already reached a level of maturity that has led to generalized conditions (1) in the general socio-economic situation; (2) in the development of the concrete crisis character of later capitalism, economically, politically, and socially; (3) in the dynamic and direction of the class struggle; and (4) in the development of the subjective factor; so that the working out of a general perspective for the Fourth International in capitalist Europe is necessary. These generalized conditions are evident in the essential elements that make up the political and social crisis and instability in capitalist Europe in the present period. The targeting of capital's strategy toward the working class, the crisis of leadership in the bourgeoisie, the crisis of the traditional leadership of the proletariat, the upsurge in workers' struggles and the revival of the workers movement which, in this phase, has gone to the point of developing concrete demand structures and forms of struggle such that in countries as different as Sweden and Spain, from Volvo to CEAT or Kiruna to Asturia, this general tendency is operating and is demonstrable in practice.

Concretely, passing a resolution on this sort of general perspective at a world congress means keeping the individual European sections from neglecting the basic requisites posed by this period we are entering into in Europe — even if there is no real danger of this at the moment. But we should bear in mind that in the past period of tacit "liquidation" of "entryism *sui generis*" in Europe, it was precisely the lack of such a general European perspective that favored the incorrect orientations or persistence in entryist routine.

On the other hand, in establishing such a general perspective it is of central importance to draw an extremely sharp line between the conditions and tasks which are to be generalized, and the particular national situations

that modify *all* general factors and tendencies and not just isolated ones. Therefore, this general perspective must avoid deriving *tactical* directives or suggestions for the European sections from the generalization of national experience in individual countries or groups of countries. A European perspectives document can be applied by a specific section in a specific country only by actually analyzing the particular class-political development of the country in question, by applying this analysis to the strength of the section and the openings available to it, and by determining from this the concrete way in which the organization can relate to the class struggle. It is only within this frame of reference that questions of *tactics* can be answered.

2. Besides the fact that a perspectives document for capitalist Europe is necessary and justifiable, the present EPD passed by the IEC in December 1972 has the virtue that it presents a basically correct analysis of the present period of protracted social and political crises and class-political instability with its economic, social, and political manifestations; draws the conclusion that we are dealing with a transitional stage of limited duration, and takes into account the changes in the subjective conditions as well as the conditions for solving the crisis of leadership of the proletariat by proposing a basic orientation of our European sections toward workers' struggles and the process of revival of the workers movement.

3. For the reasons set forth in points 1 and 2, the Compass Tendency has concluded that it would be politically incorrect to vote against the European document *in its entirety*.

4. As a document intended for providing the sections in capitalist Europe with a general perspective, the EPD draft resolution does, however, have a number of basic weaknesses.

a) The document is insubstantial in its individual parts. It would have been worthwhile not just to describe the *concrete* determining factors for the present period in Europe in their conjunctural manifestation, but to relate them to the basic character of the epoch and from this show that there are laws that govern these factors. (These factors include: the leadership crisis of the bourgeoisie and the tendency toward the "strong state," the leadership crisis of the proletariat and the immediate relevance of the transitional program, the general social crisis resulting from the

concrete obsolescence of the system in its late capitalist stage, revival of the workers movement, the double role of the trade unions integrated into the capitalist state system.) Instead, the draft resolution offers a broad and undoubtedly valid analysis of the road to dual power and revolutionary victory, something that certainly requires clarification, but just as certainly refers to another political conjuncture than the present one. This disproportion is all the more unwarranted since a great deal of space is devoted to subordinate and day-to-day aspects. Such aspects not only singularly digress from the question of dual power and revolutionary victory, but are so conjunctural that now, a year later, they need to be at least partially revised. Thus, in our opinion, the EPD draft resolution aims too high in some respects and too low in others.

b) The EPD draft resolution does not always avoid the danger of generalizing French experiences instead of sorting out the tendencies that really are universal.

c) There is a certain connection between what was said in point b) and at the end of point a) and the fact that the EPD draft resolution specifies details even to the point of giving tactical prescriptions (like building "taupes rouges" [red mole groups] in all social sectors) that have absolutely no place in a general perspectives document and that attempt to provide solutions for problems that only the national sections and their leaderships can solve for themselves. In certain sections the EPD draft resolution swings over from general perspectives to a plan for action.

d) The EPD draft resolution gives too little weight to the points that are the most important for the orientation of our sections in accordance with the general perspectives it lays out—the analysis and characterization of the upsurge in workers' struggles, the revival of the workers movement, the formation of a worker vanguard and the development of its consciousness, etc., are treated in a few sentences. The trade unions and trade-union work are hardly mentioned. Clearly the EPD does not approach the level on which a generalization of this experience and these developments is already possible in the framework of capitalist Europe.

5. The changes we suggest as alternatives to sections of the present draft of the EPD are limited to those points in the draft we disagree with, and remain within the framework of the draft itself. That is, they do not deal with all the weaknesses that, in our opinion, the draft as a whole contains. The task of producing a completely new document, more mature in all respects, will once again fall to the international leadership at the proper time. It is not a task that can be performed by a tendency in a single section.

Basically we have differences on the following points:

a) The concept of the "new mass vanguard," and the idea that winning hegemony in the "new mass vanguard" should be our principle task at the present stage. This is not supposed to be in its entirety a revolutionary vanguard, or a political vanguard in the Leninist sense, or a social vanguard in the sense of the worker vanguard, nor—according to Germain—is it sociologically definable in any way. It is tautologically defined by the characteristics of the groups referred to—it consists overwhelmingly of

young people, it stands outside the control of the "traditional workers organizations," it can be directly approached and mobilized by revolutionary Marxists.

We have the following criticisms: 1) The "NMV" is incorrect as an analytical category because it confuses the concept of a structural vanguard—meaning the revolutionary subject, the working class—with the functional vanguard concept of the sort that can be applied to any vanguard of any struggle in analogy to the military "vanguard—main troop—rear guard" schema. 2) The "NMV" is incorrectly defined as a class-political factor because it assumes a unity of two factors that cannot be contained under the same heading: the politicized force coming out of the youth radicalization, and the worker vanguard the grows out of the experiences of the working class in its struggles. This error becomes clear when the EPD states that since May 1968 "a powerful current of radicalized workers [has] joined (!) the specifically youth current. . ." (*International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 5, section 5, p. 13.) In reality, however, the workers' radicalization since 1968 has led to the development of a new worker vanguard and not to the radicalized workers "joining" some other kind of vanguard that then gradually changes its social composition. 3) The concept of the "NMV" is disorienting because by "re-baptizing" the revolutionary force issuing from the youth radicalization into a "vanguard," it magically transforms the tactical orientation toward this force into the Leninist strategic orientation for winning the vanguard, although the latter task has not yet been approached at all through the "NMV" orientation. 4) The "NMV" concept is harmful in the present context because it distracts and leads away from the necessity of (and the concretely existing opportunities for) orienting toward the *real* worker vanguard in this period as the decisive step in building a revolutionary organization. At the same time it suggests that this worker vanguard is included in the orientation toward the "NMV."

The practical danger involved in this misorientation is small in countries like Italy and Spain where the social weight of the worker vanguard is overwhelming in comparison to the social weight of the anticapitalist forces in other social sectors. This danger is only latent in countries like France and England. This danger is great and can be decisive in countries where 90 percent or more of the forces which fit the definition of the "NMV" come from the student sector and related milieus, although in these countries a worker vanguard of a completely different sort is developing at the same time. In the most negative variant, the "fight for hegemony" in the EPD "vanguard" can completely pass the worker vanguard by.

b) We agree with the view that the present period of basic instability and of a certain class-political stalemate is necessarily of limited duration. However, because of the unevenness involved in this process, one cannot reckon on a four to five year timetable (which means in effect three to four years since a year has gone by since the EPD was issued). We certainly do not feel that one can predict that the "decisive battles will be fought" at the end of this period. Let us compare this prognosis with the timetable for party building set forth in the EPD: Stage 1: Primitive accumulation of forces without which it is absolutely impossible to win hegemony in the "New Mass Vanguard." (Section 17) Stage 2: The winning of hegemony in the new mass vanguard. (Section 6) Stage 3: The transformation of the

"New Mass Vanguard" into an adequate instrument for class struggle. (Section 6)

If we need just a bit more than one year for each "stage" the whole thing could be over before we've really begun to exercise influence in the working class.

In the EPD, we should avoid any unnecessary suspicion of an apocalyptic timetable or a theory of party building by stages.

c) We do not agree with the "generally recognized view" of the social-democratic parties as workers parties on the slim basis that they remain dependent on their worker voting base and have an influence on the trade-union bureaucracy. Both of these criteria are surely met by the Peronists in Argetina. On the contrary we hold that 1) the class character of a party can change and is not strictly determined by its origin and traditions, 2) social-democratic parties in different countries, under different conditions can have different characters despite the similarity of their names, 3) the minimal definition for a

"workers party" is that it works in the working class and orients toward the working class. This no longer holds for all the social-democratic parties.

d) We believe that the EPD has an incorrect understanding of the concept "political breakthrough" when it calls "making a central political breakthrough" one of the three "priorities in employing our forces." (section 17) This breakthrough cannot be achieved by deciding to make a breakthrough, charting a course for this, and then making it a priority to concentrate employment of our forces on this. Such special "breakthrough strategies" usually lead to a breach in the weak ranks of the organization, to a hasty abandonment of the strategy, or at worst to organizational collapse. A political breakthrough is not a mechanism that can be triggered by some particular artifice. It is attained when a proper orientation and valid organizational procedure combines with a particular conjunctural situation that suddenly increases the weight and effectiveness of this work.

Proposal for changes in the EPD draft resolution of the IEC Majority Tendency for the Tenth World Congress (Fourth Since Reunification)

(Page numbers refer to *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 5, November 1972)

Original text	Proposed changes
Part I, section 2, p. 9, "The Crisis of Social Relations"	Revise under the heading: "The Crisis of Class Relations and the Rise of Workers' Struggles" (Proposal, see below)
Section 3, p. 11, paragraph 7 and 8: "To be sure . . . decisive battles are fought."	"Revise (Proposal)
Section 3, paragraph 10, middle: "It deprives . . . as a whole."	Revise: "So far . . . all of Europe." (Proposal)
Section 4, pp. 11-13, "The Crisis of the Traditional Organizations"	Revise under the heading: "The Crisis of the Bureaucratic Leadership of the Class"
Section 5, p. 13, "The Appearance of a New Vanguard"	Revise under the heading: "The Reconstruction of the Worker Vanguard" (Proposal)
Section 6, pp. 13-14, "The Central Task"	Revise under the heading: "Building the Revolutionary Organization" (Proposal)
Part III, section 11, pp. 18-19, "Three Tactics"	Delete
Section 12, p. 19, paragraph 1, line 7: "reflected in the dialectical relationship of areas of activity"	Delete
Section 12, p. 19, paragraph 3, line 2: "an irreversible turn has taken place"	Revise as follows: "a turn has taken place in this sector, which may be attenuated by conjunctural circumstances, but which cannot be fundamentally reversed because of objective changes in the student sector in the present stage of capitalism."
Section 12, p. 20, paragraph 3, line 4: "those who . . . working class"	Delete

Section 12c, p. 20, paragraph 4, line 3: "who represent . . . proper"	Delete
Section 12c, p. 20, paragraph 4, line 5: "vital"	Change to "important"
Section 12c, p. 20, paragraph 4, last sentence: "The struggle for . . . working-class youth."	Delete
Section 12d, p. 20, paragraph 5, last two sentences: "Forming . . . political initiatives."	Delete
Section 13, pp. 20-21, "The New Far Left"	Must be rewritten to correspond to the actual status and positions of the left groups. (No proposal)
Section 14, p. 21, paragraph 2, line 1: "struggling . . . vanguard"	Delete
Section 14, p. 21, paragraphs 4 and 5: "The role of the pivot . . . and sectarian isolation."	Delete
Section 15, pp. 21-22, "Sectors and Forms of Intervention"	Delete
Section 16, p. 22, paragraph 1, line 3, instead of: "in the new vanguard"	"in the new left movement"
Part IV, section 16, p. 23, line 11, instead of: "the mass vanguard is the most extensive"	"class struggles are more developed"
Section 16, paragraph 3, last line: "such as were mentioned above"	Delete
Section 17, paragraph 3, line 6: "without which . . . unachievable."	Delete
Section 17, paragraph 3: "—making a central . . . deviations"	Delete
Section 17a, p. 24, line 1: "mass vanguard"	Delete
Section 17b, p. 24, paragraph 4: "Revolutionary Marxist . . . solidarity movements."	Delete
Section 19, p. 26, last paragraph: "The spirit . . . their own."	Delete

Addenda:

Part I, section 1, p. 9, after paragraph 3: after "(cereals, for example)"	Insert: "The increasing synchronization of the West European and international economic cycles, an expression of the growing internationalization of capital and the intensification of interimperialist competition, makes it more and more impossible for capital to alleviate crises of overproduction through exporting."
Part III, section 14, p. 21, paragraph 1, next to the last line: "the Social Democracy in West Germany and to some extent in Sweden."	Revision: "in some countries to some extent even the Social Democracy."
Part IV, section 17, p. 23, "Three Priorities in Employing our Forces"	Revise: "Priorities for Employing our Forces"
Part IV, section 17, p. 23, paragraph 3, line 1: "there flow three priorities for employing our forces"	Revise: "there flow first of all the following priorities for employing our forces"

Commentary on the Proposed Changes

1. The revision of sections two and five proceeds from our position that the EPD must place the principal emphasis more strongly on the rise of workers' struggles, the reconstruction of the workers movement, and the formation and development of the worker vanguard. Important parts of the revised text have been taken from Comrade Livio Maitan's document: "Introduction to the Discussion on Workers' Struggles in Capitalist Europe."

The Compass Tendency agrees largely with the analysis and conclusions in Comrade Maitan's document. In particular, we have observed that Comrade Maitan, although a supporter of the "NMV" concept, manages totally without reference to this "phenomenon" in his analysis and conclusions.

2. The suggested changes for section 3 follow from the criticisms of the timetable and prognosis for the present period that we presented in point 5b of the introduction.

3. In section 4 we suggest replacing the unusable category "traditional workers' organizations." On the one hand, this category blurs the qualitative difference between parties (which can themselves have extremely different characters) and trade unions (which in any case remain elementary class organizations with a different and quite specific purpose and function). On the other hand, there are certainly many traditional organizations in the workers movement that are not included in the "crisis" (e.g., the Trotskyist organizations are not without tradition). Equating "traditional" with "reformist" and "bureaucratic" reflects the influence of the "New Left" of the mid-sixties, which saw itself as the beginning of everything.

In keeping with this, the document should clearly distinguish between the CP, the SP, and the trade unions. A section on the trade unions (which the EPD draft resolution hardly mentions at all) has been added. Once again this section is based on the Maitan document.

4. In keeping with our critique of the "New Mass Vanguard" we are suggesting an alternative for section 6 in which the central tasks are related to the preceding five sections. Again these first three paragraphs take their orientation from the Maitan document (points 5 and 7). The importance of the potential of politicized youth, mistakenly termed the "NMV," is not underestimated but coordinated with these tasks. The text of the EPD was largely adopted for the characterization of this milieu.

5. As for section 11 "Three Tactics" we have little to add to the critique made by M.A. Waters. Whether "entrism *sui generis*" was a strategy or a tactic may remain open to contention. Organic growth and winning hegemony in the vanguard are in any case not tactics, but goals. Above and beyond this, it is absolutely impossible to catalog all the tactics to be used in party building. The list would be endless and would have to be constantly revised. Moreover, taking a "cold" vote on the postwar entryism in this manner, a matter which in addition affects the foundations of 1963 reunification, is to be strictly rejected.

We propose deleting section 11 without providing a substitute.

6. As indicated in the introduction, we consider tactical prescriptions and scenarios out of keeping with a general orientation for a whole continent. This applies to section 15 as a whole, which we propose to delete. Only paragraph 5 on the conjunctural character of factory struggle committees and the continuity of left trade-union tendencies escapes this criticism because it presents proven lessons of the workers movement. Possibly it can be integrated into another section.

The last sentences of section 12 should be deleted for the same reason.

7. Paragraphs 4 and 5 of section 14 should be deleted for two reasons: The preceding paragraph (3) correctly lays out all the fundamental points about the necessity of bridging the gap between the far left and the workers movement. On the other hand, paragraphs 4 and 5 are basically a theoretical elaboration of the "unity in action plus outflanking the bureaucrats" orientation. It seems to us that this is an extreme example of the "French" character of the EPD and an attempt at making a false generalization.

8. The last paragraph of section 19 should also be deleted. As much as we are in favor of people fighting for their lives against a fascist regime, this paragraph facilitates misunderstandings about the immediate danger of a fascist seizure of power, and the importance that a demonstration of subjective battle readiness by the new mass vanguard can have in combating this danger. If we are to assume that there is such a danger of a fascist seizure of power, then the EPD would in fact have to approach the matter in a comprehensive way and in a totally different manner.

9. The other changes are either self-explanatory or else concern deleting the "NMV" formulation. The fact that in the other sections the "NMV" appears only in apposition makes it possible to delete the references to it without changing the sentences themselves.

10. Section 13: A year later, the section on the new far left to a great extent no longer corresponds to the real situation and should be thoroughly revised by the authors of the EPD. As far as West Germany is concerned, almost all of the characterizations of the left organizations mentioned are false.

Proposals for Revising the EPD Draft

1) Section 2: The Crisis of Class Relations and the Rise of Workers' Struggles

The end of the long period of rapid expansion brought with it a sharpening of social contradictions in capitalist Europe that, since May 1968, has taken the form of a general social crisis in several European countries. The most profound source of this social crisis lies in the fact that the basic contradiction of the system—the contradiction between the level of development attained by the productive forces and the maintenance of capitalist productive relations—has been considerably aggravated by the postwar phase of growth of the productive forces. Even more than the phase of stagnation from 1914 to 1939, this

growth has objectively undermined capitalist productive relations.

We are increasingly approaching the upper limits of the adaptability of these productive relations, as regards the functioning of the market economy, the profit drive of the private trusts, the financing of long-term productive investments, and the development of the material and intellectual infrastructure of production. The economic growth during the long postwar boom did in fact raise the standard of living of the proletariat. However, not only was capitalism incapable of satisfying—if only in an elementary way—the new needs generated in the working population by the growth of the productive forces themselves, it did not even succeed in satisfying the elementary and "traditional" needs of the working people. At the same time, the sharpening of exploitation in the productive sector (working conditions and factory discipline) and the decline in living conditions in the reproductive sector (crisis of the cities and transportation, slums, destruction of the environment, etc.) led to a process of extreme physical and psychological exhaustion of the workers.

The more growth slows, the more interimperialist competition is intensified, the more the crisis of the international monetary system spreads—the less the European bourgeoisie is able to grant new concessions to the working masses and the more it finds itself even forced to call into question a series of gains (or conditions that the workers regard as gains) that were granted during the course of the preceding phase. The attempt to make the workers pay the cost of inflation and the general reappearance of unemployment (for two years, there have been about five million unemployed in capitalist Europe) are two aspects of the same basic orientation of Big Capital, which is trying to restore the rate of profit by intensifying its exploitation of the working class.

The scope and importance of the workers' struggles that have been on the increase since 1968 is indicated by the fact that the workers are becoming increasingly conscious of these problems and are attempting to respond to them through direct struggle, and that they are putting up enormous resistance to the attempt to substantially raise the rate of surplus value. For this reason these struggles are not directly limited by the shifting economic conjuncture and often last for extended periods of time. A central point that underlines the importance of this upsurge is the fact that the tendencies outlined here are characteristic of *capitalist Europe as a whole*.

Of course, these struggles do not occur in every country in the same forms, with the same intensity. And above all they do not occur everywhere at the same time. This unevenness has contradictory consequences: it moderates the explosive character of a deepening crisis in a single country if this situation coincides with relative stability in other countries. But at the same time it prolongs the period of instability and concrete crisis on a European scale because new countries enter into a phase of acute crisis in the class struggle while others are entering into a period of partial downturn. The crises fuel each other and make it more difficult for the bourgeoisie to reestablish equilibrium in the individual countries.

The following variants, which appear either separately or in combination, are characteristic for the upsurge of the class struggle in Europe:

a) Explosions on a national scale that bring about a prerevolutionary situation and once again place the socialist revolution on the agenda not just in the historical sense (the revolution has been on the historical agenda since 1914) but in the conjunctural sense (May 1968 in France).

b) Massive, prolonged mobilizations of the working class with regional and national strike waves, mobilizations that lead to an extremely sharp social and political crisis or even to a prerevolutionary situation (Italy 1969-73).

c) Tests of strength of decisive importance at a national level (Great Britain 1972).

d) Militant mobilizations of decisive sectors of the working class on a social and political plane. (Spain, France, West Germany on a lower level).

e) Limited experiences in struggle by the worker vanguard, which nonetheless contain the salient characteristic elements of the period (Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands).

On the basis of the experiences of the post-1968 upsurge the thrust of these struggles can be summarized as follows:

a) Wage demands, whose major importance lies in the rejection of wage controls.

b) Struggle against the generalized rise in prices and demands directed against the effects of inflation on the workers.

c) Demands for defending the location and availability of work, struggles against factory shut-downs, lay-offs, industrial and regional restructuring.

d) Demands championing the principle of equality and aiming at reducing differentiation within the working class and between factory and office workers.

e) Reduction of hours with no cut in pay, longer paid vacations.

f) Defense of collective bargaining, the right to strike, and other trade-union rights and prerogatives.

In addition there has been the development of objectives in the struggle that have a profound importance because they are directed—at least in embryonic form—against the capitalist relations of production themselves. These include: revolts against the speed-up and piecework fundamentally challenging the bosses' authority; attempts to raise the question of workers' control and dispute the notion of profit as the ultimate goal of production; attempts to enlarge considerably the scope and quality of public services (right to free, quality health care and education, the right to housing, retirement at 60 on 75 percent pay, etc.). These goals of the workers' struggle are all the more important inasmuch as they run counter to the efforts of the capitalists to increase the rate of surplus value, above all through an increase in the intensity of labor, in order to counteract the decline in the average rate of profit.

This general crisis of class relations had already begun to manifest itself before the turning point in the world economic situation, but this turn has deepened it considerably. This social and political crisis, which began in 1968, continues and, seen as a whole, will deepen. Increasingly this confrontation will tend to be played out directly between the two major classes. Now more than ever, the bourgeoisie is forced to attack the working class, to control wages and close down work places.

But today they must attempt to do this within the frame-

work of a relationship of forces that has changed in favor of the working class both on a world scale and concretely in the countries of capitalist Europe. They must confront a European proletariat that (with the exception of Greece) has not suffered any serious or lasting defeat in the whole past period, that, as a result of the fifteen-year-long decline of the reserve army of labor, enters into this phase with strong forces, a higher level of trade-union organization, and increased confidence in its own strength.

Under these conditions, a rapid and crushing defeat of the working class is virtually ruled out. We must therefore prepare ourselves for years of intense social struggles, in which there will be ups and downs, and for enduring possibilities of revolutionary upsurges, depending on advances in raising class consciousness and strengthening the revolutionary vanguard.

2) Section 3, paragraph 8

Therefore there is no reason to look upon the present impasse in the class struggle with complacency. However, the uneven pace of development in the individual European countries, the different points in time (between 1968 and 1971) when the current period of struggle began in these countries, the extremely different degrees of maturity that result from this, and the unevenness in the development of crises as well as the fact that the extent of unemployment and the political level of the struggles do not yet directly pose the question of life or death for the bourgeoisie, all make it plain that the present period of deep social and political instability accompanied by continual workers' struggles all over Europe can last for several more years before exhaustion of the workers' mobilization could make it possible for the bourgeoisie to achieve a new "equilibrium." This period holds the potential of revolutionary situations with serious defeats for the bourgeoisie as well as the danger that the bourgeoisie will finally succeed in imposing "its" solution, the establishment of the "strong state."

3) Section 3, paragraph 10, last sentence

So far the Spanish bourgeoisie has not found it possible to forestall the approach of a revolutionary situation in the south-west of the continent. This situation, because of its subjective repercussions, reinforced by the large numbers of immigrant Spanish workers in other countries, can provide a motive force for the revolutionary process in all of Europe.

4) *The Crisis of the Bureaucratic Class Leadership*

Parallel to the political crisis of the bourgeoisie, the traditional workers movement has gone through a deep crisis in the last few years. In part this crisis has the same origins as the crisis of the instruments of capitalist domination: the deepening of social contradictions, which undermines the credibility of the reformist orientation of the socialist parties and the "neoreformist" orientation of the Communist parties; the rising wave of workers' struggles, which are beginning to leave the traditional leaders of the workers movement behind and which have unleashed powerful anticapitalist energies in the worker vanguard. These tendencies can no longer be reconciled with tradi-

tional reformism.

The rise of workers' struggles and the radicalization of a sizable vanguard of the working class are coming more clearly into conflict with two phenomena—the increasing integration of the Social Democracy into the bourgeois state apparatus on the one hand, and a process of "Social Democratization" of the official Communist parties on the other.

