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Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency

Letter to the International Executive Committee

The signers below are carrying out an obligation to explain to the Fourth International the reasons that led them to decide to vote against the proposal of the LTF (Leninist Trotskyist Faction) on Portugal, to cease being part of the same, and to continue voting against the proposal of the Majority on the Portuguese revolution.

Brussels, February 1976

To the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International

The signers below, leaders of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Argentina), the Liga Socialista (Venezuela), the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Perú), the Liga Socialista (México), the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Uruguay), are carrying out an obligation to inform you, and through you the entire Fourth International, that they have decided to break from the Leninist Trotskyist Faction because of disagreeing with the line developed in the resolution "The Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution," approved by the said faction (published in English in *Intercontinental Press*, No. 37 of 1975 and in Spanish in *IDB* No. 4 of the Argentine PST). The fundamental reason for this disagreement is the refusal of the comrades of the LTF, mainly the leaders of the Socialist Workers party of the United States, to agree with us that "the most important aspect of our activity should be to defend, expand, and centralize the germs of dual power . . ." and that ". . . the Portuguese masses know the names of the forms taken by these embryos. They are the worker and neighborhood commissions, the occupation of business establishments and houses, and the soldiers assemblies and committees. Our major task is to develop and attempt to centralize these revolutionary organs and procedures." (Letter from Nahuel Moreno to Joe Hansen, July 17, 1976, in the *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 13, No. 1, January 1976.)

Despite constituting a broad majority within the LTF, we have decided not to challenge either its name or organization. This is because the faction was primarily the fruit of the efforts, unselfishness, and sacrifices of the leadership of the SWP (to maintain the formalities, it would be better to say a group of leaders of the SWP). As homage to such efforts, and in recognition of the leading role of these comrades, which resulted in such benefits for our international, we abstain from posing the formally "democratic" right that we could exercise.

As follows implicitly from this acknowledgment, we continue to maintain the same criticisms that we made of the majority faction at the time, criticisms that led us to vote to reject the "First Draft Theses on Portugal for the February 1976 Plenum of the IEC" (*IDB* of the PST, No. 5). We see no other alternative but to call for a meeting of all the leaders of the Fourth International who agree in principle with our criticisms of both documents to consider

the advisability of constituting ourselves into a faction or tendency on the basis of a clear politico-organizational program.

Signed:

Andrés (U), Andrés (V), Antonio, Antonio Sá Leal, Arturo, Carlos, Capa, Eduardo, Ernesto, Eva, Fierro, Fernando, Julio, María Ester, Marcela, Miguel, Nora, Petiso, Ramón, Ricardo Hernández, Tito, Tuco, Romero.

Later Comrade Ricardo of México withdrew from the process of forming the Tendency and the following leaders of the Liga Socialista Revolucionaria (Spain), the Liga Operária (Brazil), the Liga Socialista Revolucionaria (Italy), the Tendencia Internacionalista of México, the Bloque Socialista (Colombia) joined in the convocation of a Constitutive Meeting:

Antenor, Camilo, Carlos, Chon, Darío (I), Darío (C), Edgar, Eduardo, Efigenio, Felipe, Gladys, Gustavo, Jaime, Kemel, Lucas, Luis Carlos, Marcos, Mariano, Ricardo, Socorro, Telésforo, Zezé.

I. Let's Save the International by Overturning the Majority's Policies

The Significance of the Eleventh World Congress

The Eleventh Congress of our international, which has been called for next year, will be held in the context of a class struggle favoring our growth to a greater extent than at any time since our foundation. This context is marked by a spectacular upsurge of the masses combined with a grave general economic crisis affecting the entire capitalist world.

The qualitative element differentiating this upsurge that began with the Portuguese revolution on April 25, 1974, is that, after thirty years, the center of the world revolution is returning to the advanced countries and to the industrial working class. Besides Portugal, the Spanish masses, and, to a lesser degree, the Italian and French are moving onto the stage. Within the imperialist countries, the democratic struggles have gained in importance, principally those of the oppressed nationalities, owing to their proletarian weight, as in the case of the Catholics in Ireland and the Basques and Catalans in Spain.

At the same time, the upsurge in the colonial and dependent countries is continuing and deepening, the axis being Africa, and, to a lesser extent, the Middle East. In Africa, the victory of the MPLA in Angola gave a great impulse to the upsurge, reaching Rhodesia and mainly the giant that is South Africa where the class struggle is taking the classical forms of urban mobilizations. In the Middle East, the Lebanese revolution, with the immense mobilization of the masses it provoked, is directly influencing the Palestinians in Israel and in the zones occupied by the latter since the 1967 war. In addition, the internationalization of the conflict can carry the revolution into the other Arab countries, mainly Syria.