Within the *Social-Democratic parties* during the past decade, an important shift in the relative weight respectively of the representatives of the bureaucracy of the workers organizations as such, and the representatives of the bureaucracy of the bourgeois state has taken place. The latter have gained considerably in strength in relation to the former. We have even witnessed high Social-Democratic state functionaries beginning to slide into leading positions in private concerns. These processes have unquestionably promoted the eruption of conflicts between Social-Democratic leaders trying to express the "general interest," that is, the interest of the bourgeoisie, and the unions, including the trade-union bureaucrats, who have traditionally been the most solid props of the Social Democracy.

It would be incorrect to attempt a blanket characterization of the European social-democratic parties as a group just because they bear the same name. It would be just as incorrect to attempt to define their class character simply on the basis of their working-class voting base, their control over the trade-union bureaucracy, and their historical origins. From a general point of view, the fundamental character of the late capitalist epoch, which no longer permits continual, systematic, and substantial reforms, runs contrary to the traditional role of the social democracy as a reformist workers party and favors its transformation into a bourgeois "populist" party since its total integration into the capitalist system doesn't leave open the other option—the development of an anticapitalist perspective. In places where the social democracy does not have to worry about losing its working-class votes to some alternative left party it can travel this road pretty much to the end (Germany, Austria, Sweden). The job of exercising direct political control over the working class then passes from the social democracy to the trade-union bureaucracy. In places where the social democracy runs the risk of losing its voting base by taking this road, it is continually hauled back, a process which heightens its inner contradictions (France). In places where its organizational structure makes this transformation impossible (organization based on the collective membership of the trade unions), the tendency toward a bourgeois "populist" party manifests itself in a rift between the parliamentary wing and the road taken by the party as a whole (Great Britain). The differences in character of the individual social-democratic parties is also revealed by the relationship between them and their working-class constituencies. In the former case, workers vote for them largely as a "bourgeois alternative government," a "lesser evil" for the interests of the working class. Accordingly, their coalition governments are not seen as class collaborationist. In the latter cases, workers voting for them is still an expression of the class reflex to vote for a workers party.

The *Communist parties* have in general increased their slide toward the right. In countries where the social de-

mocracy has hegemony, in their practice they have fallen back on tactics and strategies based on the trade-union bureaucracies (or their left wing). In countries where they have hegemony themselves they have adopted a completely electoralist and "neoreformist" strategy. There is an additional reason for this crisis: the crisis of Stalinism, which—after the ebbs and flows following the twentieth congress of the CPSU, the crushing of the Hungarian revolution, the eruption of the Sino-Soviet conflict, and the fall of Khrushchev—has undergone a new, important leap with the Czechoslovak crisis of 1968 and with the right-ward turn of the Maoist leadership since 1970.

However complex and contradictory the pressure from the ranks may be, the "distancing" of the CP leaderships from the CPSU resulting from the Soviet bureaucracy's military occupation of Czechoslovakia took place under social-democratic pressure and marked a new stage of the "social-democratization" process.

From this one should not, however, draw the conclusion that the Communist parties have become social-democratic parties. In contrast to the social democracy their politics are not derived from being rooted in the capitalist system, but from their ties to the international bureaucracy, at whose center stands the bureaucracies of the noncapitalist transitional societies. This bureaucracy defines itself politically as a Stalinist bureaucracy through its defense of a global status quo. From this flows its adherence to the idea of toppling capitalism and the concrete counterrevolutionary role it plays in the revolutionary process, which threatens to destroy the status quo. For this reason their "neoreformism" is not a basis for a break with Moscow, regardless of how much their "official" ties may have been relaxed.

The crisis in the traditional mass parties is not developing in a straight line. If it is sometimes marked by not unimportant splits (e.g., the "Manifesto" group in Italy), it can also be expressed through the reappearance of new reform tendencies within these parties (the "Jusos" in West Germany). It can also be expressed both by a temporary sag in the electoral strength of these parties and by a new electoral thrust—especially when these parties appear to newly politicized layers to be a "lesser evil" in comparison to the corrupt and bankrupt bourgeois parties. But the main characteristics of this crisis remain no less salient in all the countries where the resumption of workers' struggles and the youth radicalization have been of sufficient scope:

a) The traditional reformist politics increasingly lose credibility and have to be increasingly spiced up with promises of a "transition to socialism" (common program of the Communist and Socialist parties in France).

b) The raising of hopes and illusions in the elections by concluding new alliances that open up a "realistic perspective" (Union of the Left in France) or confronting the openly reactionary plans of the bourgeoisie (Heath in Great Britain, Christian Democratic Union in West Germany in 1972) only leads to a short-term strengthening of political control over the proletariat. But the mobilizations associated with this can easily lead to the opposite of the desired "pacification." Objectively, the parliamentary road, the common orientation of the social-democratic and Communist parties is increasingly called into question by the masses through their class struggle actions, even

if they continue to vote for the traditional parties.

c) The traditional leaderships lose their attractiveness for a significant section of both working class and student youth, who in turn become accessible to a political orientation that is fundamentally different from social-democratic reformism and Communist party neoreformism.

The deep crisis into which the class-political turn since 1968 has thrown the traditional mass parties that have hegemony over the working class makes the *trade unions* even more than before into the *essential instrument* for *maintaining the control* of the reformists and neoreformists over the proletariat for the whole period. The process of development going on in the trade unions at the present time is therefore of the greatest importance.

The trade unions must defend their *key position* for the equilibrium of the system. On the one hand, this calls for an ongoing search for ways to come to an understanding with decisive sections of the bourgeoisie, on the other hand it calls for the ability to represent the immediate interests of the workers—however inadequate we may find their efforts. As an immediate necessity, it is even more important for the trade-union apparatus than for the political parties that they not allow their ties to the working masses to be broken. As a basically conservative force, the trade-union bureaucracy attempts to impede the extension and generalization of workers' struggles as much as possible, to keep them from reaching an explosive crisis, and to oppose new forms of working-class struggle and organization. But within the framework of a social and political crisis situation, pacification maneuvers can only produce limited results. For this reason the bureaucrats can be forced to "co-opt" even advanced demands, to join struggles initiated against their will, or to try to channel the class movement through broad mobilizations of their own. At the same time, all of this brings about a process of differentiation in the apparatus and within the bureaucracy itself. This results from the pressures of their position and their dependence on the class movement respectively. The trade-union apparatus, even the most ossified, reactionary, and state-integrated apparatus can not be free of the effects of a deep social and political crisis. They will carry out the most unexpected maneuvers in order to maintain their influence on the movement.

This set of circumstances explains the tendency of the political vacuum formed to the left of the traditional parties by their state of crisis and compromise to be filled, at least for a time, by a section of the trade-union movement. This was the case with the trade-union left in Britain 1970-71, with the Italian trade unions 1969-71, to some extent with the left wing of the Belgian trade unions, with the CFDT in France, and the Dutch trade unions. Thus, the identification between trade union and party began to blur. A certain room for independent maneuver on the part of the unions is reappearing. This process can even go so far as to impel a wing of the unions to assume clearly political tasks, as for example in Great Britain with the struggle against the antistrike legislation of Wilson first, and then Heath, or the "struggle for reforms" in Italy in 1970-71.

We must not lose sight of the conjunctural nature of this evolution. We must especially not deduce from it that we are witnessing a full, so to speak spontaneous, confluence of the economic struggles and the political struggles of the proletariat. The unions' room for independent maneu-

ver remains limited by the bureaucratic nature of their leadership, including the left wing, which has little inclination to undertake a general struggle against the capitalist regime. 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—a question that the unions take special care not to raise. Still less now than in the past can unionism, including revolutionary syndicalism, substitute for building a revolutionary party.

On the other hand, it is clear that the reformist and Stalinist bureaucracies cannot remain passive in the face of this beginning regeneration of the organized workers movement, which threatens to undermine their hegemony over the proletariat—the basis for all their maneuvers and all their privileges. Therefore, the possibility remains for abrupt adaptations to the radicalization of important sections of the proletariat in an attempt to regain control where it has been lost and to channel the mass movement toward goals that are compatible with the fundamentally reformist strategy of these parties.

5) The Reconstruction of the Worker Vanguard

All the changes mentioned lead to a modification of the objective and subjective situation that is of immediate importance for building revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe. One of the principal characteristics of the development since 1968 has been the formation of a new worker-vanguard that leads an objectively anticapitalist and anti-bureaucratic struggle and is becoming increasingly aware of the significance and the goals of its struggle. The consolidation and maturing of this vanguard is a difficult and contradictory process that at times only proceeds very slowly and even experiences setbacks, but which can make qualitative leaps as well. In any case this process is the decisive step in the construction of the revolutionary party and at the same time represents a qualitative leap in the concrete possibility for bringing to bear the basic elements of a revolutionary strategy of transitional demands within the class struggle.

This worker vanguard is already a reality on a European scale. It is still numerically small in the countries that have not yet been seized by a broad upsurge in class struggles, but it already counts its members by the tens of thousands in those countries that have experienced relatively deep or even explosive crisis. Although a political differentiation within the proletariat will continue to play a role for a time, the development of the capital depreciation structure tends toward a homogenization of the working class reducing the differentiation between "traditional" skilled workers and specialists, who were more closely tied to the bureaucratic and reformist leadership, and those possessing no special skills like production line workers, who are quicker to get involved in struggles outside the trade-union and political structure. The determining element for the formation of this worker vanguard is, therefore, not its sociological stratification but its class-political experience ripened in struggle. For this reason, among other things, one should not simply identify the worker vanguard with those workers inspired by sentiments of revolt—who may stand in the front lines of battle but who are given to sudden capitulations just as much as to rapid advances. Neither should it be confused

with the advanced workers who are capable of systematic class-political work independent of conjunctural ups and downs. The most important and most dynamic part of this worker vanguard belongs to the generation that has not been worn down by a long history of routine, adaptation, and demoralization, but have gathered their experience in the last five years and can go through a further political development relatively quickly.

This worker vanguard is politically distinguished by the fact that it is increasingly differentiating itself from the traditional leadership, without having yet found a comprehensive new political orientation. Above all it is defined by its ability to lead struggles independently and construct "substitute leaderships" on the plant level in opposition to the trade-union bureaucracies and has even constructed soviet-like organizations in those countries that are most advanced in a class-political sense. The new working-class forms of struggle they have initiated are the attempt to come to terms with the acute problems and contradictions of the present period of social and political crisis. They are introducing a deep-going revival of the workers movement. Their methods range from the active strike, that breaks with the routine strike seen as extra vacation time, aggressive strike pickets, militant demonstrations at the plants themselves in the city centers (with blocking of traffic, etc.), to rolling strikes, strikes in the nerve centers, and genuine factory occupations. Interrelated with the development of this worker vanguard, the rank-and-file trade-union and plant organizational structures, which had been undermined and exhausted in the previous period, have been thoroughly revived and extended. On the other hand new organizational forms have arisen that correspond more directly to the conditions of the present-day struggles and express their dynamic.

This process of mobilization and organization of the struggle constantly interacts with the trade unions and their bureaucratic leadership, which attempts to channel this movement into the traditional demand structures and organizational forms that are part of the system. The conflict of the worker-vanguard with the traditional leadership and its differentiation from it is thus first manifested in the trade unions. The unions' irreplaceable function as the representative of the workers' direct economic interests demands that the trade unions play their specific role in the development of the class struggle. At the same time, the integrating function which the bureaucratized unions play as part of the system puts them at the center of the process of class-political differentiation.

Therefore, any perspective of small, minority, so-called red unions must be rejected and, in keeping with the extremely different national conditions, the construction of an antibureaucratic left trade-union tendency must be one of the central axes of intervention for revolutionaries.

In this upsurge of workers' struggles that has now been going on for half a decade, the danger that the movement will become spent and exhausted, that the most involved sections of the working class or the vanguard elements will become isolated should not be underestimated. Especially in countries that already have general tests of strength or very broad and protracted struggles behind them (France, Italy, also Great Britain and Spain), fighting strength must not be allowed to dissipate in struggles with no concrete perspectives or which do not help to raise the consciousness of the workers.

The most advanced form the present period of struggle can develop toward would be the open-ended general strike. May 1968 in France, embryonically in Denmark in 1973, the efforts in this direction in Britain, show the real possibilities for this perspective.

6) *The Building of the Revolutionary Organization*

From these five changes in the objective and subjective conditions taken as a whole, it follows that the preconditions for the construction of revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe have been qualitatively altered.

Under these circumstances what is necessary is to prolong for as long as possible the present period, characterized by a continuous upsurge in workers' struggles, explosive conflicts and persistent instability of the economic, social and political system of capitalism, and to create an ever more favorable relationship of forces for the working class so that it can steer toward the decisive confrontations with real chances for success.

With respect to the subjective factor, this requires the maturing of relatively broad vanguard layers and a substantial accumulation of cadres by the revolutionary organization. The decisive task for the revolutionary organization in the present period is to continually increase our influence over portions of this worker vanguard in accordance with our revolutionary strategy, to win them to our orientation and as a result to our organization. Given the different tempos and the special features that characterize the initial historical and political situation in which the dynamic of the class-political process is developing, carrying out this central task requires special analyses, specifications, and tactics for individual European countries, or groups of countries.

It is true for Europe on a continental scale that the carrying out of this task will be aided to a qualitatively significant extent by the fact that a numerically significant anti-capitalist *political* current has arisen on the objective basis of the acute social and political crisis situation of late capitalism. This current has developed outside of the working class sociologically and outside the control of the reformist and bureaucratic parties politically. It arose first on the plane of solidarity and identification with the colonial revolution (Cuba, Vietnam) under the influence of the deepened world crisis of imperialism and Stalinism. For this reason it assumed definite proportions principally among the radicalized youth (college and high school students, apprentices).

In order to more precisely define its character and limitations two illusions must be avoided: that as a whole it is a revolutionary vanguard, and that its existence indicates a substantial alteration of the relationship of forces within the workers movement and the working class.

Precisely because of its origins, it contains numerous elements of petty-bourgeois consciousness and petty-bourgeois ideology, which can either play a secondary role or else can influence the form and outcome of the movement in a negative way depending on circumstances and the relationship of forces to the revolutionary Marxist organization. It arose out of a spontaneous revolt against imperialism, against capitalist society, and against the adaptation of the bureaucratic leadership of the workers movement to capitalism and imperialism. But it can be a long way from spontaneous revolt to real struggle for

the socialist revolution. One component of this anticapitalist force, the prisoners of spontaneism, of sectarianism, of the infantile disorder of ultraleftism, of the apolitical proletcult, or of primitive syndicalism will never take this road. Another part will take it under the influence of the revolutionary Marxist organization, if the organization is sufficiently far-sighted and stays on top of what it has to do.

The rise of workers' struggles and the clearly anticapitalist direction of these struggles have in recent years increasingly become the basic focal point for this anticapitalist current, even in those countries where it has not been able to establish any significant organizational ties to the proletariat.

It is this very state of affairs that makes it possible for the revolutionary Marxist organization to significantly strengthen its ranks from this sector, thereby increasing its forces for carrying out the central task mentioned above, even before it is in a position to organize considerable sections of the worker vanguard, *if it [is prepared] to demonstrate in practice the validity and superiority of its orientation through its participation in the class struggle.*

This does not mean that revolutionary Marxists will assume a parasitic attitude, concerning themselves only with recruitment from the partial sectors and partial movements from which this left force originates. Rather it is necessary to precisely define the social significance of these sectors and movements and their relationship to the struggle between wage labor and capital, and to work out and put forward concrete struggle perspectives for them that are derived from both of these aspects.

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 traditional workers movement with a bureaucratic apparatus exerting tremendous weight among the working masses. The working masses do not take their orientation in the first instance from programs, platforms, or ideas. Their orientation is determined by their immediate needs and the tools for waging effective struggles that are available to meet these needs.

Only 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, will the disillusionment with the opportunism of the traditional leaderships and the revolts against it result in a massive influx into the revolutionary organizations. The stage that leads from the essentially propagandistic group to the revolutionary party, in the scientific sense of the term, is therefore one in which a revolutionary organization begins to sink roots in the working class, that is, to achieve through its intervention in the class struggle a relationship of forces enabling it to project itself as a credible alternative leadership for the workers movement, beginning with the worker vanguard.

The turns of the years 1967-68 have ushered in an extraordinary opportunity for a breakthrough for new revolutionary leadership for the proletariat, the best opportunity since 1917-23. But the opportunity will not last forever. If this historical opportunity is not to be lost,

all of the necessary prerequisites for a qualitative strengthening of the revolutionary Marxist organizations must be created within a definite period of time.

We reject any spontaneist illusions of the sort that the scope of the present capitalist crisis—which is indeed unparalleled—will force the leaders of the trade-union

bureaucracy and the leaders of the socialist and Communist parties through mass pressure to carry out a successful socialist revolution in Europe. Without the construction of a new revolutionary leadership the European proletariat, after successive waves of class struggles, would experience new defeats of historic proportions.

October 28, 1973

Know Your Own Weaknesses in Order to Better Combat the Minority and Build the International

By Jean-Pierre Beauvais

Introductory Note

Insufficient Documents . . .

This document was written in June 1973. Its basic content was elaborated in the process of giving a number of oral reports in France at that time. It had a specific purpose then: to participate in a necessary critical and self-critical debate within the international majority, and the International, on several points in the Ninth World Congress resolution.

The Ninth World Congress resolution is and will remain an important acquisition for the Fourth International. The entire development of class struggles in Latin America since 1969 confirms—unfortunately in the most tragic possible way insofar as Chile is concerned—the central thesis of the resolution and the political and organizational conclusions it drew from that thesis: *a long period of a gradual rise of mass struggles under conditions of relative bourgeois democracy is—on an overall continental scale—improbable.*

Having said that, a critical and self-critical debate, a debate based on both the central points and the method of the resolution, is still necessary on a whole number of questions.

For that reason section III of this document takes up the question of the assessment of Castroism as an organized political current in Latin America. This seems to be the central question, the central problem from which a series of errors in the Ninth World Congress resolution flow. These errors are not all of equal importance but they do form a consistent pattern, and this document takes them up one after another: the problem of a revolutionary breakthrough in the near future; Castroism as a possible strategy for victory in Latin America; the overestimation of the military relationship of forces and of rural guerrilla warfare; and an incorrect concept of a front with these Castroist organizations. Finally, on the basis of the Bolivian example a critique is drawn—and this is the most important thing of all—of the total failure to take into consideration the nature and character of our own subjective and organizational reality in Latin America. No one is unaware of or denies the fact that this will have dramatic political consequences.

These are all points on which a debate has yet to occur . . .

Furthermore, these questions cover no more than a partial aspect of the problems that have been posed. For example, insofar as the more specific problems of armed struggle—that is, the problem of the relationship between

armed struggle and work in the mass movement, and the problem of the relationship between armed struggle and the construction of the revolutionary party (which are the major problems confronting the vanguard in Latin America)—are concerned, it ought to have been possible to go beyond the brief resolution on armed struggle proposed by the international majority.

A statement like this on so difficult and prickly a problem, a problem that no one has really resolved in Latin America, may seem audacious. . . . Nonetheless, it seems that a critical and thorough debate based on what is politically *the richest experience* in armed struggle in all of Latin America since the Cuban revolution—the experience of the ERP-PRT, which unfolded in the period when this organization was still the Argentine section of the Fourth International—should have made it possible for us, and this is obvious, to go somewhat further.

This debate hasn't taken place either. . . .

At the last International Executive Committee meeting, however, the majority resolutions on Bolivia and Argentina were coupled with a motion promising the opening of just such a discussion involving both criticism and self-criticism.

Certain people—in any event the author of these lines—voted for the obviously insufficient majority resolutions instead of abstaining on them solely because of this "promise."

Today these problems are more than ever on the agenda; these are the problems we must resolve, that the Latin American vanguard must resolve. These are the problems posed to us by our comrades of the ERP-Fraccion Roja through their courageous, indeed heroic, day-to-day activity in Peron's Argentina.

These are the problems posed to us—directly or indirectly—by the Chilean revolutionary militants when they discuss, under the most dramatic conditions conceivable, the problems in organizing a strategy for resisting the fascist coup.

The discussion with the leaders of the MIR, the main Latin American revolutionary organization, is revealing in this regard, especially insofar as Castroist influence and its confusions are concerned. . . .

It is all these problems—and these above all others—that must be confronted if the problem of building genuine revolutionary Marxist organizations in Latin America today is to be posed *concretely* and *seriously*, and if we wish to seize the historic opportunities open to us on this continent.

In regard to this, the comrades of the minority have—no matter what the (quantitative) dimensions of the PST—

no concrete response. The PST itself, despite all its members, does not constitute a reply; this is obvious. What would have been the fate of a Chilean "PST"? Demolished and wiped off the political map in less than three days, probably. . .

We don't say this lightly and indifferently. But the daily spectacle of the most barbaric repression, the tens of thousands who are either dead or have disappeared, the tens of thousands of prisoners, the entire weight of this tragedy can only strengthen in us our conviction that in the present context in Latin America it is irresponsible, almost criminal, to build organizations that do not prepare themselves—politically, above all, but also organizationally—with the perspective of an inevitable confrontation with the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie and imperialism.

When seen in relation to the present context in Chile, which sharpens rather than distorts one's vision, the schematicism and shallowness of the minority's positions is more apparent than ever. What's involved is a collection of recipes and schemas—all drawn from the classics, we're told—that cannot be passed off as any sort of a strategy.

It is also more apparent than ever that while the positions of the majority have been essentially confirmed by the facts, they have remained general and vague in comparison to the concrete terrain of the class struggle in different Latin American countries.

Thus, a thorough examination of these positions is more necessary than ever.

This assessment should include, among other things, a critical rereading of certain elements of the Ninth World Congress resolution. It should also include a *genuine* balance sheet of our political activity over the last four years, above all of the experience of the PRT-ERP and that of the POR in Bolivia.

This assessment must be carried out between now and the Tenth World Congress and—as a matter of necessity—ought to continue afterwards. It is in this spirit that this document must—at last—be published.

As a contribution to the debate, logic dictates that it be followed by a series of amendments to the resolution on armed struggle proposed for the Tenth World Congress.

In large part, these amendments concern section 5, which is manifestly unacceptable as it now stands.

Jean Pierre Beauvais
Santiago de Chile
October 1, 1973

Introduction

This document takes the following statement as its starting point:

Numerous documents on Latin America have already been published for the next world congress. They touch on a great number of problems, supposedly drawing balance sheets. . . Nonetheless, after turning the last page in the last document your appetite is still there in a way, far from being satisfied.

You are dissatisfied because, by all the evidence, the International (more precisely, the sections in agreement with the majority orientation at the last world congress) has

experienced severe setbacks in Latin America. And in the case of Argentina the setback was coupled with an extreme example of political regression. There is also a sense of dissatisfaction because above and beyond the balance sheets and the polemics, a tiny little question remains: *What is to be done?* How are the problems of building the International in Latin America today posed? What initial concrete responses can be given?

The Ninth World Congress tried to provide a reply to this difficult question. And this is not one of the lesser merits of the celebrated resolution on Latin America, the resolution so sharply criticized by the comrades in the minority at the last world congress, who today find themselves grouped in the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency. It broke with a long tradition of resolutions that had more of a character of analyses or commentaries and generally didn't take into account their concrete implications for the tasks involved in building the revolutionary party.

The Tenth World Congress will have to further elaborate and clarify our political line on Latin America. It's essential that this be done: The defeats and setbacks of the past must not be allowed to conceal from us a reality that few comrades are fully aware of—that is, *the fact that the objective conditions for a rapid development of revolutionary Marxist organizations, for winning hegemony in the broad vanguard, already exist in a number of Latin American countries.*

It's possible to do it: no matter what their outcome has been, the experiences of Bolivia and above all of Argentina have been extremely rich in political lessons. This is true not only for the International but for the entire Latin American vanguard as well. This *too* must be taken into account by any balance sheet worthy of the name.

It's indispensable in regard to what the Tenth World Congress must be: a congress of clarification, of increased ideological and political homogenization, based on a genuine political and organizational centralization of the International.

But this means going beyond the present debate. Indeed, it means carrying out a twofold debate. On the one hand, it involves a debate with the positions taken by the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency; on the other hand, it also involves a debate on some of the analyses and positions that were presented and defended at the Ninth World Congress and after, within the framework of the "majority" orientation. In this regard, the Ninth World Congress resolution on Latin America makes a good starting point. It correctly synthesizes and illustrates a concept of the vanguard organization that must be vigorously defended against *what is concretely taking shape* behind the "defense of the classical methods of party building" by the comrades of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency. At the same time, however, it's not difficult to discern the basic weak points, the errors—which are important and quite serious—made by the majority at the last congress and afterwards. It is *imperative* that these be taken up again if we wish to make progress in regard to what must be our sole objective in these debates: building revolutionary combat parties of the Fourth International in Latin America.

The purpose of this document is above all to open the second door to this twofold debate; it presents a critical

analysis of the Ninth World Congress resolution in light of the tasks of the International, both as they are posed today and also as they were posed in 1969.

Before taking up this central point, it is important to return once again to the debate with the "Leninist-Trotskyist" comrades, in order to get a little better grasp of the concept of the vanguard organization that they are putting forward *in concrete practice in Latin America, and that they therefore counterpose to the majority concept*. This is the fundamental point in the debate with these comrades. We will begin there.

I. The 'Classical Norms' and the 'Classical Method of Party Building' Put Forward by the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency and Some Examples of how They Practice It in Latin America

I. Let's Get the Debate Back on the Track

It is regrettable that such a clarification is necessary four years after the Ninth World Congress adopted the resolution on Latin America, but this resolution is *not essentially and above all* a call for and an orientation toward urban guerrilla warfare. The question of guerrilla warfare, urban as well as rural, was taken up there at some length, as is quite obvious. We shall see later on what conclusions should be drawn about this today.

But to see this—as the comrades of the IEC minority do—as the fundamental point, as the heart of the resolution, is incorrect and opens the door to a phony debate.

The debate on the orientation in Latin America that has been carried out since the Ninth World Congress is *not* a debate over "Guevarism vs. Leninism and Trotskyism" as the comrades of the IEC minority sought to make it seem when they named their tendency "Leninist-Trotskyist." Nor is it a debate over "rural or urban guerrilla warfare" vs. the so-called "classical method of party building." To reduce the debate to these terms is to make a crude, indeed false, caricature of it. Even more serious is the fact that this obscures the question that has really been posed: *the revolutionary vanguard party; the concept one has of how to build it; its role and the tasks that flow concretely from the prerevolutionary situations of today, such as those that exist in Latin America. . .* (or in a context such as that of Western Europe today, as the discussion on the "European" document made clear). *In this sense, the discussion on Latin America and on "building revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe" actually constitute two doorways that lead to one and the same debate.*

II. A Necessary Reminder: The Aims of the Ninth World Congress Resolution and the Gains it Represented

The aim of the resolution was to start with a synthesis of the broad socio-political tendencies in Latin America, to determine the forms the *revolutionary crisis* would take in regard to the different apparatuses of the bourgeois state and, in the last analysis, in regard to imperialism. Once this had been established, the next step

was to determine (concrete, immediate) orientations for Latin American revolutionary Marxists.

In summary form and in a completely schematic way, the resolution analyzed and emphasized:

- The *growing* economic and social instability, the growing social contradictions on both a continental scale and in each of the Latin American countries—which are inextricably linked to imperialist exploitation and domination.

- The profound influence of the Cuban revolution, along with its forms of struggle, on the vanguard of the Latin American masses, who were themselves radicalized by the impact of the first socialist revolution on the continent.

- The declining influence of the traditional populist-reformist working-class leaderships, a fact that is linked in part to the preceding point.

- In the bourgeois camp, the increasingly concrete emergence of the army as the *pivot* of bourgeois power—a very concrete, material pivot (in its function as the repressive apparatus) but also a political pivot, inasmuch as the army is more and more substituting itself for the bankrupt traditional formations, presenting itself as the "party of the bourgeoisie."

On the basis of the analysis of these broad tendencies, the resolution emphasized the fact that in the period ahead the inevitable mass mobilizations (whether of workers, students, or peasants) would assume a highly *explosive* character, and that from this would flow an *inevitable confrontation with the army*.

Under such circumstances, a *long period of a gradual rise* of mass struggles under conditions of relative bourgeois democracy is—on an overall, continental scale—*improbable*.

What tasks then flow from such a political context, so far as a revolutionary Marxist organization, the genuine heir to Bolshevik traditions, is concerned? *Isn't it to prepare the masses—politically and organizationally—for such armed confrontations, to in some way "arm them with the desire to arm themselves"?* And if this is not to remain the pious wish of a powerless commentator, it requires concrete measures and a concrete orientation for every revolutionary Marxist organization, depending on their degree of development and implantation. Does this mean that every Latin American revolutionary Marxist must "*hic et nunc*" [here and now] enter into armed struggle and form guerrilla nuclei? . . . Of course not.

But it does mean that Latin American revolutionary Marxists carrying out work in the context just outlined must have an orientation and, as the resolution states, lead "mobilizations based on a transitional program conceived in accordance with the logic of an anticapitalist struggle" ("Draft Resolution on Latin America," in *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* reprint *Discussion on Latin America* [1968-72], p. 8.) And at the same time, insofar as objective conditions permit they should also "promote forms of armed struggle specially adapted to certain zones," that is, "take advantage of every opportunity to increase the number of rural guerrilla nuclei" as well as to "undertake actions in the big cities aimed both at striking the nerve centers . . . and at punishing the hangmen of the regime as well as achieving propagandistic and psychological successes." ("Draft Resolution on Latin America," p. 8.)

In other words, in the course of building their organizations the Latin American vanguard, and the Trotskyists in particular, *must take the necessary political and organizational initiatives so that the masses will not have to confront the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie and imperialism without preparation and without arms.* This means that the revolutionary organizations themselves must be prepared—politically as well as organizationally—with such a perspective.

And this is far from the only thing in the Ninth World Congress resolution. As we shall see later on—and this is the principal aim of this document—in many aspects the resolution is open to criticism or is even erroneous. But the few lines above synthesize the essence of its aims and *gains*.

And regardless of the demagogic formulas of the minority comrades ("Guevarism," "focoism," etc.), *they are attacking this fundamental aspect, these gains—or more precisely, the concept of orienting the vanguard toward its tasks* of the hour and, in the present debate, in Latin America.

And they counterpose to this—in a somewhat abstract, dogmatic and, in the last analysis, anti-Marxist fashion—a "return to the path of Trotskyism," a return to the "norms," to the "classical method of party building," which thus implies a different concept of the vanguard organization. . .

But what concept? On this point, the actual practice of the comrades of the "Leninist-Trotskyist" minority in Latin America is particularly illuminating.

III. A Curious Concept of the Role of the Vanguard and of the 'Classical Norms'—The Example of Venezuela

The recent history of the Venezuelan vanguard is in many respects a good illustration of what has taken place on the rest of the continent. This is true both in regard to the forms taken by the current rise in struggles and in regard to the crisis of Castroism and its consequences for the Latin American revolutionary movement. In short, it is here that Castroism and Stalinism confronted each other most directly in the years following the Cuban victory. Even today this confrontation is still symbolized by the polemic on the peaceful road to socialism that the Cuban leadership carried out with the Venezuelan CP before the OLAS conference. The Cubans reaffirmed the necessity of armed struggle, in this instance, guerrilla warfare. At that time it appeared as though Venezuela would become—in the very near future—one of the key countries in the Latin American revolution. The background for the debate was the deep and extremely rapid (though differentiated) radicalization of important layers of the peasantry, the students, a good part of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and of the proletariat, which was still numerically weak. The source of this radicalization can be traced to the considerable impact the nearby Cuban revolution had on Venezuela, and to imperialist exploitation, whose consequences have been more visible and dramatic in Venezuela than anywhere else in Latin America.

The main parties in the debate were the different armed-struggle fronts that developed rapidly and grouped themselves together in the FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation), an organization that had a considerable im-

pact on the country. One indication of this is the fact that several high-ranking military officials joined it.

The Cubans considered the FALN their Latin American sister-organization *par excellence*, with all that this implies "concretely" . . .

They were confronted with a highly bureaucratized, Stalinist CP, whose influence was not insignificant. In its early days this CP participated in armed struggle, and a few of its former leaders are now in the mountains. When confronted with the development of guerrilla warfare, its impact, and the danger it represented for the tranquility necessary for paving the way toward the peaceful road to socialism, the CP stopped short, broke all relations, and halted all aid—which had serious consequences for the FALN. The old Venezuelan CP will never recover from having broken these relations and from the polemic with the Cubans that followed. It will go from crisis to crisis, losing little by little the young forces capable of assuring replacements for the aging apparatus.

As for the FALN, *while the polemic permitted some clarification in regard to the reformist strategy of the Venezuelan CP, it did not resolve (or even pose) the problems this organization was confronted with in effecting its transformation into a genuine revolutionary alternative, capable of elaborating a consistent revolutionary strategy leading to taking power.* The question of the revolutionary party, even of its necessity, was not raised. There was no real understanding of Stalinism in all its political implications, international as well as national. What you did find almost everywhere throughout the continent was the reaffirmation of an orientation toward armed struggle for carrying out the socialist revolution, and the practical application of this orientation through the development of rural guerrilla nuclei. But this by itself was not enough to overcome the gaps in their understanding of the situation.

Lacking a consistent perspective, the FALN became stagnant, and a stepped-up repression, equipped with unprecedented means, was launched against it. Nearly two years of full-scale domestic war decimated the organization, cutting it off from its bases of support. A little later (1969), the turn by the Cuban leadership, which began to dole out its aid to the Venezuelan revolutionaries with an eyedropper and under strict conditions, completed the isolation of the FALN and led to its being crushed. The polemic that Douglas Bravo, the leader of a nucleus of survivors, carried out at that time with the Cuban leadership left no doubt about this.

In Venezuela, the political generation that went through the FALN period came out of it frustrated, demoralized, and without any concrete perspectives, *but it was not completely demobilized.*

Since the objective reasons for the radicalization of the early 1960s had in no way disappeared, the lull was of short duration. Over the last two or three years there has been a significant rise in new struggles in the student milieu and in several sectors of the working class.

One of the first manifestations of this new rise in struggles was a new crisis within the CP. Beginning on a confused basis, it involved most of the younger layers in the party, who had created a centrist organization dominated by such influences as the (Spanish) CP of Carillo, Garudy, and other rightists of this variety.

The objective of its leaders was clear: to fill the immense political void that arose from the setback suffered by the FALN. In this sense, they had a certain success. Although for the moment Douglas Bravo had survived with a small nucleus of combatants—prestigious but isolated—the MAS [Movimiento al Socialismo—Movement Toward Socialism] won a sizable number of active elements to its organization and periphery in the 1960s. It made gains above all among the younger militants, the product of the new rise of struggles, the representatives of a broad, genuine vanguard that was seeking a perspective and a leadership.

What did the MAS offer them? A fine example of a centrist organization, it offered them plenty of confusion and little in the way of concrete perspectives. Less than a year ago, however, the MAS did find "a way out": the electoral campaign.

Elections are going to take place in Venezuela at the end of the year; among other things a new president will be elected. Although the bourgeoisie is divided, they do understand the significance of the new rise in struggles the country has witnessed and they are aware of the dangers that this implies—which is why they set the electoral process in motion almost a year ahead of time. When Venezuela entered an electoral period last summer, it represented the collective desire of all factions of the bourgeoisie. What a splendid opportunity for the MAS. It presented "its" candidate for the presidency, the "independent socialist" José Vicente Rangel, and began to campaign at the beginning of last fall, fourteen months before the elections. A campaign for socialism? Of course. It was a campaign against unprincipled class alliances too. But beyond that it was also a shallow, confused campaign, with no precise perspective apart from "Vote for José Vicente". . . In short, *it was the campaign of a centrist group.*

It was in this context that a tiny Trotskyist nucleus arose. Although extremely weak, this nucleus understood the potential of such a situation for revolutionary Marxism. At the price of a considerable effort, these few comrades began almost two years ago to publish *Voz Marxista*, a respectable monthly that carries articles on the situation in Venezuela and reports the analyses and activities of the International. Its success says quite a bit about the reality and the potential of the broad vanguard in Venezuela; an average of 5,000 copies a month have been sold by a handful of militants engaged in rebuilding a real organization. There is a considerable interest in Trotskyism and its analyses and perspectives.

The majority of the leadership of this small group has for some time been made up of comrades who today are members of the "Leninist-Trotskyist" Tendency.

What situation could be more ideal for comrades who wish to counterpose a "return to the norms" and the "classical method of party building" to the errors of Castroism and Guevarism!

The FALN and Castroism had suffered severe setbacks, Venezuelan Stalinism was in a state of crisis, a new rise in struggles was under way, and there was a considerable—and concretely tested—interest in Trotskyism. What a splendid opportunity for our Leninist-Trotskyists to draw the necessary balance sheets and put their line into practice! Once the time for lofty internal pronouncements had

passed, what did this line turn out to be concretely? Support—and hardly critical—to the MAS campaign, support to the candidacy of José Vicente Rangel. "Vote for José Vicente," proclaim our Leninist-Trotskyist comrades when they participate in the campaign. In fact, they said this just recently from the speaker's stand—in their capacity as cosponsor—at a major meeting for Rangel.

Beginning last fall, thirteen months before the elections, the front page of each *Voz Marxista* has carried a call for support to Rangel. Since then, this position has become more pronounced, and their support became more direct, more concrete, to the point that *Voz Marxista* has actually become one of the principal vehicles of propaganda for a centrist candidate.

Whatever the reservations and criticisms the Venezuelan Leninist-Trotskyist comrades put forward in regard to the MAS, they carried little weight in relation to the weight, the importance, that support to Rangel took on for the activity of the small Venezuelan Trotskyist group. It is the central focus of their activity and serves as the political focus of their newspaper.

Vote for Rangel—this is the perspective they offer to a vanguard of immense potential, a vanguard that expected (and, we hope still expects) something quite different from Trotskyism, especially after it had rejected Stalinism and the deceptions it had been offered by Castroism.

Calling for a vote for Rangel is not necessarily against our "principles," Comrade Novack would say (see "Two Lines, Two Methods," in *IIDB*, Vol. 10, No. 3, March 1973), but is that all the Leninist-Trotskyist comrades have to offer the Venezuelan vanguard, especially in view of these comrades' desire to return to the supposed classical norm. *In fact, however, these alleged classical norms serve only one purpose—whether in Venezuela or elsewhere in Latin America—and that is to cover up for a tail-ending, rightist tendency.* In Venezuela, this tail-endism has manifested itself in relation to a confused right-centrist organization, which is the product of the crisis of Castroism—above all its limits and deficiencies—over the past decade. It reflects the confusion and the lack of perspectives in a broad, significant vanguard that is full of hope. The task of Venezuelan revolutionary Marxists is to renew the links with the historical experience of the FALN. Along with those who, like Douglas Bravo, symbolize the best of this experience, they must try to draw the most fruitful balance sheet possible of this period. They are in the best position to do this, and this is what the better part of the *Voz Marxista* readership is waiting for. It's on such a basis that the work toward building a genuine revolutionary Marxist organization in Venezuela could really get off the ground, rooting itself among the sectors of the vanguard who are confused and are seeking a consistent orientation.

The battle against the MAS, which is an *obstacle* and *not a vehicle* for building a revolutionary party, must also be carried out on a similar basis.

This doesn't mean that a sectarian attitude should be taken toward a formation like this; *tactical* support to one or another of its activities is conceivable. But this has nothing in common with an almost totally uncritical support for an electoral campaign that became the central focus of the group's political activity for a period of fourteen months.

We ask our Leninist-Trotskyist comrades: Is this a return to the "classic norms"? Isn't it instead an illustration — among many others — of a "tail-endist" concept of the vanguard organization, and of its role and tasks?

Because the Venezuelan example isn't the only one . . .

IV. *It Wasn't a Caricature, but Rather the . . . 'Norm'*

It's not possible to go into other examples *in any detail* here. That's not the main objective of this document. We do, however, hope that other comrades who have come into direct contact with the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency's orientation in carrying out work will not fail to do so. . . .

The Peruvian comrades of the FIR-Combate [Frente de la Izquierda Revolucionaria — Revolutionary Left Front], for example, should be able to give an interesting account of the development of the FIR formed and led by Comrade Hugo Blanco after the split in 1969 — especially of the concept of trade-union work that this organization proposed and put into practice.

"Wherever they work, our comrades must be the best defenders, the best propagandists, for the slogans and demands of the union. Insofar as their trade-union work is concerned, they shouldn't differentiate themselves in regard to these slogans. It's on this basis that they will little by little gain the confidence of their comrades within the CGTP (the main trade-union federation in Peru, led by militants who are either in the CP or under its influence. On the whole, it supports the Velasco regime.). . . . In any event, the trade-union is the workers instrument for winning their economic demands and defending themselves; it's not an instrument of political struggle."

This is, word for word, the proposal put forward in a March 1971 meeting in Lima by one of the leaders of the FIR-Blanco, a meeting called to discuss, among other things, the differences with the FIR-Combate. But that's not all . . .

". . . The comrades of the FIR (Combate) have an ultra-left, guerrillaist orientation. . . . They don't understand trade-union work. Wherever they have militants in a trade union, they very quickly make themselves known as political militants, thus isolating themselves from the masses of unionists . . . They criticize every aspect of the union, which is a workers organization even if a clique of bureaucrats is in the leadership of it. Their guerrillaist orientation? . . . At the gates of factories where they have comrades, they distribute leaflets that talk about the necessity of armed struggle for the liberation of the working class . . . They don't understand that this isn't a question the workers are raising. . . ."

It's not necessary to go into the Peruvian situation in any great detail to understand the profoundly syndicalist and economist orientation reflected in this statement. And that's still not all. At that time, the Peruvian government had just set up the "Industrial Community," a "profit-sharing" structure. Every worker in Peruvian industry was forced to become a member of this industrial community, which also included representatives of the state and of the bosses. Through this structure, the worker became a small stockholder in the factory where he worked, and it was within this "Industrial Community" that social

conflicts were supposed to be settled. As a cog in the Peruvian "participationist" regime, this "Industrial Community" was above all a weapon of war against the trade unions. Moreover, the law is quite strict: it is illegal to hold both a trade-union office and a post in the "community."

What position did the FIR-Combate comrades take toward it? They called for a *boycott* of the "community" and at the same time for a campaign in defense of the trade unions and for workers control, with a central slogan of "Workers Control — Not Participation."

During the very same meeting, Comrade Hugo Blanco was to characterize this position as ultraleft, explaining that participation in the "Industrial Community — critical participation, of course, and combined with a defense of the trade unions — was correct . . . because there was a greater number of workers there than in the trade unions. Furthermore, he explained, an orientation that does not combine work in both the "industrial community" and the trade unions — that is, an orientation like that of the FIR-Combate — is ultraleft and reveals a misunderstanding of what work in the mass movement is all about . . .

That was in March 1971. But after reading the material published by the comrades of the "FIR-Blanco," it doesn't seem that their positions have fundamentally changed since then, even if their practical application is more cautious than some of the statements reprinted above.

The example of Uruguay might also be considered. There the PRT-U, the local version of the Argentine PST, had the occasion to make use of its talents as a rightist and tailendist organization by calling for a vote for the candidates of the Broad Front. This was a *multi-class electoral front*, organized during the last elections around the CP and above all certain sectors of the bourgeoisie, for support to General Seregni, the Broad Front's candidate for president (this position was publicly denounced by Comrade Hansen, in an article in *Intercontinental Press*, as contradictory to the principled positions of Trotskyism in respect to coalitions of the *Popular Front* type, which the "Broad Front" was a typical example of).

And last but not least, the actual practice of the Argentine PST could also be taken up in some detail, especially its trade-union work, which is so much discussed in the Leninist-Trotskyist comrades' documents. It's true that this is important, that the PST's trade-union implantation is far from being negligible. But the essential thing is to know what political line to carry it out on. Above all and most importantly, it must be a line of *confronting* the corrupt and bureaucratic Peronist trade-union leadership, which is often linked to the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie, and *driving them into a corner* . . . Because once the power and authority this apparatus has over the working class becomes fragmented, formations known as "class-struggle" tendencies will appear here and there, pulling together a young and militant workers vanguard, one that is determined but still confused politically. Because everything indicates that this centrally important trade-union bureaucracy will serve as the backbone of the Peronist regime in power in Buenos Aires today. . . .

As a matter of fact, the past history of the PST and the history of the different political maneuvers carried out by Comrade Moreno, especially his ultra-opportunist shift

toward Peronism in 1957-59, would serve as an excellent source for illustrating the concept of the vanguard, of the party, that the Leninist-Trotskyist comrades are defending and putting into practice in Latin America.

There's no doubt but that it would be worthwhile to write this up between now and the world congress.

Insofar as the PST of today is concerned, this has been taken up at some length by Comrade Ernest Germain ("In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International"). Apart from the central and significant aspect of trade-union work, which it was important to recall here, there's no need to cover this ground a second time.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that the PST's practice has become considerably more opportunistic over the last few months; this has been reflected in particular by its attitude toward Campora and Peronism. Here are a few examples:

— After a conflict between PST militants and CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] bureaucrats, the PST asked Campora to intervene: "Dr. Campora, form a commission to make an inquiry about the facts . . . We ask you to do this because you were elected with the support of the working class, and because you have announced that you will govern in permanent consultation with the working class." (*Avanzada Socialista*, March 15, 1973.) Since when, Leninist-Trotskyist comrades, do we ask bourgeois politicians to serve as "impartial" judges and to "make inquiries" into internal trade-union conflicts?

— In *Avanzada Socialista*, summary comparisons have been made between Campora and Allende, and it has been insinuated that "Campora can base himself on the masses . . . but the pressure of mobilizations by the workers and the people can result in the government's making big concessions to the workers, concessions that go beyond what they had calculated. . . . We have in mind once again the case of Chile where, given the pressure from antagonistic social forces, the only path the government could follow was to base itself on the masses." (*Avanzada Socialista*, March 15, 1973.) The comrades of the PST don't seem to make any distinction between a coalition dominated by two workers parties like the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, and a bourgeois coalition like that of Campora-Solano Lima representing FREJULI [Frente Justicialista—the Peronist coalition].

Worse yet (because it occurred a little later), the PST declared it would accept the discipline of a Peronist CGT congress if the meeting were really democratic: "We declare that from now on we will comply with the resolutions passed by a truly democratic and representative rank-and-file CGT congress, even if (as seems likely) Peronist workers are in a large majority." (*Avanzada Socialista*, April 4, 1973.) Given such an orientation, one question arises immediately: if such a congress where "Peronist workers are a large majority" voted full support to the Campora government, would the PST comrades carry this out? Tail-endism occasionally makes harsh demands. . . .

— But the PST didn't stop there in its opportunistic contortions; confronted with a proposal for a "social truce" solemnly put forward by Campora, the PST replied in the May 16, 1973, *Avanzada Socialista*:

"Concretely, we would like to see . . . the truce proposed

on the basis of workers control of the accounting books and production so that the country can be rebuilt along the lines of an economic plan determined by the workers."

Thus to suit the needs of tail-endism, of the adaptationism of Comrade Moreno, workers control has become the vehicle for a social truce and is no longer an instrument for intensifying the class struggle and the mobilizations of the workers. . . .

This evolution of the PST's positions has become accentuated over the past few weeks . . . to the point that a question may be legitimately raised: Are we going to see Comrade Moreno return to the political line he held at the end of the 1950s, that is, a political line of unconditional—not even camouflaged—support to Peronism?

It is a fact, and these four examples prove it, that the Leninist-Trotskyist comrades represent a genuine political current in Latin America, a political current that has a real unity and coherence above and beyond the different contexts in which it has appeared.

V. A Rightist, Tail-Endist Tendency that Draws its Strength from Setbacks and Lulls

In Latin America, at least, this unity and coherence must not be underestimated or neglected, if only (to take one example) for tactical reasons.

For it is on this basis that the *current* represented by the Leninist-Trotskyists in the Latin American revolutionary movement can be replaced. *And it's also on this basis that the debate on strategy in Latin America takes on all its meaning.*

A rightist current, solidly rooted in a tail-endist concept of the vanguard organization, tainted here and there—according to the context or the conjuncture—with syndicalism, economism, or simply opportunism, *in practice* the Leninist-Trotskyists join up with currents that are *non-formalized* and ideologically vague, though quite real; currents that are encountered, with a number of variants, just about everywhere in Latin America.

A notable example is the current within the Brazilian left that is characterized as "massist"—as opposed to the militarist currents represented by such organizations as the VOP or the VPR [Vanguardia Popular Revolucionaria—Peoples Revolutionary Vanguard]. It's known as the "massist" current because after the "militarists" were crushed in a total defeat, the "massists" proposed a return to work in the mass movement; in fact, they called for the militants in the vanguard to immerse themselves completely in the mass movement, and to do so on the level of the consciousness and activity of the masses—no matter how low it might be. Furthermore, *they denied the necessity of specific actions by the vanguard organization under the present conditions.*

The characterization as "massist" is actually incorrect. It's not the desire to carry out mass work that characterizes this current but rather the concept of mass work it has formed, a concept that in practice has led its militants to tail-endism, economism and, occasionally, to opportunism of the most incredible sort.

In Latin America, the origin of this kind of orientation can be traced to a defeat of the guerrillas, of the armed organizations inspired by Castroism. When these defeats are not analyzed and fully understood, they give

rise to their exact opposite. It's not so long ago that many of today's "massists" were the most outspoken advocates of militarism and focoism. *But above all, it's in a period like the present upsurge that such a current can develop.*

Regardless of the specific local circumstances, this is really the basis on which the Leninist-Trotskyist comrades are recruiting today. And they count on broadening their field of action in Latin America by winning over nuclei and elements of this "massist" current: their Brazilian "contacts," for example, are an excellent example of this so-called "massist" current.