Despite the uncertainty of the reports, an increase in the

antibureaucratic struggles is to be noted as a product of the world upsurge—such is the case in Poland—as well as the beginning of a crisis in the Chinese bureaucracy.

Also in Latin America, following a series of grave defeats on the Southern Cone, a resurgence of mobilizations is to be noted in the north of the subcontinent, in Central America, and, to a far lesser degree, in Brazil. In addition, in Argentina there are signs that the defeat of the proletariat was not complete.

As a direct consequence of this revolutionary upsurge, the different national parties of the Fourth International have been growing and becoming stronger in a continual process, marked by distinct stages, that has been going on since the mid-1960s.

Nevertheless, while it is certain that the objective situation in the class struggle and our concomitant growth have opened a favorable perspective for us, it is also certain that we are passing through a critical situation, the product of seven years of intense ideological, tendency, and factional struggle, which has cost us public polemics, splits of national parties, the disappearance of major sections, and which has presented us with the permanent danger of a split in our world party. When the Eleventh Congress is held we will have spent eight years dragging along in this chronic crisis.

In view of all the above, it can be seen that the agenda of the next congress has inadmissible omissions, which if they are retained would place in danger its real productivity. We believe that it is imperative to introduce some modifications and to reorient accordingly the preparatory discussion, which has been lamentably delayed. The agenda is incomplete in relation to the key points in the class struggle; the indispensable analysis of the Portuguese revolution is not enough, it is necessary to incorporate a point on Spain and another on the revolution in southern Africa, beginning with the Angolan civil war. Likewise a discussion is urgent on Latin America and the past participation of the international there, since this postponed balance sheet would be very useful, both to arm ourselves for new struggles in this continent and to judge our current policies as a whole.

But the gravest omission, which practically invalidates the present agenda, is the one relating to the decisive point on the present crisis in our international and the policies needed to overcome it.

The Responsibility of the Majority

Our tendency holds that the responsibility for this crisis rests solely with the majority leadership of our world party. At the Ninth Congress it imposed on us its guerrillaist orientation and at the Tenth its policy toward the “new mass vanguard,” a euphemism behind which it hides its consistent ultraleftism, an orientation and policy that has taken us away from the broad masses and led us to give up the Transitional Program and its method of mobilizing them. Owing to this, all the groups adhering to the IMT (International Majority Tendency) that had to confront the prerevolutionary situation that appeared in their countries, as occurred with the sections in Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile in turn, and as is now occurring in Portugal, suffered a total crisis. The current crisis of the demoralized French section, deeply divided into various tendencies, broke out just when a new rise of the workers movement demanded the utmost audacity and iron unity

on our part so as not to miss the opportunity it opened up for us. We can already say: as a consequence of the policy of the IMT, our international, which is led by them, is unable to utilize the new struggles of the French proletariat to advance by a colossal leap in that country.

The majority within the Majority are trying to evade drawing up a balance sheet of these disastrous results by means of a “spectacular” maneuver, which consists of pursuing unification or reunification of groups claiming to belong to our international in some countries, in order to boast of the great “successes” of their “policy.” Parallel to this, they are making a change, more apparent than real, orienting toward the centrists, and accentuating their old councilist and workerist deviation, in order to better disguise their perennial vanguardism and ultraleftism, thereby laying the basis for new crises and failures for our international.

Let no one try to avoid an accounting by claiming they were misinformed. It is necessary to demand of the Majority that they account for their “successes” in Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, and Portugal, the countries that have undergone revolutionary crises. The Eleventh Congress must consider the unifications that have occurred in recent months, but in addition it will be a propitious occasion to demand of the present leadership that they report on the fate of some of their fervent adherents, like the POR(C), the PRT(C), the official Chilean section, and the Portuguese LCI. The Eleventh Congress must likewise judge whether the present light-minded political turn of the IMT is an advance toward the solution of the crisis in the Fourth International or whether it is, as we think, a new danger to the development of our world party.