Many comrades, especially in the majority tendency, haven't always understood this, and have thus for a long time underestimated the real possibilities for the development of Leninist-Trotskyist positions in Latin America. They have also underestimated the International's *concrete stake* in the political battle against these positions in Latin America.

The outcome of this political battle will depend on the reply to this seemingly simple question: Will the International play its vanguard role in relation to the tasks that flow from the political situation in Latin America?

II. The Central Task Today

I. A Superficial and Temporary Lull

The Latin American vanguard and the Latin American revolutionary movement have experienced serious and significant defeats since 1966-67, defeats that were both the cause and the consequence of the lull that followed the revolutionary victory in Cuba.

All indications point to the fact that on a continental scale this lull is only *temporary and is not generalized*: the spectacular mobilizations of the Argentine proletariat since the first Cordobazo in May 1969 and the continuing radicalization of the Chilean masses since the election of Allende in 1970 attest to this, although the phenomena involved are still of great fragility and limited perspective, given the absence of genuine revolutionary leaderships.

But this must not be allowed to make us forget the defeat in Brazil, which literally decimated the vanguard in a country that is decisive for the future of this continent. Nor can we forget the defeat in Peru in 1965-66, nor the defeat in Venezuela mentioned earlier in this document, nor the defeat in Bolivia (which is exemplary in many regards) after the coup by Colonel Banzer, that zealous vassal of the generals in power in Brasilia. And others still. . . .

In fact, the fundamental reality is that the imperialists and the local bourgeoisies have not succeeded in taking advantage of this lull to significantly stabilize the situation in their favor. Nowhere has the social basis of their exploitive regime been significantly broadened. Social contradictions have retained all their sharpness everywhere and are ripe for explosion in the near or not far distant future. In this sense, the analytic framework outlined by the Ninth World Congress remains more valid than ever.

The lull, which is linked to these objective facts, has given the recent history of the Latin American vanguard a specific rhythm.

In the period following the Cuban revolution, a young

vanguard emerged and began to develop in most of the Latin American countries. An offspring of the petty bourgeoisie, it was politically weak and confused, reflecting the lack of solid traditions in the Latin American workers movement. Its total dependence vis-à-vis the Cuban leadership stems precisely from the absence of these traditions. This was accentuated by the fact that the strategy the Cubans proposed—in essence, immediate actions through the creation of guerrilla nuclei—fit in very well with the fact that this young generation was completely "fed up" with the powerlessness of its predecessors . . . (the CP and the other populists).

The repeated setbacks of this strategy and the defeats it entailed splintered this generation in many countries and demoralized a good number of its militants despite the shallowness of the lull that followed.

Here and there, many tried to analyze the errors and draw the necessary lessons. This is the fertile ground in which the theories of the "massist" variety emerged, as we have just seen. And here too, *among other places*, is where we must look for the origin of the renewed influence and credibility of reformist and populist orientations over the last few years.

II. A New Generation of Vanguard Militants

But at the same time and in many countries, the precursors of a phenomenon that was going to become generalized appeared in the course of new struggles—mass student struggles but also struggles of workers and peasants. A new generation of militants has appeared, foreshadowing a new vanguard generation that was to be different from the one that preceded it.

It is different from its predecessor because it comes much more directly out of real and concrete mass struggles. It consists, in a helter-skelter fashion, of the most politicized sectors of the Mexican student movement; the militants who have emerged from student struggles, especially in Columbia; the Chilean working-class vanguard; the best elements of the Cordoba proletariat; and many others.

They are different from their predecessors inasmuch as their relations with the Cuban leadership are radically different. Politically and organizationally, they are not under its influence. They respect and admire the Cubans, but the experience Cuba represents is often far removed from the problems with which they are confronted. And although from the historical point of view they owe a great deal to those who seized power in Havana, this generation is fundamentally a *post-Cuban* generation.

Politically, this has major consequences.

Unlike their predecessors, these militants are less "continentalist" and more internationalist. They are more conscious of the rise in struggles Western Europe has witnessed. The invasion of Czechoslovakia deeply affected them, and presented them with many questions.

Their history, as well as the kind of political work they have come out of, has given them a much greater political maturity. One example of this, comrades of the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency, is the fact that for this generation the question of armed struggle is posed *very concretely*. For they have experienced Tlatelolco and the brutal occupation of the campuses in Caracas; they have

experienced the violence of the Colombian and Peruvian armies when they fired on a demonstration of teachers and high school students two years ago; and they have also experienced the interventions of the national police in the factories of Cordoba. They are aware of the threat of a military coup on the part of the Chilean army.

But precisely because the question is posed concretely for them, it no longer appears in the same light as before. The romantic flight to the mountains, the guerrilla nucleus that was to spark the revolution—all that is completely foreign to this generation. Insofar as armed struggle is concerned, the question they must resolve immediately is how to combat the intervention of the police and army in an industrial zone where the factories are occupied by strikers, as in Cordoba; how to guarantee the security of the peasants in Cautin Province in Chile, peasants who are occupying the land and who have been attacked by armed bands in the service of the expropriated landholders; how to ensure revolutionary militants' work and penetration in the factories of Lima at a time when similar bands of cops are paid handsomely to reduce them to silence . . . A great number of examples of this sort could be given.

III. The Key Task Today

THE HISTORIC TASK OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL IN LATIN AMERICA TODAY IS TO WIN OVER THIS NEW GENERATION OF VANGUARD MILITANTS WHO ARE NOW BEGINNING TO APPEAR EVERYWHERE ON THE CONTINENT.

Why is this a *historic* task? Because if the majority of this new vanguard generation is not won over to revolutionary Marxism, it will once again mean that most of those who make up this generation will be lost—like the generation of the 1960s. And time is of the essence. . .

The weight of the repressive apparatus, as well as the weight of imperialism in such an explosive context, means that errors and political weakness will have to be paid for dearly in Latin America. This is one of the key aspects of the Ninth World Congress resolution, an aspect that must be understood in all its dimensions and implications. The resolution underscores the fact that the slow accumulation of militants in the context of a prolonged period of bourgeois democracy can scarcely even be envisioned—with no exceptions. This means, for example, that while an organization and its members might physically survive this or that error in their orientation in the context of present-day Europe, this is far from the case in Latin America.

How many militants in Castroist organizations—organizations that today no longer exist—have tested their orientation at the expense of their lives?

Winning this new generation of revolutionary militants also means sparing ourselves a repetition of this and avoiding a new lull of this sort in the Latin American revolution. It means taking a *decisive* step toward this revolution.

We must be all the more convinced that this is *possible* today—despite the defeats that have been suffered and the errors that have been committed, and despite the real weakness of our movement in Latin America, which hasn't been spared by these defeats and errors.

Confronted with such a generation, with the problems

it has to grapple with, the influence of the International—its development, for example, and its experience, especially in Europe—can play a decisive role. It has been possible to test this partially—much too partially—particularly in Mexico and Colombia, where new organizations composed of militants who for the most part belong to this new generation have experienced significant developments. . .

But that is certainly not enough.

IV. To Accomplish this Task, It Is Necessary to Reject the 'Leninist-Trotskyist' Orientation as well as that which is Incorrect or Outmoded in the Ninth World Congress Resolution

An orientation based on an incorrect concept of the vanguard organization leads inevitably to tail-endism and right opportunism and at bottom has *nothing* to offer this new vanguard generation. But this doesn't mean that such an orientation can't develop a real influence there. *For in the context of Latin America today—contrary to what occurred in the preceding period—this rightist orientation that poses as the "Bolshevik" alternative to the errors and excesses of Castroism, Guevarism, and tutti quanti [all the rest] is a fundamentally demagogic orientation.*

It is *demagogic* because it pretends to furnish an explanation for the ebb in the Cuban current, and thus a way out, an alternative. It is *demagogic* because it does this with both a condescending manner and a wink of the eye. It's enough to read the articles in *Avanzada Socialista* to understand concretely what this means when it's a question of those "*muchachos*" [boys] (!)—courageous, of course, but following an incorrect line—of the ERP and the Tupamaros. Above all, it is *demagogic* because it pretends to resolve—in the traditional Bolshevik fashion—the central question of the link between the vanguard and the masses, the question that's at the center of all the debates over the Castroist current.

Armed with certain correct points, with an apparent consistency, and with historical references that are irreproachable on the level of book learning, they too can win over elements of this new vanguard, elements that are disoriented or seeking an orientation—especially if no other consistent alternative seems to exist.

The development of the Argentine PST—whatever one might think of it—attests to the reality of such a possibility.

But as far as the future of the International in Latin America is concerned, it would be just as incorrect and dangerous to consider this "rejection" of the Leninist-Trotskyist Orientation as sufficient.

For what's involved is not just simply rejecting it within the framework of a polemic; it must be rejected *in practice* as well. *That is, its rejection must be based on a strategic orientation that replies concretely and effectively to the needs of these new Latin American vanguards.*

And let's be quite frank here: in Argentina, for example, it is undeniable that the gains made by a PST could not in large part even be conceived apart from the fact that the comrades of the PRT held political concepts that left them incapable of capitalizing on the prestige and reputation they won during the second Cordobazo, and apart

from the fact that they then showed themselves just as incapable of providing a credible political and organizational reply to the turn that was initiated when the Lanusse dictatorship and the Argentine bourgeoisie decided to hold general elections. And while it's neither possible nor correct to place an equal-sign between the positions and orientation of the PRT (especially over the last year or two) and the positions of the "International Executive Committee majority," let's be frank and honest: *the majority's vagueness, its silence, in regard to the PRT—which stem mainly from the imprecise formulations and the basic political errors contained in the Ninth World Congress resolution—have also contributed substantially to the gains made by the Moreno comrades.*

In this sense, while the essential points of the Ninth World Congress resolution—namely, the concept of the revolutionary party it set forth and its analysis of the political period in Latin America—must once again be reaffirmed and defended against the Leninist-Trotskyist comrades, it's also true that many of the analyses and orientations projected by this resolution *must today be called into question.*

To fail to do this is to leave the field open to the Leninist-Trotskyists. This is one aspect of the matter. But it would also mean that we are not arming ourselves for accomplishing the historical task of winning over the new generation of vanguard militants that is now emerging; it would mean not giving ourselves the means for building the International in Latin America in the period that's opening up. For this resolution offers very little in the way of a response to the concrete political problems confronting these militants. And the answers it does provide are often outmoded or inappropriate.

III. The Ninth World Congress Resolution

This is not the place for an elaborate commentary on the document. The resolution does, however, contain a number of specific points that are open to criticism and a number of rash formulations susceptible of opening the door to a great deal of polemics. As, for example, the following little phrase:

"... the civil war will take manifold forms of armed struggle, in which the principal axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare . . ."

Such a statement is not without importance. But the essential problem lies *elsewhere* . . . and it's there that we must begin.

I. The Central Question of Castroism

In both its analysis of the Latin American political context as well as in the strategic orientations it drew from this, the Ninth World Congress resolution commits one *central error: this is the implicit analysis it makes of Castroism, with all its consequences.*

The analysis is implicit because nothing is said about the Cuban workers state and its nature, its politics, or the path that it's following. Of course the resolution noted quite correctly that "the Cuban revolution continues to represent a fundamental pole of attraction." But even this should have been much more specific. In 1969 when the resolution was written, the Cuban leadership—inasmuch

as it had carried out the first successful socialist revolution in Latin America and inasmuch as it represented the leadership of the first workers state on the continent—still hoped to play the role of a continental revolutionary leadership. This is all to its credit. And it was recognized as such in a more or less confused way by the broad masses in Latin America, and more or less explicitly by the majority of the vanguard. In fact, as the resolution emphasizes, "on the level of ideological and political influence the Castroist current remains by far the strongest." To let it stand at that and say nothing, or almost nothing, more poses a serious problem.

This initial remark is not concerned with form, but rather with method. It will be objected that the International already has a position on this, and that it's sufficient to refer to it. This is both true and false. It's true to the extent that since 1959 there has been no lack on the part of the International of analyses on the Cuban revolution, its history, and the lessons to be drawn from it. It's also true to the extent that an initial analysis of the OLAS conference was made by Comrade Hansen, who attended the conference, and that Livio Maitan wrote a severe critique of the "theories" DeBray set forth in his book *Revolution in the Revolution.*

But at the Ninth World Congress the problem was something quite different: what was involved was projecting the basis for a united front on a continental scale, since the final section of the resolution states—and without any other significant mention of Castroism apart from the one that has just been cited—in its first point dealing with the activity of revolutionary Marxists:

"a) Integration into the historic revolutionary current represented by the Cuban revolution and the OLAS, which involves, regardless of the forms, working as an integral part of the OLAS. . . ."

Given such a perspective and one so vigorously affirmed ("integration into . . ."), isn't it necessary to *bring all our analyses and positions up to date in light of and as a function of such an undertaking?*

For in the last analysis, what was the situation in Latin America in April 1969, when this resolution was adopted by the Ninth World Congress?

Of course it's true that the historical gains of the Cuban revolution were still in evidence. There's no need to go over this again. Just one example: the resolutions on the Latin American revolution supported by the Cuban leaders at the OLAS conference constituted a fundamental step forward and are not being called into question here—especially this fundamental declaration:

"For the proletariat and the best revolutionary cadres of the left, this means carrying out an anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution and transforming it into a socialist revolution."

This indicates a real understanding of the Latin American revolutionary process as a process of permanent revolution.

Well before 1969, however, there were numerous signs that should have induced much more *caution* and reflection.

First of all, in Cuba itself the economic situation was far from sound. From 1961 to 1966, the average annual per capita growth in the Gross National Product was 2 percent a year, and from 1966 to 1968 there was no

increase. This rhythm is quite insufficient and has *consequences that are largely inevitable* in a country whose initial underdevelopment was so great: deterioration of relations with the masses; dangers of bureaucratization in the long run; and, in the short run, growing dependence on the Soviet Union—that is, a strengthening of the Soviet bureaucracy's grip on the life of the country.

Consequences such as these are not mechanically determined, but the lack of soviet-type bodies, the lack of effective participation of the masses at every level of the decision-making process (which has been denounced many times by the International), and the very lack of a CP with even the slightest degree of an organized structure should lead us to be doubly cautious.

Especially since there are serious and significant indications of a political turn linked to the growing direct or indirect weight accumulated by the Soviet bureaucracy. How else can you interpret Fidel Castro's startling declaration supporting the intervention in Czechoslovakia (which occurred six months before the Ninth World Congress)? How else can you interpret Fidel's initial declaration on the Peruvian regime, in which he spoke of the "revolutionary role" of the Peruvian army (three months before the Ninth World Congress)?

In Latin America, the resolution tells us, OLAS "has not developed any important degree of organization and . . . has not succeeded either in finding a solution to the problem of crystallizing and consolidating organized new vanguards." Quite a euphemism!

But in 1969, OLAS existed on paper in *Tricontinental* magazine and in a few offices in Havana, but that's all.

A good number of Castroist organizations had been destroyed or were in crisis; the guerrilla nuclei had been wiped out. It had already been a year and a half since Che had died in Bolivia.

For the most part these facts were known by the participants in the world congress, particularly by the supporters of the resolution on Latin America. But they were pushed off to the side a little and underestimated. They were mentioned but their consequences weren't analyzed. And above all, the resolution *forgot* them completely when it proposed "integration into the historic revolutionary current represented by the Cuban revolution and OLAS."

This wasn't done through any form of dishonesty, but because it was considered a secondary matter.

Such an underestimation is significant: it reflects and emphasizes *the main error—the overestimation of the ideological and political gains of Castroism, of the Cuban leadership, and of the Cuban current that had been embodied in a great number of organizations (usually ephemeral) in the four corners of Latin America since 1959.*

There's no question here of revising the analysis of the essential lessons of the Cuban revolution, of the remarkable turn it represented for the Latin American continent as a whole. Nor is it a question of taking up again either the important role it played in fueling the crisis of Stalinism, or the particular characteristics of the Cuban revolutionary leadership, a leadership that developed outside the framework of the "traditional" organizations of the workers movement. All this is part of the theoretical heritage—in the fullest sense of the term—of the Fourth International. Nor is it necessary to change our assessment of the important step in the recomposition of a genuine

Latin American (and world) revolutionary movement represented by Che's famous appeal from the mountains of Bolivia, and by the OLAS conference which, as we pointed out above, defined the Latin American revolution in terms of permanent revolution and engaged concretely in the practice of proletarian internationalism.

When we say there has been an overestimation of the ideological and political gains of Castroism, of the Cuban leadership, and of the Cuban current, *we are not calling all these things into question.* But starting from there, starting from the very real break with Stalinism that the Cuban revolution represented, the question we must ask ourselves is the following: *What type, what degree, and what form of a break with Stalinism?* This is a very complex question which, if it is to be approached in a fruitful way, involves an analysis—one that is much deeper than any made to date—of the Cuban revolutionary process since 1959, and of its relationship to the workers states as well as to the Latin American revolution. It is impossible to take up such an analysis within the limited framework of this document, but opening up a discussion along these lines is today an indispensable task. *It is an indispensable element for elaborating a strategy for the Latin American revolution.* We don't criticize the Ninth World Congress resolution for not developing such an analysis. At that time the task would have been even more difficult than it is today inasmuch as the underlying tendencies—which were already discernible in 1969—have only taken on specific characteristics since then. It's significant, moreover, that the comrades of the "minority" didn't really raise these questions at the time.

But, and this we repeat, the error at that time was to have totally neglected such tendencies, to have actually considered as resolved—and even as resolved in the most positive possible way—the questions that are posed so sharply today . . . while projecting instead "integration into the historic revolutionary current represented by the Cuban revolution."

And beginning from here, with this central question, with the overestimation of the subjective factor represented by Castroism in that period, a whole series of errors was to flow; these errors weren't all of the same importance but they were consistent. We will see how this was so by analyzing them one after another.

II. The Underestimation of Reformism

The first of these errors was to be an underestimation of the possibilities for the development and revival of different forms of "reformism," which seemed to be excluded as much by the example and impact of the Cuban revolution as by the sharpening contradictions within the objective situation. . . .

But the rise of reformism—under very distinct forms, it's true—is one of the fundamental facts of the situation in Latin America today.

This should not be seen as an indication of important changes in the facts of the objective situation; a genuine reformist project of any prolonged duration is still hardly credible, given the character of the social contradictions and their degree of explosiveness, linked as they are to the imperialist exploitation of the continent and to the local bourgeoisie's thin margin for economic maneuver

that flows from this.

This is a fundamental point that should—perhaps in another document—be developed extensively.

How then are we to understand this rise, this revival, of reformism?

First of all a distinction should be made between two things that are radically different but are nonetheless often confused in the somewhat "catch-all" category of reformism: this is the distinction between "bourgeois reformism," whose prototype could be the Peruvian military regime or even—in an appreciably different context—the Frei regime in Chile between 1964 and 1970; and reformism in the sense that it is understood in the workers movement.

This "bourgeois reformism" *has nothing to do with reformism except the name*. What is involved here is actually the product of the evolution of imperialist politics vis-à-vis the Latin American continent. In several articles this has been called the "new policy of imperialism" (cf. Ernest Mandel, *Quatrième Internationale*).

The tendency toward an increase in foreign investments in the modern, dynamic industrial sectors, relegating the traditional sectors of imperialist exploitation (plantations and the extraction of raw materials, in particular) to a secondary place, involved important changes in the relative composition of the ruling classes. Most importantly, it gave a preponderant role to the industrial bourgeoisie at the expense of the traditional oligarchic sectors.

What is called "bourgeois reformism" is in fact simply the political line carried out by these new ruling bourgeois sectors as a function of their interests. And their interests are just as inextricably linked with the interests of imperialism as those of their predecessors ever were, even if the forms of the relationship have changed quite a bit. . . .

Here's one example, among others, of the economic and political logic of these new sectors: the necessity of obtaining capital, which is linked to the necessity of developing (however slightly) the domestic market in order to give a more solid foundation to an industrial development that is in very large part focused on exports, has led to pressure for agrarian reform—of a partial character, obviously, and wholly along capitalist lines. But it's precisely this agrarian reform that has allowed a certain demagogic reformism to develop.

In reality, however, this so-called bourgeois reformism should not be allowed to create illusions and must be taken for what it actually is: *an important, often decisive element of imperialist domination, an element that is structurally linked to this domination*.

In this sense, while we should expect new developments on the part of this "bourgeois reformism" in the years ahead, we should not, however, overestimate its consequences. As an element of imperialist exploitation it can neither break the laws nor depart from the framework of the system. *The dependent character of the Latin American economies will not be fundamentally modified*. The implications of this dependence—the narrowness of the social bases of the regimes concerned and the explosiveness of the social contradictions, among other things—will have no less force.

The illusions engendered by this sort of developments have nonetheless fueled a veritable renaissance of reformist currents *within the workers movement*.

Although the Ninth World Congress resolution outlined

an initial analysis of this "new policy" of imperialism, *it in no way envisioned such a consequence*. And for a good reason.

The rebirth of reformist currents within the Latin American workers movement was not automatically implied in such an evolution. A clear position on the part of the Cuban leadership, on the part of the Castroist current, would undoubtedly have been a decisive element militating against such a rebirth.

On the contrary, however, the Cuban leaders' empiricism, combined with their justified desire to break through Cuba's isolation in Latin America, led them to adopt confused and ambiguous positions that often go so far as to offer support when confronted with regimes representing this new orientation (such as in Peru or in Panama)—not to mention their scarcely veiled backing to the Uruguayan military or to the new Peronist regime, a quite specific variant within this general framework.

In the meantime, in the highly specific context of Chile, the experience of the Popular Unity government was under way, an experience that can hardly be transposed to other contexts in Latin America because there is no other workers movement as well organized as the one in Chile.

But here again, the Cuban leaders' highly favorable attitude toward the Allende government, combined with relentless international propaganda on the part of the Stalinists around the theme of the possibility of a peaceful path to socialism, was decisive in favoring the rebirth of reformism over the last two or three years.

The conjuncture of all these factors, as well as the absence of any consistent alternative revolutionary pole, *at a time when we were witnessing, as we have seen, a significant upsurge in struggles*, compels us to consider reformism—and particularly its Stalinist component, which is organized on a continental scale—as a central problem. *A lasting recomposition of one form of reformism or another within the Latin American workers movement would serve as a considerable brake on the development and implantation of revolutionaries. One of the high-priority tasks for Latin American revolutionary Marxists is to carry out a merciless struggle against such a perspective*.

This complete underestimation of "workers" reformism and of its possibilities for developing, which is mainly a consequence of politically overestimating Castroism, *actually accentuated the implications of such an overestimation insofar as the precise orientation of members of the International is concerned*.

III. A Revolutionary Breakthrough in the Near Future?

There is an idea, a conviction, that is never quite made explicit in the document, although it is there implicitly from beginning to end. This is the notion of *the possibility of a rapid breakthrough of a revolutionary process in Latin America*, the snapping of one or another of the weakest links in the imperialist chain shackling the continent, to use an image in vogue at the time.

Several aspects of the Ninth World Congress discussion on Latin America embodied this notion; the same is true of the written debate in preparation for the congress. It's sufficient to reread Comrade Maitan's contribution entitled "An Insufficient Document" to become convinced of this.

It is clear that this perspective of a rapid breakthrough was *incorrect*. We have seen in the previous section how the lull Latin America experienced was superficial and limited. But the perspective for a revolutionary victory *in the near future* is no more valid today than it was in 1969. This is true for both Argentina and Chile, and there in particular the mobilization of the masses must not be permitted to conceal a decisive fact: the absence of a genuine revolutionary movement rooted in the working class, and the absence of a revolutionary leadership recognized by the broad masses.

How did such an error occur in our evaluation of the situation? It wasn't because of an incorrect analysis of the objective facts. The resolution's assessment of the underlying economic tendencies, of the cumulative character of imperialist exploitation, of the dynamic and the role of the social classes, and of the explosive character of their contradictions was and remains essentially *correct*. Several of the points it touched upon should be clarified and made sharper, but the general tendencies it emphasized have been largely confirmed by the facts or have grown even deeper.

If an error of this sort has been committed in evaluating the situation, it's because there has been an overestimation of the subjective revolutionary factors. And the implications of this overestimation are all the more significant for the fact that they have occurred in an objective context of explosive contradictions.

And here we come up against the problem of the Castroist current once again. For in the case in question, the overestimation of subjective factors was much more of a *political* overestimation than a physical or organizational one.

This last aspect should certainly not be neglected—far from it. We have seen that the resolution projected "integration" into OLAS, although this organization already no longer existed, that is, if it ever did exist beyond its founding conference. And apart from the Castroist current, there can be no doubt that there was also an overestimation of the capacities and organizational realities of the International's own organizations. We will see further on what this meant in the case of Bolivia.

But what is involved above all is a political overestimation, a political overestimation once again of the current that emerged from the Cuban revolution.

IV. A Possible Strategy?

To be more precise, what the resolution revealed is a belief in the desire and capability of the Cuban leadership, and of the current that adheres to this leadership, to take advantage of these explosive conditions and make a socialist revolution, as was the case in Cuba.