An Iron Dilemma: Either We Overturn the Orientation of the Majority Or the Crisis Will Deepen

The Bolshevik Tendency does not claim that the militants of our international as a whole agree with our analysis of the crisis. Nor do we expect that they will agree with the appraisals formulated in this document concerning our immediate past. Every self-respecting militant has the obligation to defend the past, if he thinks it was correct, as well as the right not to make a judgment on it. But what we do demand of the IMT and LTF leaders and militants in positions of responsibility, mainly the former, is that they reflect deeply and seriously on the crises and tensions that currently exist both in the international as a whole as well as in various national parties belonging to it. We urge them to look at the present reality of the class struggle in Europe, the center of the world revolution. We invite them to follow the magnificent example of the leaders of the Chilean IMT, who have placed the interests of our world party above any factional interest, observing without fear the present reality, both its internal aspects as well as those of the class struggle, so as to draw progressive conclusions oriented toward overcoming the current crisis politically. Within the framework of this crisis, we note as an auspicious fact that sectors of the leadership of our dynamic and powerful French section, of the audacious leadership of the Spanish IMT, and of the leadership of the IMT itself have sought to open up for consideration by our parties in these countries a new policy, the axis of which is an orientation toward the broad Socialist and Communist masses. Unless this

opening toward a new policy is concretized, unless we move completely away from flirting with, or speculating over, the "new mass vanguard" and the centrists, as well as any bending toward councilist workerism, and orient ourselves resolutely toward the European Socialists and Communists and the peoples of the oppressed nationalities struggling for national self-determination, the road toward overcoming the crisis in the international will be blocked more and more.

The dilemma confronting the Eleventh Congress is clear, sharp, and plain to see: either the current councilist orientation of the IMT, directed toward the organizations of the centrist "vanguard," will be ratified, thus deepening the bankruptcy and crisis of our world party as a whole and paving the way for new disasters like those provoked in Argentina, Chile, and Portugal; or this orientation will be defeated and our European parties will turn resolutely toward the broad Socialist and Communist masses and toward the oppressed nationalities in order to tear them out of the treacherous influence of the reformist leaderships and to construct Trotskyist parties with mass influence.

For a Minimum, Principled Agreement to Save the International

In the face of this iron dilemma, the resolution of which will determine to a great extent the future of our international and the role it will play in this stage of a worldwide upsurge, the Bolshevik Tendency declares that without abandoning its invitation to all the militants to join up, it views adherence as secondary for the moment, since what is primary is to gain an agreement of leaders and militants around a common minimum program that would enable us to defeat, once and for all, the calamitous orientation laid out by the IMT for the international. This program cannot be anything but *repudiation of the vanguardism, workerism, and councilism of the IMT and its new orientation toward the centrists, an implacable struggle to extirpate the strong vestiges of the Majority's ultraleftism and to eradicate the opportunist dangers of their policy; and, finally, a battle for a Trotskyist line centered on the broad Socialist and Communist masses and on the oppressed nationalities as the only possibility of winning them away from the treacherous leaderships and thus defeating the trap of popular frontism which they are proffering to them.*

With this fundamental question clarified, all that remains is to explain the reasons that impelled us to organize a new tendency, the Bolshevik, and those that led us to believe that the optimum would be for all the conscious militants and leaders of our international to join it.

II. Seven Years of Unrelenting Internal Struggle

Let's Apply the Marxist Method in Analyzing Our Recent History

We will not succeed in overcoming the current crisis and internal division unless we explain them in the light of a correct Marxist approach. Up to now, both the LTF and the IMT have shown themselves totally incapable of doing this.

For us, the only analysis through which we can correctly approach the past and the present, and prepare ourselves for the future, is the one founded on the class struggle and our ties to it. This is the "red thread" that must guide us in studying the divisions, reunifications, and struggles of tendencies: only by combining the situation of the workers and popular movement concretely with the strategy and tactics advanced by the international and its tendencies can we classify the distinct stages that have been lived through. The sectors that emerged with flying colors, strengthened by the tests, were always those that managed to remain linked to the movement of the masses, participating in their struggles, raising slogans that fit their needs and consciousness, and seeking to get them to advance toward the socialist revolution.

Thus, while it is true that the periods of retreat ended in a general weakening of our ranks that affected all the tendencies, revolutionary upsurges—as we have seen in the West beginning with the Cuban revolution—have to the contrary upheld and strengthened those of our sections that consistently stuck to an orientation aimed at responding concretely to the struggles that this upsurge placed on the agenda.

The reunification of the decade of the sixties, for example, which permitted the creation of the United Secretariat, was a direct consequence of the colossal impact of the triumph of the Cuban revolution in the Western world, and an indirect consequence of the Hungarian and Polish revolutions against the Soviet bureaucracy. The correct definition of the newly formed Cuban workers state and the correct policy adopted toward it, as well as the reaffirmation of the counterrevolutionary character of Stalinism and the insistence on the necessity of maintaining a completely independent policy, enabled us to properly arm ourselves to meet the different situations that the class struggle opened up for us at the time, leaving outside of the international, to fall behind more and more, the incurable sectarians (Healy, Lambert), and those opportunists (Pablo, Posadas) who, with an apparent concern for the mass movement and its dynamics, justified giving way to the reformist apparatuses or bourgeois nationalists.

The correct orientation laid out by us made possible not only the reunification on a serious programmatic basis but the colossal progress of our international in the United States—rooted in the movement in defense of Cuba, first, and against the war in Vietnam later—and in France as a consequence of May 1968. The correct policy of democratic mobilization of the student movement geared to the workers movement transformed the French League into the first Trotskyist party with more than a thousand militants, and by that into the most powerful party of the Fourth International at the beginning of the decade of the seventies.

Ultraleft Guerrillaism

Unfortunately what was a colossal advance for our international, the strengthening of the French League, was transformed into an obstacle. The couple of thousand comrades who joined our ranks in France brought not only their enthusiasm, spirit of self-sacrifice, and talents, but also their political backwardness, their illusions, and their impressionistic methodology typical of university circles. Through this dead weight, the ultraleftism of the

European student milieu became disseminated in our world party. Starting with the glorification of "Che" Guevara and the Cuban revolution, they engaged in putting across the method of rural guerrilla focuses in "exotic" continents, mainly Latin America, the land of their heroes. This deviation would not have had the grave repercussions it did if it had not been combined with two other phenomena. A majority sector of the leadership of the international let itself likewise be influenced by the guerrilla "fashion." Because of this, the understandable infantile extremism of the student milieu became fused with the improvised senile extremism of some of the old leaders, setting off a general guerrilla "eruption" in our whole European movement.

To this conglomeration was added—giving it encouragement and justification—an important sector of the Trotskyists in Argentina, Bolivia, and other countries of the continent, who transmitted into our ranks the pressure of the Latin American guerrilla vanguard, which in turn reflected the plebeian and petty-bourgeois sectors radicalized by the revolutionary crisis.

In consequence of all this, the Ninth World Congress voted by a big majority for a guerrillaist orientation in Latin America, according to which the Trotskyist parties and nuclei had to prepare themselves technically, for a prolonged period, for rural guerrilla war on a continental scale (although the Colombian guerrillas, who did represent a real manifestation of the peasant struggle, were ignored). This orientation stood in flat opposition to the real course of the upsurge of the Latin American masses, which, beginning with the close of the decade of the sixties, proceeded by reanimating the workers movement in the big cities, the epicenter being the Southern Cone of the continent. In its practical consequences the common denominator was the predominance of ultraleftism aimed exclusively at sectors of the vanguard, the systematic depreciation of the democratic struggles of the broad masses and an incapacity to utilize to the utmost all the legal openings won by the mobilization of the workers and the people from the different bourgeois regimes. This incapacity is aggravated by the fact that these legal interludes will always be very short, compelling us to utilize them intensely and with full audacity.

The clearest consequences emerged between the ninth and tenth congresses. Whereas in Bolivia the POR (Moscoso) maintained a proguerrilla and sectarian policy toward the first Popular Assembly and toward Banzer's coup later, which led to its disappearance in fact, in Argentina Santucho's PRT-ERP, consistently developing the petty-bourgeois guerrillaist orientation, broke with the Fourth and took completely to populist terrorism. Despite everything, the leaders of the Majority never acknowledged that the bankruptcy of its policy and the disastrous consequences in Latin America stemmed from the resolution of the Ninth Congress on this continent. To the contrary, at the Tenth Congress they continued to insist on guerrilla war, although reducing it to terrorism and displacing it to the cities.

The Vanguardist Ultraleftism of the Tenth Congress

The commencement of the mobilization of the students and workers in Europe opened the door to the extension of

the errors of the IMT to this continent. Thus the Tenth World Congress voted to extend ultraleftism in the European sections to the terrain of theory, strategy, and tactics.