Insofar as their *desire* is concerned, in 1969 there could be no doubt that it was real, on the part of both the Cuban leadership and the organizations affiliated with it. The Castroist current is an authentic revolutionary current.

It's *capability* is a different question. Contrary to what the Cuban leadership and the Castroists in general may believe, the Cuban process as such will *never* be repeated in Latin America. It was a product of exceptional circumstances, and its victory modified the objective conditions of the political situation in Latin America. The army, the local bourgeoisie, and the imperialists all drew the lessons

from it. This has been said many, many times, and by the International itself. Why then the failure to draw out all the consequences? Why not begin the necessary polemic with the Castroist comrades who, *mutatis mutandis* [taking into account their respective differences], *for the most part believed in the possibility of a repetition of the Cuban process and worked toward it?*

In fact, a polemic of this sort against the Castroist strategy—and not only against its most exaggerated aspects, as set forth by Debray—should have been one of the central points of the resolution on the International's strategy in Latin America. Instead of and in place of this, we find a few indirect or timid criticisms, the rather abstract reaffirmation of fundamental theoretical points, such as the necessity of "the existence and functioning (!) of the revolutionary party" and the necessity of work in the mass movement based on transitional demands. This is of course correct, but it is totally insufficient.

Nowhere in the resolution are our differences with Castroist strategy and concepts *clearly* pointed out. *Nowhere is it clearly stated that DESPITE THE EXPLOSIVE OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS, such a strategy and such concepts CANNOT LEAD TO A REVOLUTIONARY VICTORY.*

Nowhere does it draw even the skimpiest balance sheet—not a word, not a sentence—of the defeat of the FALN in Venezuela, of the crushing of the Peruvian guerrillas, of Che's tragic Bolivian adventure, or of the many other more modest and less well known ones.

Nowhere is it set down in black and white that to send a dozen or so revolutionaries with arms and ammunition off from some point on the Caribbean coast—which has been done many, many times—in order to initiate guerrilla warfare in nearby mountains is perhaps admirable, but totally absurd from the point of view of politics. Hundreds of young revolutionary militants in Latin America have paid for this at the price of their lives—and with almost no results.

In 1968-69, this was still one of the central questions of the revolutionary movement. Don't forget the fact that—as the resolution noted quite correctly—"on the level of ideological and political influence the Castroist current remains by far the strongest."

It was also a central question because of the fact that in the new vanguard generations of that period it was widely believed that such a strategy, if trimmed of its excessive aspects—could lead to victory.

In this regard, it's sufficient to recall the kind of commentaries that were made at the time of Che's death. The main explanation given for the defeat didn't focus on the project in general and how incorrect it was, but instead on two aspects which, while they were of course important, were simply consequences of the initial errors: that is, the link with the Bolivian CP and the fact that the guerrilla nucleus found itself in an area that was both thinly populated and lacking in a tradition of struggle.

In the same way, we should also recall the complete lack of criticism of the Argentine comrades of the PRT (Combatiente) when they launched, at about the same time as the world congress, a political operation whose incorrectness should have been apparent to anyone with the slightest familiarity with the situation in Argentina—that is, their formation of a guerrilla nucleus in the north-

ern part of the country, in the Tucumán-Salta region. It's true that there's a rural proletariat there, employed in a sugar-producing area. But it's such a marginal—and declining!—sector of Argentine society, especially in comparison with the millions of industrial workers whose traditions of struggle are well known. As it turned out, almost all the organization's cadres and resources were invested in this orientation, which was quickly revealed to be a dead end, obliging the comrades to make significant adjustments. Worse yet, at the time the project was considered to be quite logical: the area in which the guerrilla warfare was going to take place was not far from the Bolivian border, the Bolivian comrades were soon going to launch an armed struggle, the two would become linked together, and Che's former project was going to be accomplished under the banner of the Fourth International . . . The irony was bitter . . . And one could take other examples.

Actually, the problem consisted precisely in *HAVING CONSIDERED THE CUBAN STRATEGY A POSSIBLE STRATEGY, AS A STRATEGY CAPABLE OF LEADING TO VICTORY*, at a time when the Cuban revolution itself had profoundly changed the conditions of struggle.

And in having considered it as such despite all its weaknesses and inconsistencies. Despite the fact that it underestimated and at times even ignored the role of the industrial proletariat and the cities; despite the fact that it actually ignored the problem of building the revolutionary organization; despite the fact that it underestimated ideological factors, such as, for example, the way in which the masses of a country conceive of their situation at a given moment.

Despite the Castroists' obvious overestimation of the *military relationship of forces* and of one aspect in particular of this relationship of forces—*guerrilla warfare*.

This was to have two consequences in relation to the strategy the International adopted in regard to Latin America.

V. The Overestimation of the Military Relationship of Forces and of Guerrilla Warfare

The first is that following in the footsteps of this "*possible strategy*," the strategy the International was to adopt, involved the International itself in an overestimation of the military relationship of forces, and of one particular aspect of the latter—*guerrilla warfare*. After having correctly reaffirmed—as the resolution does—the concepts the vanguard should have of its role in the period Latin America was then experiencing, it was incorrect and dangerous to write that "technical preparation cannot be conceived merely as one of the aspects of the revolutionary work, but as the fundamental aspect on a continental scale. . . ."

This is exactly what militants in the Castroist organizations said, and this is what they did in actual practice. The essential aspect was in 1969, is today, and will be for a long time, the battle to build a genuine revolutionary party and to root it in the working and peasant masses. It must be a combat party, one capable of audacious vanguard actions, one that prepares itself very rapidly, even when it's still no more than a small group, for

the inevitable necessity of armed activities and actions, whether they be offensive or defensive, whether they be reprisals, and whether they take place during mass mobilizations or in periods where there is no mass mobilization. This is elementary. Perhaps. But it's not yet part of the theoretical heritage of the Latin American vanguard. The battle is still to be carried out . . . against the Castroists, on the one hand . . . but also against all the "massists" on the continent and against our Leninist-Trotskyist comrades, whose concept of a "combat" party has—if one judges by the parties they are building in Latin America—very little to do with such a definition.

The overestimation of rural guerrilla warfare is patently clear since, according to the resolution, it was to be the "principal axis" of armed struggle for an entire period. It's quite probable that rural guerrilla warfare would become the axis of the struggle here or there, but it's most likely that this would occur at a later stage of the struggle, on the basis of an already consolidated—to however minimum a degree—implantation of the revolutionary organization in the countryside.

Given a revolutionary crisis entailing a major confrontation between the forces of reaction and the revolutionary forces, a confrontation in which the latter is defeated, it is quite conceivable that guerrilla warfare would be seen as a strategy for defensive countermeasures at first, and for offensive countermeasures later on. But in the present period there's no basis of any substance for talking about a principal axis in any of the essential countries in Latin America. This is simply an additional and incorrect concession to Castroism.

VI. The Problem of the Front

We have seen that the resolution proposed a strategy of entering into a common front with the organizations belonging to OLAS, that it was even posed as a question of integration into OLAS.

Apart from the problems already pointed out above, the very concept of a front implied in the resolution poses a problem.

With what perspectives should revolutionary Marxists integrate themselves into such a front, and what form should this integration take?

The resolution is singularly silent on this decisive point. In fact, the concept of a front that comes across in the document is that of a stable front, based on a certain division of labor that would take into account the past history, and the political and organizational traditions and inclinations of the participating organizations. Furthermore, all of this was envisioned under a relatively long-term perspective.

This amounts to saying that given a front conceived of in these terms, the fundamental problem of political debate takes on a secondary importance. However, such a front could provide a perfect framework for a political and organizational battle to gain political influence, to win over sectors dominated or influenced by Castroism, which still had hegemony at the time.

Although this was an *essential* and decisive question, it was only mentioned by way of allusion.

This is consistent with the positions in regard to Castroism: a current whose evolution should be pushed toward

better worked-out, more advanced positions that are closer to revolutionary Marxism, and not a current whose influence should have been vigorously disputed.

This incorrect concept of a front with the Castroists should not be allowed to conceal an *essential* point from us today: that it was correct to envision carrying out work in a front with organizations affiliated with Castroism—the ELN [Ejército de Liberación Nacional—National Liberation Army (the guerrilla force led by Che Guevara)] in Bolivia, for example. The very fact that such a possibility was open, regardless of the conjunctural ups and downs, represented an important step forward for the International on the entire continent, a step whose importance it would be incorrect to underestimate today.

But this did not necessarily imply such a static and, in the last analysis, opportunistic concept of internal relations within the front. Because when seen in these terms, the front, which should have provided a favorable framework for building and developing the organization, lost its most important aspect.

VII. The Problems of the Organizations: Some Fundamental and Crucial Questions that Were Almost Totally Ignored

One of the most significant criticisms that must be made of the Ninth World Congress resolution is that it didn't take into account the real situation of the International and of the sections on this continent. It's true of course that the final lines of the resolution actually amount to four pieces of advice, which are certainly not incorrect but which are inadequate. These lines state that if revolutionary Marxist organizations really want to translate such an orientation into practice, they "*must*" . . . build "more solid organizational structures on the basis of substantial political homogeneity" . . . adopt "methods of work corresponding to the necessities of a struggle conducted under conditions of repression and strict clandestinity" . . . combine "tactical flexibility with firmness in criteria" and, finally, attain better coordination on a continental scale.

A reading, even if it doesn't go between the lines, of the last paragraph of the last section of the resolution indicates quite simply that:

1) The organizational structures of the sections are not suitable for the orientation projected.

2) The political homogeneity of the sections leaves so much to be desired that it may call into question their capacity to put such an orientation into practice.

3) Their methods of work must be totally readjusted to the new conditions involved in the orientation adopted.

The problem does not lie so much in the organizational reality of the Latin American sections at the time of the Ninth World Congress. After all, it's basically through the practical application of an orientation that one builds an adequate organization.

The problem lies in *having believed and having led others to believe* that three or four pieces of advice at the end of a resolution were sufficient to resolve the question. And in this sense the resolution was organizationally—and thus politically—irresponsible. And don't the four years that have gone by justify—as the Bolivian

example has shown—the severity of such a judgment?

What would have been indispensable at that time was not an enumeration of weaknesses combined with advice for remedying them, but rather an effort to *define, in collaboration with the sections*—and on the basis of a much more precise analysis of their real situation—the *axes and stages of a political line aimed at overcoming these weaknesses and at aiding the sections in their development into such organizations.*

It would be too easy to object to this on the basis of the International's weakness in terms of cadres and resources.

Even in the context of the International's limited resources, at the time of the Ninth World Congress it would have been quite possible to carry out such fundamental tasks as opening a debate with the Argentine comrades on the concepts that had already been put forth in their Fourth Congress document ("El Unico Camino" ["The Only Road"]); as well as envisioning, along with the Bolivian section, the implications for the organization—especially the enormous pressure—that would unfailingly result from their work in a front with the ELN (a group powerfully aided by the Cuban workers state and enhanced by Che's prestige).

In actual fact, however, if this wasn't done, if the resolution only mentioned this sort of problem in an elliptical fashion, it's because it was considered a secondary matter. Why?

Here again, at least in the two examples cited, it's because the gap that separates the Castroist currents from revolutionary Marxism was largely underestimated, and therefore the problems posed by our relationship with this Castroist current were likewise underestimated.

But also, and this is an important element, because the real situation of certain sections of the International in Latin America wasn't really known and understood.

In fact, and let's not overlook this, at the time of the Ninth World Congress there were only two sections that were really organized and that were of significant size: the Bolivian section and the Argentine section. Everywhere else the sections consist of no more than small nuclei of militants with little in the way of organizational structure, some of whom have experienced a number of important developments—as in Mexico—but that's all.

Thus, when the Ninth World Congress orientation was adopted, it concerned these two countries above all. But in the case of Bolivia, for example, what sort of problem was posed for the section there? On what points should a discussion have been initiated? And what elements of a reply could have been furnished?

VIII. The Importance of the Weaknesses and the Organizational Liabilities in Regard to the Tasks Outlined: The Bolivian Example

In Bolivia, Trotskyism—and more precisely the Bolivian section—has a rich past. Several of its leaders and a certain number of its militants are tested working-class cadres who have a real influence wherever they intervene, especially in the trade-union movement. There can be no doubt about the fact that the POR is known in the working class as a component of the Bolivian workers movement.

But while this was sufficient for a leadership like that of the POR to have become the vanguard in the struggle against Lora and the Lambertists, against Posadaism and Posadas when the latter was still rampant in the ranks of the International, was it also sufficient for drawing all the lessons and understanding all the implications of a turn like the one made at the Ninth World Congress—all this in a country like Bolivia, where the traditions of struggle are considerable, but where the effects of economic underdevelopment, with all its social, cultural and, finally, political implications, are also considerable, and where the isolation in regard to the rest of the continent likewise exercises a significant influence?

In actual fact, in 1969 the POR was still and above all an organization whose methods and structure were characterized by *propagandism*. In the trade unions, the militants of the POR appeared as cadres and enjoyed a real audience. But this audience *did not imply that our comrades were genuinely rooted in an organized way*. Furthermore, there was just about as much delimitation of an organized current of sympathizers as there was an implantation of the party.

The party was vague about its limits and its structure. According to the leadership itself, the dividing line between sympathizer and member had never been clearly defined. A militant of the COB [Confederación Obrera Boliviana—Bolivian Workers Confederation] working with this or that comrade of the POR in trade-union activity could be considered a member of the party without ever having attended a party meeting. Many more examples of this sort could be given.

What were the consequences of such a state of affairs?

First of all, the Bolivian section *never* really put into practice the orientation it had set for itself.

This doesn't mean that it never did anything, and that what it did do was incorrect. The entire section devoted to Bolivia in Germain's document ["In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International"] as well as the resolution adopted at the last International Executive Committee meeting ("Bolivia—Results and Perspectives," *IIDB*, Vol. 10, No. 6, April 1973) discussed the activity of the POR at some length. We won't go back over this in any detail. But if we return to this resolution from the last IEC meeting, we find that it says: "After the death of Guevara, the POR, in contact with the International, decided on an orientation of relaunching armed struggle, while recognizing the lessons of the defeat. This orientation was completed at the time of the Ninth World Congress" [p. 10].

If it did indeed decide on such an orientation, when and where did it put it into practice? The answer suggested by the resolution itself is: *never*. Furthermore, every discussion with the POR comrades leads to the same conclusion. Two facts permit an understanding of such a state of affairs: first, the objective conditions—that is, the wave of repression of 1969, combined with the difficulties of putting into practice the alliance with the ELN. But—and this point should not be neglected—there were also internal, *subjective* difficulties linked to the nature of the POR. Relaunching armed struggle in Bolivia after the death of Che and within the framework of an alliance with the ELN implied a confrontation with a repressive apparatus—both police and military—established by the

imperialists, an apparatus that had just furnished proof of a certain effectiveness. It therefore implied—at a minimum—an organization structured along precise lines and having a substantial clandestine apparatus at its disposal. The POR was far from being this kind of organization.

It also implied an organization capable of carrying out an extensive battle against the concepts of the ELN, the very concepts that had led Che to his downfall. But the militants of the POR had no tradition of political debate, had held no congresses for several years, had no structure for educating their cadres, and were thus for the most part incapable of carrying out such a political battle.

To the contrary, several militants, among them those who had received a certain amount of military training, joined the ELN. To them, the ELN seemed more effective because it was "technically" better equipped and organized . . .

Somewhat later, according to the resolution on Bolivia adopted at the last IEC meeting, the POR "quickly understood the change in the situation, which it analyzed in a series of documents" [p. 10]. This refers to Ovando's turn toward reformist politics in the last months of his regime, but above all to Torres's coming to power.

From that time on, the question of armed struggle was no longer posed in the same terms. One of the merits of the POR is the fact that they understood this right away, but even more important is the fact that they analyzed the limits of this turn by the Bolivian military, as well as the inevitability of new confrontations in the near future.

And here, contrary to the comrades of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency, the essential criticism that must be made of the POR is not that they underestimated the possibilities for legal work in the mass movement that were made possible by the unstable period of the Torres regime, by the Popular Assembly, etc. It did carry out this work in the trade unions, in the peasant associations, at the university and even, in a different context, in the Popular Assembly. It won some influence there. But this work was seen in far too propagandistic a fashion, that is, as involving the presentation and the defense of the POR's analyses without offering concrete alternatives through initiatives in action. This is at least the impression given by the party's activity in La Paz in the spring of 1971, and it's also the impression that emerges quite clearly from a reading of their publications of that period.

Moreover, while the POR was, and this we repeat, the only Bolivian revolutionary organization to correctly analyze the inevitability of a military coup, it found itself—like all the other organizations—disarmed when actually confronted by the coup; disarmed both literally and figuratively.

Its militants and leaders frequently displayed a heroic attitude during the dramatic hours of the coup, leading resistance columns or the nuclei of such columns when and where they could, and forming them wherever their influence among the masses permitted. For example, Tomás Chambi, the leader of a peasant union in the La Paz district, organized a small column of armed peasants in the streets of the capital in the early hours of the coup.

But actions like this, which reflect the leadership capacity and the courage of a comrade, cannot replace

the centralized and coordinated activity of a political party. And the POR did not react to the Banzer coup the way a structured organization could have. Had it done so, it is highly unlikely that it could have done anything to change the outcome of the coup. But it might have spared the useless sacrifice of militants and sympathizers, and above all it would have permitted the organization to have continued to function underground afterwards.

To the contrary, after the coup the POR, its leaders, and its members found themselves dispersed, cut off from contact with each other, the target of fierce repression, and totally powerless. It was to take more than a year to reestablish some of the lines of communication that were cut that day . . . with the profound demoralization of a number of militants and even leaders thrown in for good measure.

Thus, insofar as the problems posed for the organizations were concerned, the reality was much more complex than that suggested by the last few lines of the Ninth World Congress resolution. Even in the case of Bolivia, which at the time appeared to be exemplary. Isn't this the country where the International had the means for realizing a significant breakthrough, for giving concrete proof to the Castroist currents of its capacities for intervention?

It's easy to smile about this today. *AND NEVERTHELESS, THE NOTION WAS CORRECT IN MANY OF ITS ASPECTS:* it was correct to seek to give the Latin American vanguard practical proof of the capacities of revolutionary Marxists; it was correct for the Fourth International to take concrete action in a context as symbolic as that of Bolivia; and it was correct to consider that the traditions of Trotskyism within the Bolivian workers movement were a powerful trump card. But this by itself was not sufficient.

By overlooking, or rather by failing to foresee the problem actually posed there—the problem of the transition of an essentially propagandistic organization (like the Bolivian organization) into an organization capable of assuming the tasks imposed on it by the period—the Fourth International in a certain fashion halted in mid stream in regard to Latin America. After having correctly established the framework permitting an understanding of the tasks of the hour for revolutionary Marxists, the resolution left this essential problem to the side. By doing this it opened up a useful and salutary crisis in a Trotskyist movement that up until that time hadn't really raised these crucial problems, but it didn't provide this movement with any means for resolving it.

June 1973

The Evolution of the Liga Comunista (Formerly Encrucijada Tendency)

By LCR Members Belonging to the Majority Tendency

Note: The limited length of this document prevents us from presenting in a detailed way to the whole of the International reality of the LCR [Liga Comunista Revolucionaria — Revolutionary Communist League] and the ETA (VI) [Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna — Basque Nation and Freedom]. A reading of the resolutions of our Second Congress and the Sixth Assembly of the ETA, as well as the respective magazines (*Combate*, *Comunismo*, *Berriak* and *Zutik*) can help overcome this. In separate supplements to *Quatrième Internationale* [French-language organ of the International Executive Committee] the documents of previous congresses have been published, as well as in the *Bulletin de Sociologie Internationale* No. 2, published by the French comrades. These documents, although insufficient, will give a much clearer and more real picture of the LCR than do the caricatures of the LC (Encrucijada) or some representatives of the international minority.

1. The tendency debate that developed in the LCR from May to December of 1972 and that wound up with the split of the La Liga en la encrucijada [The League at the crossroads] tendency, which is today called the Liga Comunista, has great importance for the international debate that is presently under way. This is true not only because it gave rise to two organizations, one that looks to the international majority and one to the minority, but also because the rapid rightist evolution of the former Encrucijada tendency — today the LC — in a context of a maturing pre-revolutionary situation within Spain allows us to analyze from a particularly interesting point of view the implications of some of the positions defended by the international minority. Another aspect is that Comrade Andres of the SWP took a pretty direct part in the split of Encrucijada, endorsing methods of political and organizational paralysis that now threaten to extend themselves to the International as a whole.

To make known the extent of the debate between tendencies that developed in the LCR we have chosen the document that the former En Marcha [Underway] tendency presented to the IEC [International Executive Committee] in December of 1972. It follows this introduction. There are two kinds of reasons for publishing this document that is already nine months old. On the one hand, it has proven to be a good characterization of the former Encrucijada tendency at the moment of its split from the LCR; its intervention in the class struggle and its political evolution are consistent with the characterization we made last December. On the other hand, making a new political characterization of the present LC is very difficult for a very simple reason: although the LC has gone through an intense tendency fight and the split of

a Lambertist faction; although it held a congress more than three months ago that should have established its political positions with precision, there is still no public LC document that draws a balance sheet of this period or that makes known the resolutions of its congress. We have been forced to limit ourselves to an analysis of documents produced in internal debates, to the report of the comrade from the majority who attended its congress, to its irregular political magazine, and to its very weak intervention in the class struggle.

These things have inclined us toward writing an introduction in which we intend to describe the organizational evolution of the present LC, its intervention in the two most important struggles that have developed in Spain (San Adrian and Pamplona), and the political evolution that is recorded in its internal documents and its congress.

First we want to summarize the principal episodes from the time of the last IEC meeting until the present LC.

2. Almost immediately after the IEC meeting the Encrucijada tendency split. This split had been prepared by a long series of violations of democratic centralism, violations of the norms of functioning that had been previously adopted, either at the First Congress of the LCR or at subsequent Central Committee meetings with the agreement of both tendencies. The formal pretext for the split was a disagreement about the number of delegates to the Second Congress that the Encrucijada tendency was entitled to. The Encrucijada tendency was in a minority by a small margin, and it wanted to increase its number of delegates by counting as full members some candidate members and a certain number of sympathizers, including some ex-members of the organization. When the En Marcha tendency disagreed, Encrucijada decided to proclaim itself the "majority of the Central Committee and of the organization." They appointed a new Political Bureau and new local leaderships, they set a new date for the congress (which later they themselves did not adhere to), and they allocated a new "representation" to that congress.

But more important than the above is determining the political nature of the tendency that was splitting from the LCR. According to the representative of the Encrucijada tendency at the IEC and their good defender Comrade Andres, this tendency was a homogeneous tendency formed around documents that had appeared a few days before and which had a majority within the LCR.

According to us, it was a heterogeneous tendency that had a Lambertist wing within it. This wing developed out of the search for a "complete coherency for the positions of

Encrucijada. The development of this wing had provoked a crisis within the old tendency and led to the appearance of a "new Encrucijada." The "new Encrucijada" did not make any fundamental changes in its political positions, but it excluded the Lambertist leaders. We backed up these assertions by pointing to a series of discussions and regroupments within the LCR and to an internal document—in the discussion of which Comrade Andres took part—that included a plan of action by the "new Encrucijada" against the Lambertist wing, but within a common fight against the En Marcha tendency. What happened after the split, in particular the rapid "official" appearance of the Lambertist tendency and the sharp debate that led to its expulsion, allows us to go even further in this characterization. Those who split from the LCR were more than a heterogeneous tendency; they were a faction—with its own democratic centralism, its own discipline, and its own tendencies. The majority wing of this faction was grouped around the documents of Encrucijada, the ones we criticized at the IEC. The minority wing was a Lambertist-type tendency with positions and documents not known within the LCR. The continuity in the leaders of the former "clandestine tendency" and the latter Lambertist split give even more weight to this interpretation.

3. Six months passed after the split of Encrucijada before the congress of the LC was held—ignoring the period of time established by the United Secretariat, which Encrucijada had promised to respect. During this period the circle practices were prolonged and there was no systematic intervention by Encrucijada in the class struggle. This developed to the point that the only central campaign of Encrucijada—at a time of the renewal of collective contracts, of increasingly harsh repression by the dictatorship, which imposed stiff sentences to workers and vanguard fighters, and the continuing U.S. bombing of Vietnam—was a collection of money and the distribution of a pamphlet entitled *Managua, the Earthquake, the Rich and the Poor* . . . one month after the famous earthquake. Its political magazine was even later in appearing than the irregular frequency that presently characterizes it. All this in the period when the conditions for that great mass explosions of San Adrian del Besos, and, later, Pamplona were being forged. The real situation of Encrucijada during these months is the best confirmation of certain political and organizational habits which we had repeatedly denounced within the LCR.

The combination of political heterogeneity and circleism in the split from the LCR confirms the analysis we made of the principal reason for the split that occurred at the end of 1972. The reason was not the considerable political differences, but rather the whole set of organizational deformations that led the leaders of the split to refuse to put their political positions to the test, accepting the framework of a democratic-centralist organization which intervened actively in the class struggle with the line of the majority of the LCR, and reacting in a candid fashion to the Lambertist tendency they themselves had contributed to creating. They chose instead to form a "united front" against the majority of the LCR and the Fourth International. Only after the split did the Encrucijada leaders openly take up the fight against Lambertism,

although they prolonged the circleism and relied on bureaucratic methods that even at the founding congress of the LC were rejected by a significant minority of the delegates. Later on the Lambertist split from Encrucijada fused with the tiny OT organization, which defends a pro-Nagy orientation.

These events put Comrade Andres and the minority tendency in an embarrassing position, since it is difficult to think that in their long organizational experience in the Trotskyist movement they could find arguments to justify the camouflaging of a Lambertist tendency in the LCR in order to hide it from the eyes of the International as a whole and their close collaboration with that tendency against the majority of the LCR and the Fourth International.

4. After the struggles of San Adrian but before the Pamplona general strike, the founding congress of the LC was held, after 14 months of debate and six months after the time recommended unanimously by the United Secretariat. Nevertheless, in spite of such a long debate, the congress had to be held without resolutions that were known to the delegates beforehand, voting only on the general orientation or the outline of resolutions, and leaving the Central Committee the task of elaborating the statutes (in spite of the strong criticisms that had been levelled against the statutes that had provisionally functioned in the LCR). Three months after the congress the resolutions still hadn't been made public.

No delegate from the LCR was invited to this congress in which other organizations which aren't Trotskyist were represented. The justification was apparently that we were "moving away from Trotskyism" and therefore couldn't be granted either an invitation or the right to address their congress, although we had granted Encrucijada these things at the Second Congress of the LCR. The birth of the LC ended the period during which both organizations presented themselves to the vanguard and the masses as the LCR. The change in the name formally recognized the change in the relationship of forces between the two former tendencies, Encrucijada and En Marcha. We were coming to be recognized not merely as the formal majority of the old organization, but as the only ones who were giving life to the initials LCR among the vanguard and the masses.

5. This fact is intimately linked to the intervention of the two organizations in the class struggle, mainly in San Adrian and Pamplona. An analysis of the attitude of the LC in these struggles will permit us to spell out the political significance of the LC in a more concrete fashion than in the document that we are presenting to the IEC.

During the struggle in San Adrian del Besos, the present LC and the Lambertist tendency still coexisted within the same organization. However, a whole series of political positions they adopted during the struggle at San Adrian are consistent with the ones that they later defended in the Pamplona General Strike, and because of this we think that they help to characterize the LC.

These two struggles show very well the level reached by the mass struggle in Spain after the Burgos military trials of 1970. Like Seat, Ferrol, and Vigo, these struggles are instances of generalized mass movements or general strikes

on a local scale that pull into combat diverse sectors of the population—students, neighborhood workers, etc., and that awaken important solidarity on a national scale. To support these mass explosions, trying to push forward their development and generalization to a national scale is one of the most important tasks of revolutionaries in preparing a Revolutionary General Strike that can overthrow the dictatorship and open a process of permanent revolution which can lead to the seizure of power by the proletariat.

During San Adrian the Encrucijada was, at least numerically, a far-left organization with real weight in Barcelona. Nevertheless, it adopted a purely propagandistic attitude—a few general leaflets—and an attitude of putting pressure on the CP-controlled Workers Commissions. In addition this pressuring was carried out in a weak and disconnected manner. The proof is that they did not accept our proposal for unity in action with other struggle organizations (college committees, neighborhood commissions, etc.) to push forward, in the coordinating body of the Workers Commissions a series of slogans on which there was common agreement. The LC lamentably wasted the opportunity to use its influence among the high school and college students to strengthen initiatives—demonstrations, pickets to extend the strikes, etc.—which in places like in the zone of San Adrian have found a wide echo (combative and defended demonstrations of workers, students . . .). The slogan of self-defense not only didn't even receive the shadow of an initiative by Encrucijada, but even in its propaganda, this slogan was only one more in the long list of tasks. Encrucijada neither understood nor emphasized the broad echo that the self-defense slogan evoked among the vanguard and mass sectors after the assassination of the worker Manuel Fernandez by the Francoist police. (Even representative members of the CP had to defend this slogan and make oral self-criticisms of their previous attitude.) In fact demonstrations were frequently surrounded by strong picket squads armed with molotov cocktails.

As for spreading the struggle geographically, the issue of *Combate* published by Encrucijada which contained the balance sheet of San Adrian broke with an old tradition of the LCR in carrying no information about solidarity actions on a nationwide scale. Nor did it carry any information about the activities of Encrucijada in this regard. This is not simply a literary change: it was a real reflection of the inactivity of Encrucijada in this sphere.

Immediately after these struggles the CP tried to relaunch the second meeting of the Assembly of Catalonia* in order for this reformist project to capitalize on the radicalization that had won broad layers of workers. Not one slogan, not one orientation came from Encrucijada.

It is not strange that the standing-committee of the Assembly of Catalonia's call for a meeting in a church in San Cugat on May Day to listen to the reading of a letter from the bishops and to peacefully break up afterwards would find Encrucijada completely disarmed. Its position was to not attend. But what alternative did they propose? None. But for the LC, the call for a demonstration by various groups of the far left—among them the LCR—did not merit any attention (was it because the demonstration was divisive?) in spite of the fact that it brought together 3,500 fighters (compared to the 8-9,000

who went to San Cugat).

The important struggles at Seat and Hispano Olivetti which developed at this time also didn't find much support or initiatives from the LC. All they did was to pressure inside the Workers Commissions, which the CP—afraid of things getting out of their hands—spent great efforts trying to prevent from meeting. Obstinate trying to bring the working class into the CP-controlled Workers Commissions, Encrucijada finds itself in the paradox of being able to carry out its tactic of pressuring the Workers Commissions only when the CP has no other choice but to call a meeting of the Workers Commissions, although it already may be late and opportunities are being wasted. Too high a price to pay for refusing to take initiatives in action, which the LC insist on equating with acts of "urban guerrillas"!

We can concede that the struggle in San Adrian caught Encrucijada by surprise (it wasn't for nothing that their phrase "to carry out the intervention at the rhythm of the debate" had become famous). It is certain that the existence of a Lambertist tendency inside the Encrucijada did not favor a decisive intervention in the class struggle. But their attitude during the Pamplona general strike—after their congress—confirms that their series of errors were not accidental but rather flowed from their general politics.

6. The intervention of the LC (Encrucijada) in the Pamplona general strike was a perfect illustration of the propagandism and the parasitism which we have referred to so many times. The state of the Workers Commissions in Pamplona—much weaker and more bureaucratized than in Barcelona, for example—condemned any tactic that was limited to exerting pressure within them to ineffectiveness.

In the face of the refusal of the Secretariat of the Workers Commissions to push forward activities in solidarity with the Motor Iberica workers, it was possible to take two roads: Either limit oneself to continue pressuring this bureaucracy or—without ceasing to do so—to center the weight of the organization's intervention on a mass response without subordinating oneself to the passivity of the leadership of the Workers Commissions. The first choice was the only activity of the LC. Our comrades of the ETA VI correctly chose to take the second road: They launched committees of support to Motor Iberica conceived of as a broadening of the Workers Commissions where these existed, or as temporary committees where there were no Workers Commissions. They played an important role in the holding of workers assemblies and in the committees for extending the strike. These committees came out of the factories and played a fundamental role in the results of the general strike. The comrades played a leading role in some of the committees elected by assemblies. They were also the principal advocates of the idea of creating a central strike committee, toward which they took the first steps by coordinating the elected committees (Imenasa . . .) with workers' representatives from other factories.

The LC not only did not play any role in these initiatives, but in their balance sheet of the Pamplona strike they have distorted them tremendously—without worrying about falling into obvious factual errors—accusing the ETA VI of contributing to the division (!) of the workers.

Is it in order to avoid "dividing" the workers that the LC does not say even one word about workers self-defense in their balance sheet, in spite of the confrontations that occurred with the police and in spite of the unsuccessful attempt by a picket squad to free the prisoners being held in the bull-fighting stadium?

The LC's intervention in Pamplona clearly shows that their condemnation of initiatives in action includes not only vanguard minority actions, but also mass actions which draw in significant sectors of workers if these actions are not seconded by the bureaucracy of the Workers Commissions.

In the organization of solidarity actions on a country-wide scale the activity of the LC was no different nor more intense. The results of its "pressure" on the bureaucracy of the Workers Commissions, in those localities where it took place, was also without effect. But on the other hand the criticisms of our supposed "minority activism" have proliferated, even though they have had to resort to distortion of the events. So they have criticized a commando action carried out against a branch of Motor Iberica by our Barcelona comrades without referring to the campaign of agitation developed by them. Nor did they mention the demonstration that these comrades initiated, nor that of the PCI-MCE [ultraleft Maoists] (who did not accept our proposals for unity in action). These were the only ones to take place in Barcelona. What did the LC propose? Pressuring the Workers Commissions.

7. We believe that these examples of San Adrian and Pamplona are sufficient to show how the political line of the LC has been concretized, the political line that we analyzed in the document presented to the IEC.

Nevertheless, from what we have found out about the LC from the comrade of the majority who attended their congress and from their internal documents, there are some rectifications that have to be made in this document that was written nine months ago. The evolution of the LC has apparently reached completion in the sense that there is greater homogeneity with the international minority—although there remain important differences such as the conception of the united front as a strategic axis. . . . As a result there has been a deepening in their rightist course that is concretized in important changes in their characterization of the period, of the crisis of Francoism and the orientation of revolutionaries in the face of it.

At the time of the split no explicit differences had emerged on these topics. The documents elaborated by the United Secretariat were the common reference points for both tendencies. One cannot say the same thing at this time.

The LC believes—as we do—that the Francoist dictatorship can only be overthrown if the mass movement is able to elevate itself to the form of a Revolutionary General Strike. The differences affect the characterization of the period that will open up with the defeat of the dictatorship. For the LC, this will be a democratic interregnum, presided over by democratic illusions that the CP will have been able to sow—at least momentarily—among the great masses. This will force the overall activity of revolutionary Marxists to be focused on the slogan of a Constituent Assembly (within which framework the attainment of the oppressed nationalities' right to self-determi-

nation should be introduced). This slogan is given a transitional character, or, at least the character of a key demand through which we have to pass before transitional slogans can have a mass audience. Here is how the comrades explain it in an internal bulletin: ". . . We will not tire of repeating that no matter what the number of soviets, at this moment there will not exist a revolutionary party sufficiently developed to take their leadership and to free, in one fell swoop, the great masses from the illusions that are mixed in with their democratic aspirations. This is what makes *mandatory* the most decisive struggle for complete and thorough-going political democracy: *All of which implies that, even from today, propaganda must tie the call for a Workers Government with a Constituent Assembly, elected by universal suffrage that is equal, direct, and secret, which is impossible without the total destruction of Francoism. No bourgeois or coalition government can guarantee the call for or actual meeting of such an assembly.* Only a Workers Government based on the organizations that have led the overthrow of the dictatorship can and should assume this responsibility."

The only possibility that the comrades seem to have in mind is that of a new 1931, in which the influence of the CP will play a fundamental role: "In order to put brakes on the thrust of the masses, it will not suffice for the CP to support a bourgeois government, as is proposed in the present "pact." The CP will have to participate in the government directly, through some governmental formula for coalition with the bourgeoisie. . . . In fulfilling this pledge the leadership of the CP will be able to base itself on the confidence that the enormous masses propelled into action by the fall of the dictatorship will give it. . . ."

The LC always guides itself by the framework of this exclusive hypothesis in which the revolutionary party will only complete its construction after the defeat of the dictatorship and will only then be able to lead the proletariat to power.

Our criticism of this analysis of the crisis of Francoism points out that there are three underestimations in it: a) of the level already reached by the mass movement and which it will reach in the Revolutionary General Strike that will defeat the dictatorship. In particular, it ignores the combined character of the mass radicalization, which combines in its struggles democratic and elementary demands as well as others which have a transitional content (self-defense, self-organization); b) it underestimates the crisis of Stalinism, expressed as much in the masses going beyond it in their actions as in its internal crisis; c) it underestimates the possibility for revolutionary Marxists to base itself on the new vanguard with a mass character in order to deepen these actions by the masses that go beyond Stalinism and propel them on a transitional dynamic.

As we see it, the confluence of these elements means that the period that will open after the overthrow of the dictatorship will see elements of *dual power* (councils, militias, etc.) appear from the very first moment, which revolutionaries must make every effort to extend and centralize until they are able to destroy the bourgeois state and institute a workers state. The transitional governmental slogan that is capable of helping the masses to take these steps cannot yet be decided with precision (a

Government of the Workers Commissions and elected committees, a Popular Assembly convoked through these elements. . .). That's why we have limited ourselves to defining this perspective through the propagandistic formula of a Workers Government, which we determine by means of its anticapitalist program and its basing itself on the mass organizations which will have carried out the defeat of the dictatorship (Workers Commissions, elected committees, militias, etc.). This does not totally exclude the possibility of variations in the relationship of forces—between classes, between the masses and bureaucratic apparatuses, between these, the new vanguard, and the revolutionary Marxists—which may force revolutionaries at a given moment to resort to the slogan of a Constituent Assembly. But in any case this slogan will be only an occasional one, within the broader context of a situation—more or less developed—of dual power. In other words, its significance will be completely different than that of a total demand for a democratic interregnum. Adopting the position of the LC not only presupposes putting oneself into a false perspective. It also means one is unable to take advantage of the revolutionary possibilities offered by the present situation, and that one works, in effect, for a relationship of forces that is less favorable to the proletariat.

If, as appears possible, this orientation of the LC is consolidated, it is obvious that this will mean its rightist course will deepen as is already indicated by a series of positions adopted by the LC since its split from the LCR. a) A turn in the characterization of the CP, which from "catastrophic" positions has changed into an underestimation of it; b) an identification of the Workers Commissions under the hegemony of the CP as the only possible framework for the expression of the combativity of the class (ignoring the contradictory significance of the breaks with these commissions), and as the exclusive place from which to carry out united-front activities; an ignorance of the phenomenon of the new vanguard which leads to a conception of the radicalization of the workers as homogeneous and gradual, and leads to systematically wasting opportunities to introduce more advanced slogans, such as self-defense; an erroneous characterization of the far left, whose main characteristic is seen as "adaptation to the CP . . . the left cover of the reformist apparatuses and an obstacle to the construction of the Party."

This is the overall picture of the changes in the LC's political orientation since the time we presented the document to the IEC. From them we can better understand the interventions in San Adrian and Pamplona which we have already described. Their loss of influence in the university movement is not unrelated to his, especially in Barcelona where the LC was an important force, and where it experienced the loss of an important part of its militants in this sector who, after losing their links with this sector, were recruited into the Lambertist tendency.

8. The perspectives for the evolution of the LC are thus the deepening of the rightist course that it embarked upon while still within the LCR. The greater homogenization with the theses of the international minority indicates the direction of this evolution although it is possible that important heterogeneities will continue to exist, originating as much from the state of the class struggle in

Spain as from the political positions of the LC itself (strategic united front conception of the Transitional Program) that have not been reabsorbed. In the organizational field it is not unlikely that pro-split positions in regard to the International will grow. This had already gathered some force at the time of the split but which the association with the international minority have temporarily attenuated.

We believe that the only possible way to prevent this degeneration would be the beginning of a process of fusion with the LCR which would facilitate a progressive closing of the differences in political line and in practical intervention. Naturally this process would take place within the framework, nationally and internationally, of a strict respect for democratic centralism. In order to facilitate it the LCR will take the initiative of constantly proposing unity in action in order to intervene in the class struggle. We will also propose the carrying out of joint discussions and the preparation of common balance-sheets of these experiences.

The coming fusion of the LCR and ETA VI will permit us to consider this process with greater possibilities for success. In fact, the political discussions and the process of unity in action between the two organizations, above all since the signing of the protocol accord of May 1973, have led to a situation where the Seventh Assembly of the ETA VI and the Third Congress of the LCR will discuss—and very possibly approve—the unification of the leaderships and central organs (Central Committee, Political Bureau, political magazine). The unified Central Committee shall be in charge of preparing the participation of the fused organization in the Tenth World Congress and a Spain-wide congress that will sanction the definitive fusion of the two organizations. We think this fusion will mark a qualitative leap forward in the building of the section of the Fourth International in Spain. This will make the fused organization the most important on the far left, not only numerically, but also because of the close links that will unite the new organization with the broader vanguard and the masses on a countrywide scale, and because of the attraction that this fusion will have among the vanguard, given the significance of the two organizations.

The political clarification and the strengthening of the international center that we hope will result from the Tenth World Congress will be of fundamental importance to the construction of the revolutionary party, which the Spanish working class needs more than ever in the twilight of Francoism. For our part, and to the extent of our possibilities, we will not squander the efforts that can allow us to advance in this direction. The request that we have made, that our contribution to the world debate presented to the IEC be published accompanied by this introduction, is an attempt to help this process to some degree.

September 15, 1973

* In the document that was presented to the IEC we defended the slogan "Bourgeois parties out of the Assembly of Catalonia." The considerations we put forth there explaining why the Workers Commissions could not be considered as the exclusive framework for united front activities are still correct. It is necessary for revolution-

ary Marxists to put forward positive proposals in the face of the problem of the Assembly of Catalonia and of the necessity to have coordinating bodies to concretely advance generalized struggles. But we did not take into account the programmatic framework which the Assembly of Catalonia has taken for itself, which is limited explicitly to democratic liberties within the framework of the 1932 Statute of Autonomy which the Second Republic conceded to Catalonia. Acceptance of this program is the precondition for belonging to or joining the assembly. Our po-

sition—which has been explained in *Combate* No. 15—is aimed at developing an ideological struggle against the Assembly of Catalonia and at proposing the building or consolidation of the coordinating bodies between the Workers Commissions, workers parties, and organizations of struggle of other popular sectors—students, teachers, etc.—which have already appeared, in an embryonic form, in the principal mass struggles, and particularly during San Adrian.

Sept. 15, 1973

In Defence of the Transitional Programme

By Rajnarayan Aryan

The declaration of the Leninist-Trotskyist tendency calls for a reversal of the Latin American guerrilla war orientation and of its projection in various fields geographically and programmatically. It calls for the approval of the general line of the document: "Argentina and Bolivia—the Balance Sheet." It reaffirms the need for a return to the method outlined in the Transitional Programme.

We are in total agreement with this line and extend our full support to the call. We must return to the path of the Transitional Programme before much damage is done to the movement.

The call of the majority of the United Secretariat, henceforth called the majority tendency, for approval of the line of the Ninth World congress, for an orientation towards "the new mass vanguard" for a correct intervention in mass struggles through initiatives in action of the vanguard, for armed struggle orientation and for the building of an international leadership, as explained by Comrade Germain in his "Defence of Leninism" (International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. X, No. 4, April 1973) requires comment and deserves ultimate rejection.

We are in agreement with the general line of the Ninth World Congress, even as explained by Comrade Germain in the said article. We are aware of the emergence of the new vanguard and are as anxious to link up with it as Comrade Germain is. We are no less interested in intervening in mass struggles which are developing. But we are opposed to "initiatives of action" based exclusively on the new "mass vanguard" and addressed to them, or in such initiatives taken with a view to "stimulating revolutionary dynamism." As for our intervention in mass struggles, we hold that they should be based on transitional demands and a united front of all the unions and organizations involved in the struggle. Lastly, we are opposed to the armed struggle orientation and cannot support the creation of an international leadership as an imposition on the movement.

I. The Latin American Turn of the Ninth World Congress—a political Accomodation

As mentioned before, we accept the general line of the Ninth World Congress and the two conclusions mentioned by Comrade Germain on page 40 of the IIDB Vol. X, No. 4, in his "Defence of Leninism." He claims that the Latin American resolution was but a specific application of the general line. This may be so in the eyes of Comrade Germain but it need not be so in the eyes of everyone else.

We are aware of the existence of new militant vanguards all over Latin America for some time past who were influenced by various guerrilla war strategists—Guevara,

Debray, etc.—for a long period but are regrouping and rethinking and turning to mass movements. We are eager to welcome them to the fold of socialist revolution and transitional programme. But we do not think it desirable either to concede to their views politically in order to win their confidence or to admit them to the FI in haste with a promise to reconsider Trotskyism and rebuild the FI. We would not do it even with the purest of motives to assure them of our support and the like. This is politics of accommodation and is not a correct way either of "profiting from the existence of mass vanguards" or "of outgrowing the phase of propaganda group" and becoming an "organization capable of political initiatives."

We can realize the extent of political accommodation of the majority leaders to the PRT(C) if we care to study the resolutions passed by the PRT(C) in its fifth congress held in July 1970, that is even after it had become a section of the FI. It claims to be the only foquista group in Latin America and remains firmly committed to Stalinism. Its resolution on the International states as follows: ". . . we do not believe in the possibility of the Fourth International becoming converted into the international revolutionary party . . . this is now impossible . . . and that the role of the International should be to seek to construct a new revolutionary International based on the Vietnamese, Chinese, Cuban, Korean, and Albanian parties." (IIDB Vol. X, No. 5, April 1973)

The PRT(C) does not seem to have any preference for Trotsky; he is just one of its heroes. Others are Giap, Castro. It holds that the past armed struggles failed because of the technical shortcomings and not because of political reasons and the lack of objective conditions necessary for it.

It is this PRT(C) that the leaders of the majority have been patting on the back for its 'courageous struggle' and defending its positions against the orthodox attack. The long letter of the leaders of the majority stating their political differences with the PRT(C) sent recently cannot explain their silence on this so far. It is beyond our understanding how the majority leaders accepted the political assessment of this PRT(C) which must justify its political stand with a wrong assessment.

On the question of armed struggle and initiative by the vanguard, there are no political differences between the majority and the PRT(C). Agreement on a single issue has been sufficient for the affiliation or the continued affiliation of the PRT(C) with the FI.

The position of the PRT(C) on these questions is given in the resolutions of its fifth congress on "Dynamics and Relations of Our Revolutionary War" as follows:

"In this sense, we can say that the revolutionary civil war has begun in our country, developed by sectors of

the vanguard. The working-class vanguard, sections of the proletariat and popular sectors will take it up, until finally it becomes a struggle led by the working-class vanguard, the working class and the popular masses against the bourgeoisie and imperialism."

PRT(C) holds that this war "will be a prolonged one." We have therefore to conclude that it will take years for it to develop from one stage to another, for example from the present stage of a war begun by "sectors of the vanguard" to the stage when the working class vanguard and sections of the proletariat will take it up. What is it if not an armed struggle in isolation from the masses? This view is supported by the statement occurring in this resolution that they still have to solve the problem of linking up with the masses.

The Latin American resolution of the Ninth World Congress is not much different. It states in paragraph 18 as follows:

"Under the perspective of a prolonged civil war with rural guerrilla warfare as its principle axis, *even in the most difficult phases of severe repression and temporary prostration* the problem of liaison between the guerrillas and the masses will be a vital one.

"In a situation of pre-revolutionary crisis such as Latin America is now experiencing on a continental scale, guerrilla warfare can in fact *stimulate a revolutionary dynamic*" (Emphasis added).

This resolution, too, envisages the beginning of guerrilla warfare in a period of repression and prostration when it will find no support among the masses, at a time when the problem of liaison is still to be solved and when the purpose of this guerrilla warfare is only to stimulate a revolutionary dynamic.

Let us be clear, even the most extreme instability cannot amount to civil war by itself. It becomes civil war when the contending classes of society begin to struggle for power, not only the vanguards. This is not the stage yet in Latin America. The masses there are even now following Peron and Allende (though dead). In such a situation, an armed struggle will most likely result in the isolation of the vanguard from the working masses rather than a link-up. It cannot stimulate revolutionary dynamic.

It is time that we reversed the Latin American line of the Ninth World Congress before much damage is done.

II. Guerrilla Strategy Vs. Transitional Programme

Comrade Peter Camejo has discussed the scope and future of the guerrilla strategy in the *International Socialist Review* of November 1972 and in the IIDB Vol. X, No. 8 of 1973. The document "Argentina and Bolivia—The Balance Sheet" discusses the two views on the armed struggle—the Marxist and the Guevaraist. (Page 8, section I; and page 40, section III.) It mentions Hugo Blanco as the man who correctly applied the strategy of armed struggle and guerrilla war. His book *Land or Death* has also been mentioned. Hugo Blanco is cited as an example of a man who applied the Transitional Programme in opposition to guerrillism. In all of them, it is emphasized that our movement is primarily political and our task is to awaken and mobilize the masses on issues and demands that arise from their midst and from their consciousness but never to substitute ourselves for the

masses. For example the position is stated in the document "Argentina and Bolivia—The Balance Sheet" in the following words:

"The marxist concept is that the vanguard, by participating in the daily struggle of the masses and winning them to the program of socialism can, in the heat of mass mobilization and struggle, bring them to the point of engaging in armed struggle, on a scale so massive as to sweep over every obstacle."