The Tenth Congress should have played the role of arming our European sections to meet the capitalist offensive together with the workers movement; to combine this with the anti-imperialist struggle of the oppressed nationalities of the colonies and semicolonies of Europe against imperialism; to confront the dictatorships of the continent with an essentially bourgeois-democratic program of struggle; to understand the unequal development of the European revolutionary process, and thereby the impossibility of a single strategy and program for all of the countries of Europe. But, to the contrary, at the Tenth Congress the IMT demanded a single strategy for the whole continent: "winning hegemony in the broad vanguard"; and a single program of ten points for all the countries of Europe that ignored all of the foregoing guidelines.

In this program, as in the entire European document of the IMT, our activity was oriented toward the creation of organs of dual workers and popular power, mainly "workers control," in the whole continent. Not content with this, the IMT contended that there were three tactics by which to construct a party: entryism, independent construction, and "winning hegemony in the broad vanguard" in order to transform it into an "adequate instrument" to lead the revolution. And it stated that the latter tactic for the construction of revolutionary parties in all capitalist Europe was the latter, discarding both entryism and the independent construction of Trotskyist parties. The results of this orientation were not long in appearing.

A large number of young activists moving toward Trotskyism found in the policy of the Majority a guide to continue throwing themselves happily into their "exemplary" actions, together with the ultraleft vanguard from which they came, separating themselves more and more from the concrete problems facing the exploited masses of the continent. The search for the desired "social revolution" led them to forget the democratic struggles.

Thus it was that the possibility and real perspective of constructing strong Trotskyist parties through consistent work in the mass movement was watered down into hope in the development of the "broad vanguard" and the supposed possibility of "winning political hegemony" within it.

The LTF, A Milestone

The guerrillaist orientation of the leadership of the international aroused a current of opinion that harshly criticized such deviations from the Trotskyist program and method. Finally, in March 1973, a minority of our workers organization founded the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency. In view of the Majority's persistence in following ultraleft errors, the LTT converted itself into a faction some months before the Tenth Congress.

The LTF was the correct reply and the reflection in the ranks of the Latin American upsurge, although in a very uneven way because of its extreme weakness in two of the key countries—Chile and Bolivia. It offered a political alternative to the international's crisis in orientation and it outlined in a precise manner both the errors and deviations of the Majority as well as the disastrous

consequences implicit in them. For the LTF, the strategy of Trotskyism continued to be the construction of Leninist combat parties based on the Transitional Program and its method and thereby oriented toward the movement of the workers and the masses. It was intransigent application of this policy that explains the strengthening of the LTF during this upsurge, which found its maximum expression in the PST, a party that, after the split with the guerrillaists in 1968 and the "Cordobazo" (which opened a prerevolutionary situation in Argentina), correctly utilized the period of legality to work in the mass movement, steadily gaining in strength, as was recognized by the Tenth Congress which characterized it as the most powerful Trotskyist party in the world. If the antiguerrillaist current at the Ninth Congress constituted a tiny minority, at the Tenth Congress the LTF included about half the militants of the entire international.

At the Tenth Congress, the LTF was able to politically and theoretically confront the IMT's orientation toward the "new mass vanguard." It pointed out that this orientation was the extension into Europe of the guerrillaist ultraleftism of the Ninth Congress, which drew us away from work among the masses, from the possibility of mobilizing them and breaking them away from the leadership of the reformist parties, and prevented us from carrying out the task of constructing solid Trotskyist parties. It pointed out, too, that the IMT's orientation was preparing the way for new and grave fiascos for our world party. However, the warnings of the LTF were not listened to by the majority of the international, and the IMT's document, *Theses on Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe*, was approved by the Tenth Congress.

In their draft of the European document for the Eleventh World Congress, voted for by the majority of the US, the IMT claims that its theses for the Tenth Congress were correct, and tries to have this affirmation voted for by incorporating it into the text of the draft. Thus it repeats the very grave error of the Tenth Congress which, against all the warnings of the LTF, endorsed the Ninth World Congress's guerrillaist deviation in Latin America.

Every congress of our international has the obligation of drawing a balance sheet on the analyses and policies voted for at the previous congress in order to determine what was correct or in error in them. So as to avoid any equivocation, and so that every militant in a position of responsibility knows what stand to take, it is necessary for us to make a detailed analysis of the proposals that were presented by the IMT and the LTF at the Tenth Congress, mainly in relation to Europe, the center of the world revolution.

III. The Test of the Two Opposing Lines at the Tenth Congress

Which Program Was Correct for Portugal and Spain, the IMT's or That of the LTF and the PST?