Strangely enough, Comrade Germain while criticizing this document ignores this passage and makes a new discovery of this position in the following sentence which is vague enough to be given a new twist:

"The problem of armed struggle in Latin America is . . . a problem arising out of the development of the class struggle itself." (IIDB Vol. X, No. 4, 1973)

This is the point of departure. Comrade Germain is not worried about the consciousness of the masses. For him open dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in the shape of military dictatorship is a stage in the development of class struggle which calls for armed struggle, whether the masses are mobilized to the extent or not. While the balance sheet proposes to bring working masses themselves to the point of engaging in armed struggle in the heat of mass struggle and mass mobilization. Comrade Germain in his "Defence of Leninism," proposes to engage the new vanguards in armed struggle straight way without waiting for the support or participation by the masses. "The Balance Sheet" proposed to stimulate revolutionary dynamic through movement based on the Transitional Programme; Comrade Germain wants to stimulate revolutionary dynamic through armed struggle. These two strategies are opposed to each other.

Comrade Germain has examined the scope of the Transitional Programme also and found it wanting. The concept of the Transitional Programme as something arising from the consciousness of the masses so that they may be mobilized in it, does not appeal to Comrade Germain for it does not support his theory of initiative by the vanguard even without the participation of masses. He wants to mobilize the militant section of the vanguard. Hence for him, the demands on which they are to be mobilized should be militant and appealing to the vanguard, whether they can move the masses or not.

We have to make a choice between armed struggle and the Transitional Programme. The minority seeks to subordinate armed struggle to the concept of Transitional Programme, Comrade Germain want to subordinate Transitional Programme to his concept of armed struggle.

III. The Cuban and Chinese Experiences

Comrade Germain wades through recent history and analyses events in Bolivia, Argentina, Peru, China and Cuba to prove that armed struggle does appear at a certain stage of development of class struggle. His analysis suffers from the twist given by him to this concept. But there is another lesson also be drawn from the experience of these revolutions. It is this: that the line of armed struggle was accepted by them as a non-class line on which even the national bourgeoisie and the rich peasants could be mobilized along with poor peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the workers. This gave them pretext of neglecting class organization of workers and poor peas-

ants and extending and deepening their class struggle. The result was that the petty bourgeois party activists dominated at every stage of the development of those revolutions. This and the fact that the working class remained effectively demobilized facilitated the growth of bureaucracy. We must learn from them to keep the mobilization of workers and poor peasants in the forefront. If armed struggle does become necessary let this also be under the control of mass organization and not under the control of the vanguards.

Uncritical references to armed struggle may also call our theory of permanent revolution in question. After all, those who led successful revolutions with armed struggle did not believe in this theory. Nor is it practicable to keep the working class in the role of leadership for the armed struggle will be begun by vanguards and will be taken up by the working class vanguard and the working class only later. This will eventually blur the distinction between Trotskyism and Stalinism. The result would be that all those engaged in armed struggle would begin to give a call for the unity of the Chinese, Cuban, Vietnamese and Albanian parties to build a "real" international, like the PRT(C).

If we are really earnest about the working class leadership of the coming revolutions, we should mobilize the whole working class at the same time and not only a few advanced and militant workers isolated from their class milieu. Declassed petty bourgeois and working class militants, even if they are the best communists, cannot be a substitute for the working class. So while the Cuban, Chinese and other revolutions tell us of the efficacy of the strategy of armed struggle, they also warn us against the consequences which flow from it.

Comrade Hansen is right when he says that the Leninist concept of party building militates against the concept of armed struggle as advanced by Comrade Germain. For building revolutionary parties on the Leninist model, strict adherence to the Transitional Programme is necessary and the strategy of armed struggle cannot be given an overriding importance.

IV. Party Building and the Ninth world Congress

Although Comrade Germain criticizes Comrade Hansen for posing party building as an alternative strategy to armed struggle and makes it appear that this is not at all in the centre of our debate, he states it on the very next page that "it is impermissible to detach the strategy of party building" from correct strategical and political options. We have only to add that the strategy of armed struggle, not being correct, is incompatible with the strategy of party building in the Leninist way.

If we apply this principle to the building of revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe, both sides should propose their own "correct" strategic and political options. The minority insists on building movements on transitional demands arising from the consciousness of the masses and thus helping the growth of the parties in struggle. The majority wants to mobilize the vanguards on demands which should be militant and revolutionary enough to attract them, including armed struggle in isolation from the masses.

Thus the line of the Latin American resolution of the

Ninth World Congress has been extended to Europe and may be extended elsewhere if the Tenth World Congress does not reverse the line.

* * *

Evaluating the general line of the Ninth World Congress in his article "In Defence of Leninism," Comrade Germain claims that this represented "a turn towards the transformation of Trotskyist organization from propaganda group into organization already capable of political initiatives at the level of vanguards." He follows this statement with several examples—of the French comrades in May 1968, the U. S. Trotskyists in the antiwar struggles, the Spanish comrades boycotting elections and the Ceylonese comrades initiating antirepression struggles.

This does not amount to a turn. Every Trotskyist organization should pass from propaganda stage to the stage of political initiatives as soon as it has gathered the minimum number of cadres. It did not require the Ninth World Congress to make them do it.

Whatever opinion Comrade Germain may have of these struggles, they were really based on the consciousness of the working masses, not on the consciousness of the "militant vanguard" alone. This is the basis of the Transitional Programme and is the line of our movement since 1938. This is not the turn. He has yet to give an example of a movement based on the consciousness of militant vanguard.

Comrade Germain opposes his line of political initiatives themselves. There is nothing bad in calling upon unions and other mass organizations for united action on some issue, nor is it necessary to go alone in order to "prove" to the militant vanguard our own "revolutionary character." We do not mean to defend the Healyites and Lambertists, but they cannot be criticized for giving a call for united action. This too does not amount to a "turn."

* * *

If by "turn" he means a specific strategy for "profiting from the existence of the mass vanguard," he seems to forget that the Transitional Programme provides for that too. After determining what problems a particular section of the working masses faces, we can find out on the basis of an accurate analysis of the social and economical conditions which of these problems are fit for a general mobilization of the said section and deep enough to give them a transitional character. This is a programme for mass mobilization. It is in this that we catch most of the vanguard, though we may not be able to satisfy a few "militant" ones who insist on going ahead without masses. This is the only correct method of "profiting from the existence of the mass vanguard." This is the only correct specific application of the general line developed at the Ninth World Congress. Not the one taken in the Latin American Resolution of the Ninth World Congress or the the draft on the building of revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe.

After wondering for quite some time in his "Defence of Leninism" as to what possible objection the minority could have to the draft on the building of revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe, he alights thus (page 48 of the IIDB

Vol. X, No. 4):

"Class struggle initiatives taken by our sections, related to our view of the dynamic of the mass upsurge which is unfolding, can only help us recruit these elements for our organization. . . . if and when these initiatives correspond to the needs of *the most militant sectors of the masses*."

Therefore, he proceeds to differentiate between the needs of the masses and the needs of the militant sections of the masses. Since the direction of the Ninth World Congress is to turn to the vanguard, therefore Comrade Germain must turn his back upon the masses to turn to the vanguard.

Comrade Germain however thinks that he need not turn back on the masses when he turns to the vanguard. We agree, but this is possible only on the basis of the Transitional Programme outlined by us above.

Comrade Germain asks "whether it wouldn't have been necessary to combine a general united front approach mobilizing the maximum number of the people for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam with a more specific propaganda directed to a more limited vanguard, explaining the need to support the Vietnamese revolution till final victory."

It is so long as the move for mass mobilization is the overriding concern and the propaganda is conducted in a sympathetic manner patiently explaining to the whole vanguard. But if the specific propaganda makes us reject some of the would be supporters of the general movement, i.e., when it begins to affect the united front approach itself, we have to prefer the general mobilization approach and give up the approach of specific propaganda for a limited vanguard. *The Militant* could publish articles explaining why the SWP supports the Vietnamese, but the SWP could not make it the basis for united front.

The SWP chose single issue campaigns for mass mobilization and was right. The IEC majority proposes to make a fully revolutionary propaganda and start vanguard initiatives to show that it is not reformist or "tail-endist," even though it may not be understood by the masses and may fail to mobilize them.

It is this neglect of the masses and movements meant to mobilize them and was preference for movements which may appeal to militant vanguards only that marked the departure of Comrade Germain and his friends. It is to this that we object.

There is something more too in this draft. Comrade Germain and his friends have not forgotten to bring in the "correct" strategy of armed struggle in Europe. We find the following sentence in the draft which makes it clear:

"The spirit in which our sections will have to educate the entire mass vanguard moreover, is this: to show the bourgeoisie in *practice* that the price it will have to pay for any attempt to establish an open dictatorship will be a civil war in which both camps *will use arms*." (page 26, IIDB No. 5 of November 1972. *Emphasis added*.)

To show this possibility to the bourgeoisie, we have to start using arms even before that eventuality, even as protests or bravado or just demonstration. We think this line is not different from the Latin American line of the Ninth World Congress.

We may recall that Trotsky gave a call for the over-

throw of the capitalist system and for a socialist revolution in just such a situation, when Europe faced the threat of fascism. He called for workers' defence committees and a united front of workers and their parties, but no armed struggle. Comrade Germain and his friends call for a civil war where both sides would use arms. It seems that Comrade Germain and his supporters have lost patience with Trotsky now.

V. Building the International Leadership

In his "Defence of Leninism," Comrade Germain has called for the construction of an international leadership. The basis of this call is an objective factor—the uneven development of the world revolution. This, according to him, resulted in specific national experiences and different approaches to the same problem of orientation. Comrade Germain wants to see a team of international leaders who have transcended their national limitations and national experience of class struggle and party building.

Two questions arise in this respect. Is the Tenth World Congress to "select" a few leaders for such a training or are the members of the IEC themselves to be so selected and trained on merit. The members of the International Executive Committee cannot be hand picked; they will be elected by the world congress on the basis of proportional representation of tendencies. As such they are likely to be confirmed representatives of their tendencies which may persist in one form or another. If they are hand-picked, they will be subordinate to the IEC and cannot influence the formation of tendencies as much as Comrade Germain would wish. They can at best become members of an international administrative apparatus, which is ready to serve any tendency that happens to be in the majority. Comrade Germain rejects this proposition.

The second question is: suppose Comrade Germain succeeds in creating such a band of international leadership. Will he, or can he, prevent the "eruption" of an opposition from the second line of leadership or a temporary combination of national delegates at the world congress? If a national section finds that the international leadership does not reflect its views, can he prevent some other delegates coming up from sections to the world congress?

Organizational methods are no answer to political problems. Free discussion is the only effective method of internationalization of experiences; and this creates an international team not only of a few leaders but educates whole sections. This is what we have to guarantee. In this the false sense of security that Comrade Germain invests his friends with is the most dangerous thing. He defends the majority view and the Latin American line by seeking shelter behind so-called specific national experiences and all the uneven development of the world revolution. Another danger arises from the fact that a theoretician of the calibre of Comrade Germain has begun to revise the very fundamentals—the concept of Transitional Programme—to rationalize what is obviously not a correct strategy. The third enemy of free discussion is the tendency exhibited by him in his "Defence of Leninism" of leaving the issue in question aside and bringing in other questions in order to say: "Look, who are the persons in the minority tendency?" This raises a prejudice against the minority tendency and prevents the majority from

entering into the debate with an open mind. After all, it is not impermissible for tendencies which remained at loggerheads till recently to combine on another issue without agreement on the past issues. They cannot be held responsible for the past views and actions of their partners.

We should also be clear about what can be internationalized and what shall always remain specific and national. It is only the approach, the fruit of study, training and experience that can be internationalized through organized discussions but the assessment of the national situation and the formulation of the concrete policies must remain national. It is only the people on the scene who can best assess the situation. Even if they make mistakes they should be allowed to rectify them through their own experience. It is they who have to make their revolution. Spoon-feeding by the international cannot make them stand on their own legs.

The role of the International is only advisory in so far as the specific assessment is concerned. The world congress reviews and analyses general trends. The International Executive Committee should guide national sections within that framework and international leaders should always make their own assessments known to a section. But the ultimate decision about assessment should be of the national section.

What we attack in the Latin American case is the attitude of the comrades there towards mass work and their preference for the gun, and the "militant" section of the vanguard, and only advise them about the assessment of the national situation.

With this is linked another question: What should other sections do when one of them goes beyond the framework of the world congress resolutions. A public disassociation of its own different policies. The International leadership should itself act immediately to correct such a mistake. We should not allow considerations of organization group loyalty to blur the image of the FI. It is strange that the strong resolutions of the PRT(C) have been allowed to be associated with the positions of the FI in public mind and those who dissociated from the outrageous Sallustro affair were reprimanded.

* * *

Comrade Germain has expressed the fear that the minority would split. It goes without saying that the majority never splits; it holds on. A split occurs when attitudes harden and the possibility of an open debate and conversion of the minority into the majority disappear forever. Let us hope that this will not happen to that.

This can be done by reaffirming the basis of Transitional Programme and then leaving it to the national sections to decide their tactics within that framework, even miscalculating, on the condition that they will, at all times, conduct a free discussion and arrive at their decisions without gagging.

VI. Entryism Sui Generis

Although this is not an issue in the debate, it has been brought in just as the issue of nationalism and tail-endism has been brought in. We do not intend to dispute the cor-

rectness of the experience that the European sections have had, which are incidentally exactly like ours in India. We only want to point out what conclusions we have drawn under similar circumstances.

We in India preceded the European sections in this course. The Indian section of the Fourth International, Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India entered the Socialist Party in 1948, which was the main "obstacle" to the growth of the revolutionary party in India at the time the CPI had been thoroughly discredited because of its pro-British role in the national movement of 1942 and the Socialist Party was basking in the glory of this anti-imperialist movement. It was attracting the youth. It had just come out of the Congress and was interested in bringing all the "revolutionary elements" in it, particularly those opposed to the CPI. We negotiated with the SP leaders and joined in. Four of our leaders were given various leading posts in the party. One was taken on the national executive, one on the national executive of its labour organization, and two others on the Editorial Board. But the result was not different from what the European sections describe. All the four leading lights were ultimately lost. The only survivors were those who gave up entry in 1949 and came out. But the infection of entryism has taken them now into the CP(M), where they seem to have finally settled. There is only one survivor of this shipwreck and he is relating the experiences here.

Let us now turn to the experiences of the European sections as described in the preparatory text for the 1971 conference of the European sections (IIDB, Vol. IX, No. 5, November 1972).

"The organizational results of [entry] were uneven, but generally they did not lead to the crystallization of revolutionary tendencies in these parties or originating from them." (para. 2)

There follows the narration of how several oppositional currents arose in the host parties but they paid least attention to our comrades and evolved their own way.

We in India were attracted to the SP because of the opportunity of coming into contact with fresh cadres and the immense possibilities of mass work. Our experience is admirably described by the preparatory text as follows:

"In certain cases . . . the militants immersed in [mass] work . . . adapted to the milieu, its tempo, its customs and its routine. The necessity to remain under cover, to confine their intervention to small doses ended with their giving up the program itself bit by bit. Some of these comrades were lost in this way being drawn in by the Stalinist or Social Democratic structures." (para. 4)

The end result was that the FI lost whole sections in Europe just as in India and had to start from the very scratch.

"From this past flowed the difficulty experienced by militants of the European sections in breaking with entryism. . . ." (para. 5)

These were the experiences of the Indian section, too. "The necessity to remain under cover" exposed us to the influence of the milieu and as we were already disintegrated, it scattered us to the four winds. Our leaders had to nod to the policies of the Socialist Party and to mouth its arguments so that they may remain under cover. In course of time they came to believe in them as did most of the members. Thus all of them "adapted to the milieu and

ended up with giving up their programme bit by bit." Lastly, when the break came, some did not break away while others, after breaking away, we went back to the Socialist Party. The damage was thus done not because of any mistakes of the leadership but because of the "necessity to keep under cover" and the strategy of "confining their political intervention to small doses."

We may also add that the disaster in the LSSP of Ceylon was due to the same attitude to party building, i.e., by entering in a large, nationally recognized party with opportunity for mass work etc., generally mentioned as "breaking the isolation."

Yet what surprises us is the conclusion drawn by the United Secretariat in that preparatory text:

"Such was the price of a correct tactic often tried but poorly mastered." (para. 6)

There is also some sort of consolation in the observation that if the entryists failed, those who stayed outside also failed to grow; and another, that our militants received organization experience and this prevented the development of sectarianism. It matters not to the authors of this text that not many were left to profit from this experience.

Our past experience of the application of this correct tactic is that of a short term of entry, not of *sui generis*. It was only in India that entry *sui generis* was first tried and this resulted in the complete wiping out of the section. However, if the preparatory text refers to the French and American experiences of the thirties, which were tried in a period of rise of mass upsurge and political effervescence, we have to remember the warning contained in the *History of American Trotskyism* on page 234, viz.

"The tactics of a party are imposed upon it by political and economic factors beyond its control. The task of political leadership is to understand what is possible and necessary . . . in a given situation and what is not possible and not necessary. The activities of a revolutionary party, that is a Marxist party, are conditioned by objective circumstances. These circumstances sometimes impose defeat and isolation upon the party despite anything that can be done by the leadership and the membership. In other situations the objective situation creates possibilities for success and advances. . . .

"There are times when the best leadership cannot move the party forward by a single inch. For example, Marx and Engels, the greatest of all the teachers and leaders of our movement, remained isolated practically throughout their entire lives."

This warning applies not only to the tactic of *sui generis* entry but to all other strategies for hasty building of a party like "armed struggle."

The American comrades carried out their tactics of entry at a time when there was no need for them to remain under cover. They only paid attention to the developments inside

the American Socialist Party and wrote out sympathetic articles addressed to the left militants before June 1936 i.e., in the period when the stage was that of fermentation only. In June 1936, there was a split in the Socialist party and the left militants were expelled. They formed another committee to fight back. The American Trotskyists negotiated with the left for entry and despite humiliating organizational terms, they entered into it with their full programme.

They were helped by the upsurge of the world revolution which posed ever new questions before the membership and gave them an opportunity to explain. In July came the Spanish revolution in which the members of the Socialist Party were interested and listened to the Trotskyists. This was followed by the Moscow Trials and the Trotskyists used it for education of the ranks of the SP as well as for a campaign in defence of Trotsky. Socialist Party leaders could not prevent discussion. We even published a periodical.

Had such opportunities not come and aroused the interest of the Socialist Party ranks, possible only in a period of the upsurge of movements, the entry tactic in the U. S. would also have been a failure.

It is important to remember that all this was done under the guidance of Trotsky himself. When the break came and it came very soon with the gag imposed on the Trotskyists by the Socialist leaders, American Trotskyists hesitated, for the work of the Trotsky Defence Committee was not yet complete. But Trotsky asked them to come out, saying:

"The most important thing is the work of political clarification and you should let nothing stand in your road."

It is this work of political clarification which becomes impossible when we remain under cover and intervene by small doses.

That *History* also tells us what should be in a period of stagnation and reaction (page 235):

"During the long period of reaction and stagnation . . . we could not avoid isolation. That was the time when the weight of the whole world seemed to bear down upon a small group."

So the American Trotskyists prepared for a future rise in the movement. They did so "first, by elaborating the program, which would equip the party for the new time; and secondly, by assembling the preliminary cadres of the future revolutionary party and inspiring them to hold on with faith in the future."

Let us therefore not be in haste in a period of stagnation, defeat or prostration. We cannot move one inch by doing anything in haste. We have to go the long way charted out by the Transitional Programme. There is no short-cut.

September 1973

On Differences Inside the Movement

By Upendranath Roy

1. Though I agree with everything in the statements of the Socialist Workers Party and the League for Socialist Action on the Sallustro kidnapping, I think it was not wise to publish these in their public organs. The United Secretariat were quite correct in disapproving the publication of these statements, as such discussions must be carried *inside* the movement and not publicly. The National Committee of the SWP is wrong in rejecting it, but justified in pointing out the fact that the United Secretariat was responsible to some extent for the unhappy situation by its failure to issue a statement at the time. Even subsequently, strangely enough, it failed to express moral solidarity with the guerrilla fighters in the resolution adopted.

2. It is monstrous on the part of the PRT (Combatiente) to demand the removal of the Moreno group from the International simply because it disagrees with the majority. Its resolution on factionalism and democracy is even more monstrous and reminds us of the Stalinist notions and practices. This is evident from the following:

(a) Though it is correct in principle that member parties should not express themselves publicly against the decisions of the congress and the International leadership, it was taken to extremes by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Even when left adventurism or right reformism was ruining the movement, even when the very future of the movement was at stake, members were silenced with a reference to the said principle. The PRT(C) comrades, too, with their peculiar fascination for Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Kim Il Sung and Castro, wish to invoke that principle in the same fashion.

(b) "It is not the job of anybody or of any organization to discuss the questions already settled by the Congress," they declare bluntly. May I remind them that Stalin, too, declared like that, but Trotsky and his followers dared discuss such questions? Had they desisted from that, there would have been no Fourth International today. It is not discussions, inside the party, but *acts* inconsistent with the party line we can reasonably object to.

(c) "No section will be allowed to maintain relations in other countries with sympathising groups without the authorisation of the official section." That is what our PRT(C) comrades propose. If the United Secretariat resolves that, it will prove itself no better than a Stalinist police regime advising its members whom to follow and whom to distrust within the same international organisation. It will also mean an insult to all the sections of the F. I. The members of different sections are neither infants nor imbeciles, and such restrictions are, therefore, quite unwarranted in case of an organisation like the F. I. Instead of imposing such restrictions upon the members,

it will be better to have no sympathising group at all and that is what our comrades of the PRT(C) actually propose by demanding the expulsion of the Moreno group.

3. I agree with what Comrade Ernest Germain says about the Canadian section, but it would be a blunder to minimise the dangers involved in the ideological approach of the PRT (Combatiente). Mistakes, shortcomings, limitations, even blunders of the different sections can be tolerated in some cases; but no section, no group can be allowed to carry on a campaign of lies and slanders against Trotsky (a "petty-bourgeois intellectual" etc., opposed to the "proletarian line" and so on) and Trotskyism (the F. I. includes "counterrevolutionaries" who "prostitute its banner"!)."Memorandum on the International" ["Resolutions of the Fifth Congress of the PRT(C)," IIDB Vol. X, No. 5, April 1973] removes slightest doubts about it that the PRT(C) gentlemen are doing the same.

They pretend they are guided not by the "deification of the International but a critical appraisal of it." Their pretension is not borne out by their declared aims and objectives. They "do not believe in the possibility of the Fourth International becoming converted into the internal revolutionary party, the need of which" they uphold. They "believe this is now historically impossible." On the one hand, they believe in the impossibility of converting it into an international revolutionary party; on the other hand, they remain inside the F. I. with the intention of "struggling to orient it toward the formation of a new international revolutionary party, based on the Chinese, Cuban, Korean, Vietnamese and Albanian parties, and on the sister organizations struggling in a revolutionary way in every country against capitalism and imperialism." I fail to understand what it means if not defaming, discrediting and finally splitting the F. I. from within. No Maoist infiltrators could do worse than that, and I am afraid, the PRT(C) are hardly better than the Maoists ideologically. Unlike the Maoists and the PRT(C), no Marxist remains satisfied with fighting against "capitalism and imperialism" only. It is a grave deviation from Marxism to ignore suppression of human rights and workers' democracy in China, Korea, Vietnam, Albania and even in Cuba. The PRT(C) denounce the bureaucratic degeneration in the USSR. That even the Maoists would do. What is absolutely necessary for a Marxist is to apply the Bolshevik principles to China and our countries also. By refusing to do that, the PRT(C) expose themselves as apologists of the neo-Stalinist bureaucracy of the deformed workers' states.

4. Maoist infiltration is a real danger to our movement today. Even our experienced comrades—nay, even

entire sections sometimes—tend to ignore the excesses, deviations and crimes of the Maoist and other bureaucrats for some reason or other. Though the Chinese press and radio miss no opportunity to slander us (and that is echoed by their followers throughout the world), we fail to publish articles and pamphlets to expose them. Even when the F. I. issues appeals in solidarity with our comrades facing persecution in China or some other workers' state, there are few sections of the F. I. that publish it. Will the leadership of the F. I. inquire into it: how many sections did publish the appeal about the Chinese Trotskyists? I am sure, the PRT(C) did not publish it. Still they are supposed to be the faithful followers of the F. I. line!

I repeat if the F. I. leadership and the different sections of the F. I. do not beware of the Maoist infiltration, the consequences will be disastrous to the movement. I assure you, I am not haunted by a nightmare. I am writing to you from my personal observations and I have observed Maoists at work from close quarters. Beginning with the year 1970, they have started entering into other parties with the intention of splitting them from within, and killing their cadres and washing their hands clean of these crimes by presenting them as factional fights within the party

concerned. In India, they have entered into not only the parties like the Communist Party of India (Marxist), but even into bourgeois parties like the ruling Congress led by Indira Gandhi. I believe, this is what is going on in other countries, too. So, henceforth, they and alone they should be regarded faithful to our movement who have no soft corner for the Chinese bureaucracy and who do not hesitate to denounce the suppression of workers' democracy in China and other deformed workers' states. It should be a must for all sections to publish articles, appeals, reports etc. about the struggle for workers' democracy in the degenerated or deformed workers' states including China, and there should be no hesitation in expelling those who refuse to comply with it. Is it not strange, even criminal, that there are sections in the F. I. that demand the release of the pro-Peking persons every now and then but fail to publish even a single line for the release of the Trotskyists imprisoned in China? They find time, they find space in their organs to protest against everything in the world, but they pass over the dastardly murder of our comrades in Vietnam in silence. Is that not a betrayal of our comrades, and also of our principles?

June 1973

Reject Liquidationism!

By Upendranath Roy

I have gone through all the documents available in English and I have become more and more convinced of what I wrote earlier ["On Differences Inside the Movement"]. The majority position on Latin America as well as on Europe is untenable. I do not want to repeat all the arguments advanced by the "minority" in this connection, as our comrades are expected to read and discuss them seriously. It will suffice to point out in brief the reasons for rejecting the "majority" line.

Guerrilla Warfare

As Marxist-Leninists, we do not object to armed struggle. What is objectionable is the dogmatic refusal to utilise the opportunities of peaceful and legal work at hand, sole reliance on one and only one method of armed struggle (guerrilla warfare) and subordinating everything to it. It is absurd to talk about armed struggle in abstract. It can be promoted only as a tactic, as one of the methods of struggle, subordinate to our strategy of building a revolutionary party. The "majority" raises the armed struggle (rather, guerrilla warfare) to the level of strategy, which is a giant step toward destroying the party.

I am referring not only to the loss of human lives it brings—that is not immaterial, of course—but to the fact that it shakes the very foundations of the party. If you place guns before politics, you reject Marxism, you reject the Leninist principles of party building. The strategy of continental guerrilla war is incorrect not only because the conditions in different countries are not identical and nowhere favorable for it, but also because such a strategy ignores principled politics, defies democratic centralism and disregards masses. If it is sufficient to gather a few persons, to arm them, to wage a guerrilla warfare and to seize power, then what is the use of the party? If an army (or some armed detachments) destroy a bourgeois army and replace a bourgeois government by force and that is sufficient to constitute a workers' state, why approach the masses? Such a line is bound to lead to great leader cult and to the destruction of party democracy. If a party seizes power under the circumstances, the result will be one more Stalinist regime with or without the Stalin cult.

Individual Terrorism

The "majority" line supports individual terrorism. We reject it not because we are opposed to terrorism absolutely, but because it does not advance the cause of proletarian revolution. That masses approve these actions is no justification at all. We have heard such arguments time and again in India advanced by the Maoists, but we could not and did not join their campaign of annihilation. India has a rich experience of terrorist activities—

a record of about one century. Terrorism started during the British rule, but it failed to achieve its end—the overthrow of imperialist rule and the terrorists themselves realised it. The latest terrorist activity was, perhaps, the murder of Sir Michael O'Dyer by Udham Singh in 1940 to avenge the mass murder at Jallianwala Bagh in 1919. Maoists revived it, but in a year or two they too became disillusioned. There is much to show the obvious that individual terrorism is doomed to failure and degeneration.

Recipes Against Repression

Guerrilla war and terrorism are, sometimes, prescribed as necessary recipes against repression. That too does not stand the test. The ultraleft Maoist CPI(ML) in India have tried that well. Their so-called liberated zones in Darjeeling, Srikakulam and Midnapore were easily occupied by the Central Reserve Police with almost no resistance. Repression was let loose throughout the country but the exemplary actions of the CPI(ML) that assumed the form of the murder of big landowners and the police did not lead to a mass upsurge. Young men were arrested at will, killed in the streets, in the police lock-up, in the prisons, often even in their houses, but no resistance worth mention was seen. Why? Because individual terrorism and guerrilla warfare do not lead to arming the masses. Masses can only praise the heroes. If we intend to arm the masses, if we want to make them active participants in class struggle and not spectators of crime-thrillers, we must propose something better. That is the point our esteemed propounders of "break-through" have missed entirely.

The European Document

"Majority" resolution on Europe is, in my opinion, even worse than that on Latin America. A careful reader of the resolution is left with the highly unpleasant impression that the authors of the document have lost their sense of proportion totally. First they admit the facts, that (1) the "new vanguard" as a whole is not revolutionary, (2) that its appearance does not mean "a fundamental change in the relationship of forces in the workers' movement and in the working class," (3) that it "can at best play a secondary role in the unfolding of the struggle, or at worst profoundly distort and pervert the forms and results of these struggles," (4) that "it still remains very much a minority within the mass movement, and even more so within the organized workers' movement." With these correct premises they jump to the incorrect conclusion that "the central task is to win hegemony within the new vanguard." Is that not anti-climax? Comrades, look at the premises and read the conclusion and ask yourself:

What are we going to do? Is it our *central task* to run after those who can "at best play a secondary role" etc. and "at worst profoundly distort and pervert the forms and results" of the struggles, even though they constitute only a "minority within the mass movement"? Are we going to attach too much importance to those whose appearance does not mean a fundamental change in the relationship of forces in the workers' movement and the working class? Is it proper to change our tactics and strategy fundamentally without a change like that?

The Concept of Vanguard Revised

That is not all. They inform us, the "new vanguard" is not *as a whole* revolutionary. So we have a vanguard that is not revolutionary, or that includes non-revolutionary elements. That is indeed a new discovery because neither Lenin nor Trotsky could dream of it—and the credit for the discovery goes to our esteemed comrades of the "majority" tendency. Elements with "petty-bourgeois consciousness and ideology" and "prisoners of spontaneism, sectarianism, ultra-leftist infantilism, apolitical workerism, or primitive syndicalism" are all turned into "the new mass vanguard" by the magic wand of Mandel-Maitan-Frank tendency! To us, Trotskyists, every Tom, Dick and Harry does not constitute a "vanguard." What they call "the new mass vanguard" is nothing but the radicalized petty-bourgeois milieu. It is not a slip of pen that turns them into "vanguard." It is a departure (to take a charitable view of it, you may call it an excursion) from Marxism on the part of the M-M-F tendency. It shows their preference of debaters and boxers from the campus to the toiling masses. To us, "vanguard" means the most advanced, the leading sections of the proletariat and as such excludes all the non-revolutionaries, sectarians and shirkers from the mass movement. There is nothing wrong in attempting to win over people from any quarters for the movement, but to ascribe a name, place or role they do not deserve, is not only a travesty of truth but also a giant step towards Maoist-like revisionism.

I need not discuss in detail the tactics that necessarily follow from such a wrong concept of vanguard and such a mistaken idea of the central task. Other comrades have done that. Particularly, I refer to "The European Document" by Derrick Morrison (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 25, p. 36). Suffice it to say that the "majority" tendency is busy wooing this "new vanguard" and revising Marxism to its taste. A revolutionary Marxist organization acquires a decisive political weight and becomes able to win over people from other quarters not by aping them, but by discussing political issues fully and frankly. A party that places utmost confidence in diplomacy and abstains from ideological fight, gains nothing. Rather it loses some of its cadres to its rival organizations. That is what we have seen in India and that is what we find elsewhere.

Marxist Theory of State Revised

Comrade Ernest Mandel wrote a fine booklet on the "Marxist Theory of State." I consider it a must for our cadres and that is why I translated it in Bengali and Hindi. But it appears now, Comrade Mandel and his followers have deemed it necessary to revise it without, however, caring to say it formally. This we learn from the Sterne-

Walter resolution on Vietnam, which gives the following valuable information to us: "The decisive thing is the nature of the state, that is, the class character of those who control the armed forces." The assertion is too absurd to warrant a serious discussion. If the nature of a state is not decided by ownership of means of production, and if it is equated with the class character of those who control the armed forces, a number of capitalist states may claim to be workers' states because it is not difficult to find sons of industrial and agricultural workers controlling the armed forces. As a matter of fact, it is they who constitute the overwhelming section of the armed forces in numerous countries.

Perhaps the "class character" does not refer to the parent-hood. If so, what does it mean? No person can be a worker and soldier at the same time. So, if the question of parent-hood is ruled out, what else remains is the ideological position of the person concerned. Is that what Sterne and Walter have in their mind? To characterise a man from his political positions only is not a Marxist practice. It is the Maoists who accept the worst kind of antisocials as Marxist-Leninists only if the latter submit to the cult of Mao. People become proletarian, progressive, Marxist-Leninists as they accept the infallibility of Mao, if they do not that is enough to prove them "bourgeois." Do the comrades of the M-M-F tendency intend to smuggle similar ideas in the Trotskyist movement?

Whatever their intentions, the revision of Marxist theory of state has started and they are responsible for it. If this revision is not challenged and rejected, a turn towards Kautskyism will be not unlikely despite the ultra-left phrases of Comrade Mandel etc. As a matter of fact, Indian followers of Kautsky did say something about two decades ago like what Sterne-Walter say today. According to them—I mean Jai Prakash Narain and Ram Manohar Lohia—the facts that the power was transferred to the Indian National Congress in 1947 as the British left and that there was a strong army, most of which were the sons of peasants and workers, were enough to show that socialism had won. We did not wonder as we heard it then, but we are surely astonished when we find some responsible people in our movement repeating the same now.

Nationalism

Marxist ideas on nationalism have suffered no less at the hands of the ultra-left tendency. I do not want to discuss it in detail as Comrades Gus Horowitz and Dick Roberts have done it well (IDB, Vol. X, No. 10, and SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 17). That Comrade Ernest Germain has forgotten the inter-relationship of the agrarian question and the national question and adopted subjectivism is not accidental. To put it bluntly, it is the result of his running after the Maoists. If nationalism has become reactionary as a rule, as he contends, some pertinent questions must be raised and answered. First, the United Secretariat did call for a "United Socialist Bengal." Why did they not call for a "United Socialist India" or "United Asia" if nationalism was not a major factor in their consideration? To the best of my knowledge and belief, they did so because the nationalist feelings in one part of Bengal had risen up and the partition of Bengal in 1947 was regarded as nothing but a curse by the Bengalis ever since then. Now, do Comrade Ernest Germain and tenden-

cy feel otherwise? Do they think it was an incorrect, even reactionary slogan? Secondly, what should be our attitude towards the national aspirations of the Nagas, Mizos and other peoples? Should we in India support the bourgeois rulers in suppressing them with bullets and bombs because "nationalism is reactionary"? And what about Kashmir? A part of its territory is occupied by Pakistan, and the other by India. It has become a permanent source of trouble in the Indian sub-continent. Should we respect the national feelings of the Kashmiris and demand self-determination by them or support the status quo or military solution in favour of this state or what? If you accept the right of self-determination of the Nagas, Mizos and Kashmiris (as we, the Communist League of India, do), you are following Lenin and Trotsky, but not Germain who wants to line our movement against all sorts of nationalist movements. In fact, the ultra-leftism of Ernest Germain and his tendency is nothing but opportunism in disguise. Drawn to the logical conclusions and translated into action, it cannot but serve the interest of imperialism. Again, that is what Maoism does objectively opposing the national struggles of the Blacks, Chicanos and other oppressed peoples in America and elsewhere. Trotskyist friends of Mao are no better.

Stalinism

These "Trotskyist" friends of Mao, Ho Chi Minh and Castro have gone too far to remember the ABC of Trotskyism. That is why Sterne says: "For the majority, a Stalinist party is a party that *subordinates* the interests of the socialist revolution in its country to those of a bureaucracy in a workers' state" and adds: "For the minority a Stalinist party is one that advances *a program that in appearance is Stalinist*" ("The debate on Indochina," IIDB, Vol. X No. 7, p. 9). So far as the views of the "minority" are concerned, Sterne cannot but distort and misrepresent them for his own convenience. But what about his own views? Are they correct and faithful to the traditions of the F. I.? No, not even in the least.

The definition is inaccurate and misleading in more respects than one. If a party does not subordinate the interests of socialist revolution in its country to those of the bureaucracy in the USSR, but does subordinate it to those of the bureaucracy in China or Cuba or Korea, are you not going to call it Stalinist? If so, why? Either bureaucracy does not exist anywhere else, or if it does, it may be undesirable for the USSR only. The mystery has to be revealed by Sterne. True, he speaks about "a bureaucracy in a workers' state" in general pretends to be equally opposed to all bureaucrats. But the pretension falls to ground and his real face—the apologist one—behind the mask of Marxism is laid bare when he writes the following about the Vietnamese CP: "Like the Chinese and Yugoslav parties, it has known how to refuse to subordinate its policy to the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy." I leave aside the inaccuracies of facts; I leave aside the fact that the differences and quarrels among the Stalinists result directly from their departure from internationalism and highlight their petty-bourgeois nationalist degeneration only. What I wish to point out sharply is that if that be the criterion of being non-Stalinist, CPI(M), CPI(ML), SUC, WP and numerous other parties and groups in India—the worst enemies of Trotskyism—will become non-Stalinist.

Though it is a serious crime on the part of a "Marxist" party to subordinate the interests of the socialist revolution in its country to those of a bureaucracy in a degenerated workers' state, that is the outcome and not the essence of Stalinism. Program is surely essential, but that too is not enough. Even worst reactionaries may at times adopt very attractive and plausible programs. Everything depends upon practice. If a party does practice democratic centralism within and upholds the principles of socialist democracy without, it is Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist in the true sense of the term. If it opposes democratic centralism within and suppresses democratic rights of the working class without it is nothing but Stalinist, despite all the twists and turns of Comrade Sterne and fellow-travellers.

Again, there are comrades who think that a party involved in leading a revolution cannot be classified as Stalinist. The question is not new. It was raised earlier and Comrade Joseph Hansen discussed it well ("The Origin of the Differences on China," IIB No. 5, June 1970, pp. 20-26). There is no use repeating what he said. Let us take it the other way. If a party involved in leading a revolution cannot be classified as Stalinist, how can you classify by individuals involved in a revolution as Stalinists? Is it not true that some of the supporters of Stalin, and even Stalin himself, were involved in a socialist revolution to some extent? What makes a party or individual Stalinist is not his dissociation with the smashing of the bourgeois state apparatus but departure from democracy within and democracy without. I refrain from burdening this article with quotations from Trotsky to prove it.

Nature of Bureaucracy

The ultra-left tendency is too preoccupied with Mao, Ho, Giap and Castro to read, remember and respect our own classics and traditions. Henri Weber's absurd talk about "revolutionary bureaucracy" results from his ignorance. Bureaucracy is a parasitical caste and workers' state is the body that feeds this parasite. Despite its reactionary role in general, the bureaucracy cannot but defend the body that feeds it in critical moments for its own survival. This contradictory nature of the bureaucracy explained by Trotsky is proved by the subsequent developments and there is no justification for rejecting it. A bureaucracy cannot but be counterrevolutionary *in general* and the Chinese bureaucracy is no exception to it. Its support to Ayub, Yahya and Bandaranaike has established it too well. If Comrade Henri Weber refuses to recognize the facts, if he shuts his eyes to the reality, we cannot but regret for him.

Vietnam

How confused the followers of the "majority" line are is best shown by quite contradictory statements about the VCP by them. To Sterne VCP is not "revolutionary Marxist" but it is not a Stalinist party either; what else it is, only Sterne knows well (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 7, p. 11). According to Ernest, Livio, Pierre etc., the Vietnamese workers' state is bureaucratically degenerated (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 7, p. 32). They also inform us that in Vietnam "there isn't a separation between the state and the party." Does that not mean that the party too is bureaucratized? Then there are comrades like May Stark and Bill Yaffe to whom

the VCP is revolutionary. According to Bill Yaffe, the "Vietnamese revolution has dealt stunning blows to both Stalinism and imperialism. Today we can firmly characterize the Vietnamese Communist leadership as *revolutionary*" (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 24, p. 29). To May Stark, neither the Vietnamese nor the Chinese CP leadership is Stalinist.

But if we apply the criterion noted above and take due note of the information furnished by the supporters of the ultra-left line themselves, we cannot but characterise the Vietnamese leadership as Stalinist. Ernest, Livio and others in their letter to the PRT (C) admit the bureaucratic degeneration in Vietnam and they do admit that "the party does not function according to the Leninist criteria of democratic centralism" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 7, p. 32). Even Bill Yaffe admits that the Vietnamese leadership "do not see the workers' state as a state of soviet democracy. . . . we never find any mention of the nature of workers' councils in their writings. Traces of bureaucratization under the pressure of retardation of the forces of production and isolation have appeared and will continue to appear in Vietnam" (SWP DB, Vol. 31, No. 24, page 30). What else do we find in a Stalinist party and state? Whether you are looking for a "pure revolutionary model" or not, you cannot and you should not glorify the impure one. That is not the duty of a revolutionary. To apologise for and glorify a state and a party in which bureaucratisation has "appeared and will continue to appear" is nothing but to support the reaction unwittingly.

China

The advocates for the enemies of Trotskyism in Vietnam have become shameless enough to plead for the Maoist bureaucracy as well. First the Vietnamese are certified to be revolutionaries, non-Stalinists and then comes the cat out of the bag. "They frequently go back and forth to China for consultations." So the "complete solidarity between the Vietnamese and the Chinese" is established and the Chinese leadership must be revolutionary, non-Stalinist! It may or may not be acceptable to the "majority" tendency as a whole, but it is not an unusual outcome of their distortions in favour of the political delinquents in China, Vietnam and everywhere else.

May Stark has her own arguments to establish her contention: "With the premise that the Chinese leadership is Stalinist, the only conclusion one could draw is that Stalinism could lead revolutions. Thus, Stalinism, analyzed by Trotsky as the gravedigger of the revolution, became its opposite, the continuator of the revolution. . . . The name remains, but the content has changed." ("Resolution on Vietnam," SWP DB, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 17-18). She forgets the exceptional circumstances that led to the seizure of power by the Chinese CP in 1949, she forgets the fact that the Chinese CP has betrayed the socialist revolution in Indonesia, Ceylon, Pakistan, Iran and Bangladesh which does not befit the "continuator of the revolution" and she forgets what Trotsky wrote about the dual, contradictory nature of the bureaucracy in a degenerated workers' state (and party).

Mao and Ho Chi Minh Follow Trotskyism!

May Stark astonishes us with the assertion that "the existence of dual power in Vietnam and the Great Prole-

tarian Cultural Revolution in China show in the closest possible fashion the transition of the theory of permanent revolution in action" (DB, p. 18). Like the Holy Roman Empire (neither holy, nor Roman nor empire), the GPCR was neither proletarian, nor cultural, nor revolution. A section of bureaucracy tries to drive out the other from power—does that mean revolution? Does that affect culture in any way? Is that proletarian in nature? The answers are quite obvious. Do the anti-democratic and anti-working class policies constitute an application of the theory of permanent revolution? Unfortunately, May Stark does not explain.

There is another discovery by May Stark that deserves a research degree from Mandel-Maitan-Frank Academy. Here is the gem for you: "That Mao Tse-tung as well as the Vietnamese leaders understand and are guided by the theory of permanent revolution as expounded by Trotsky is shown by both their writings and their revolutionary victories" (DB, p. 18). There is much in the bulletins about "their revolutionary victories. "As for their writings, one quotation from Mao and two from Giap have nothing in common with Trotskyism. Rather, they support the Stalinist theory of revolution by stages. One could as well pick up some quotations at random from Stalin and prove as easily that Stalin understood and was guided by the theory of permanent revolution! After all, the USSR under Stalin also emerged victorious in the World War II and Stalin did defeat and annihilate the left opposition.

Bill Yaffe does recognise the differences between Maoism and Trotskyism. He admits the fact that "China increased the relative isolation of the Indochinese revolution in normalizing its relations with the US." But he forgets facts regarding Vietnam or refuses to draw the correct conclusions from them. He reads about the necessity of "growing over of the struggle into socialist revolution" and jumps to the conclusion that the Vietnamese theoreticians have "eliminated all Maoist mechanicalism." As the Vietnamese agree "on the role of the party as the leader of the struggle in all areas and at all times," he hastens to tell us that his heroes have come "close to our own theory" (SWP DB, Vol. 31, No. 24, p. 29).

What May Stark and Bill Yaffe fail to see is that even Stalin could talk about the "growing over into socialist revolution." Even Stalin could write about the democratic revolution as a preparation for socialist revolution. That does not eliminate mechanicalism, that does not bring the Chinese or the Vietnamese close to our theory. What is essential in our theory is first to reject the separation of democratic revolution from the socialist revolution, and second, the rejection of any sort of alliance with the bourgeoisie during the struggle. To the Chinese and to the Vietnamese these are not acceptable. To them, the democratic revolution must precede the socialist revolution as a necessary preparation which is totally rejected by Trotskyism. Neither does the "role of the party as the leader of the struggle in all areas and at all times" bring them any closer to us. The idea may be better defined as the essence of totalitarianism. We are opposed to the idea of the leadership of the party in "all areas and at all times." Unlike Stalins and Zdanovs, we are opposed to thought regimentation and we defend the freedom of artists, literateurs and scientists. It is painful to find any comrade in our movement praising the Chinese or the Vietnamese for such anti-Marxist ideas and practices.

Liquidationism

The attempts to revise Trotskyism on one hand and to present the enemies of Trotskyism in favourable light on the other with all sorts of lies spring from one and the same source. If we do not want to be hypocritical enough to hide the truth, we must call it liquidationism. Even some of our ablest comrades have become frustrated. They have lost confidence in themselves and in the F. I. They have lost their faith in the Transitional Program, in the strategy of party building. So they are seeking shortcuts and alternatives. They find it in some petty-bourgeois currents here and there and that is sufficient, they think, to relieve them of the trouble of building the sections of the F. I. in a number of countries under very unfavourable conditions. The advocacy for the Chinese, the Vietnamese or the Cuban leadership is nothing but a rationalisation of this liquidationism that intends to convince us that some petty-bourgeois currents are capable of becoming substitutes for a Trotskyist organisation.

This liquidationism has allowed Maoists, neo-anarchists and the like to infiltrate in our ranks with a view to sabotage our organisation. The activities of the PRT (C) are an instance to the point. In order to further the liquidationist activities, unjust and improper means of factional politics have been adopted. Our Canadian section and the SWP of USA have become the main targets of attack by the liquidators. What is going on in Canada and USA is not a discussion in a principled way but a secret sect has started a crusade against the defenders of Trotskyism to disrupt the organisations there as a necessary step for destroying the Fourth International. The Barzman letter (SWP DB, Vol. 31, No. 27) shows the section in true colours and it should serve as an eye-opener to all.

That is why, to defend the F. I. means to support the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency today. The sect that opposes it and encourages fissiparous, anti-Trotskyist, unprincipled trends in almost every country must be discarded and its line must be rejected. We must affirm it unequivocally that there can be no alternative to a Trotskyist program and no substitute for a Trotskyist party.

Lest liquidationism finds a stay in our organisation we must uproot it completely. This necessitates a due recognition of the fact that even the leadership of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency is not free from liquidationist ideas. What others have done in case of China and Vietnam, they intend to do in case of Cuba. They are willing to substi-

tute the Castroist regime for a Trotskyist organisation in Cuba, just as others intend to substitute the Stalinist parties for a Trotskyist organization in China and Vietnam. Even the SWP of USA does not call for a political revolution in Cuba and does not call for a Trotskyist party there.

The Revolutionary Tendency in USA was correct in criticizing this position. A healthy workers' state could be established only on the basis of workers' democracy and that being absent in Cuba, it was from the very beginning, like China and Vietnam, despite the non-Stalinist origin of the leadership, a deformed workers' state. The deformity and degeneration have gone further and it cannot be explained away with a reference to the pressure of the Soviet bureaucracy as the "majority" attempts to do. Whether you call a leadership Stalinist or not, if it does not practice workers' democracy, it is bound to serve the interests of reaction and to hinder the progress of world revolution. Hence a Trotskyist program and a Trotskyist organisation become absolutely necessary in every country, and Cuba can be no exception to it. Gerald Clark is quite correct when he says — "the Cuban regime has succumbed to Stalinism and can no longer expect our uncritical support. A call for political revolution in Cuba and the creation of a revolutionary Trotskyist party is therefore the only correct position to take" (SWP DB, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 11).

To conclude, I wish to repeat the prophetic words of Comrade Peng Shu-tse: "Replacing the Transitional Program with the strategy of guerrilla warfare, neglecting the most serious work in the working class and its traditional organizations, i.e., the trade unions and continuing to adapt ourselves to different petty-bourgeois currents and leaderships, cannot only not build an International but lead our movement into a blind alley." ("Return to the Road of Trotskyism," IIB, No. 5, March 1969, p. 23). In fact, it has led to the blind alley, called liquidationism. Today we are asked to support the petty-bourgeois leaderships in China, Vietnam and Cuba, and to desist from building our sections there. Tomorrow, they will find more revolutionary and more realistic currents elsewhere and advise us to dissolve the Fourth International. We reject the advice with all the contempt it deserves and guard the democratic heritage of our movement against the bureaucratic infiltrations and petty-bourgeois manipulations. We hope the tenth congress will reject the line of liquidators and return to the road of Trotskyism as printed out by Peng Shu-tse, Joseph Hansen and Gerald Clark.

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