No one in our international denies that the center of the world revolution today is Europe, and, within Europe, Portugal and Spain. Consequently any analysis of the lines that were voted on at the Tenth World Congress must begin by asking what the IMT and LTF or some of their sectors said with respect to the policy to be applied in these countries, in order to compare it with the living reality.

The European document presented by the IMT at the Tenth Congress did not say a single word on policies for Portugal and Spain. Apparently these two countries were viewed as coming under the general ten-point program for all of Europe, which did not pose a single democratic task.

In contrast to this absolute, total silence of the IMT, the document of the LTF on Europe said the following:

"The European document does not emphasize that the fight for *democratic demands* and *basic civil liberties* is an important task for revolutionary Marxists in our epoch, not only in countries like *Spain* and Greece, but in the bourgeois democracies as well.

"Concern for democratic demands and tasks is absent from the document on all levels. For instance, nothing is said about the role and importance of the struggles by *oppressed nationalities* from the *Basques* to the Laplanders. Ireland is not even mentioned in this regard." ("A Criticism of the United Secretariat Majority Draft Resolution on 'The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe'—an Initial Contribution to the Discussion," by Mary-Alice Waters, published in the *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 3, March 1973, p. 21. Emphasis added.)

For its part, the document approved by the PST pointed out:

"The European document does not prepare our sections for this kind of situation. The document's failure to raise the demand, 'British troops out of Ireland, Portuguese out of the colonies!' shows its indifference to *basic democratic demands*. This indifference leaves the Spanish, Greek, and Portuguese sections abandoned to semifascist regimes that have destroyed all democratic rights.

"What do we tell the workers in those countries? That they should struggle for 'workers control' or for our 'socialist model'? Would it not appear much more correct to the comrades of the majority for us to put forward some specific democratic demand (constituent assembly, free elections, freedom for political prisoners, legality for political parties, or some other more suitable demand) as the main political demand for those countries?" ("A Scandalous Document—A Reply to Germain," by Nahuel Moreno, published in the *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 11, No. 4, January 1974, p. 63. Emphasis added.)

The Trotskyist militants, especially the Spanish and Portuguese, have a magnificent opportunity to check which of the opposing lines at the congress proved to be correct. The Portuguese comrades will be able to evaluate what results might have been obtained if the Fourth International had raised, one or two years before April 25, 1974, the slogans calling for the withdrawal of the Portuguese troops from the colonies, freedom for the political prisoners and a constituent assembly against Caetano, that is, the slogans proposed by the LTF and the PST.

For their part, the Spanish comrades can check both programs to see which of the two provided an adequate analysis and political reply to the Spanish revolutionary process. The IMT now tells us in its European document for the Eleventh World Congress that the Spanish masses have mobilized "... beginning from the conquest of democratic rights and the release of all the political prisoners, the dismantling of the repressive apparatus, and the fight for the right of self-determination of the

oppressed nationalities. . . ” (“Draft Theses on Tactics of the Fourth International in Capitalist Europe,” submitted by Aubin, Claudio, Duret, Fourier, Frey, Georges, Ghulam, Jones, Kurt, Otto, Roman, Walter, and Werner. *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 13, No. 3, November 1976, p. 5.) But all this is nothing more than the bourgeois-democratic demands that were absent from the European document of the Tenth Congress and present in the documents of the LTF and the PST. The Spanish comrades, who have been able to evaluate the impact of the struggles for *national self-determination*, particularly those of the Basques, on the revolutionary process in Spain, and who had the good judgment to raise an adequate slogan in this respect, should check which of the opposing policies at the Tenth Congress gave a correct orientation in this field. The comrades of the Spanish LCR, who are today raising the bourgeois-democratic slogans of a constituent assembly and a republic, rectifying previous errors, should state whether the delay of several years in applying this line was related to the debate at the Tenth Congress, and should specify who best armed the Spanish Trotskyists to meet the course of the process: the IMT, which ignored these slogans, or the LTF and the PST, which raised them as one of the axes of its program for Spain and Europe.

Were the Portuguese Colonies Fundamental Elements or Otherwise in the European Revolutionary Process?

Today no one in our international questions the close relation between the revolution in Portugal and the struggle of the Portuguese colonies for national liberation. But many comrades have forgotten or never knew, because they are new recruits, that what is now accepted unanimously, gave rise to a sharp polemic before the Tenth Congress. At the time, both the IMT and the SWP refused to take into account this relationship and consequently refused to outline a policy in this regard for Europe. In fact, the European document of the IMT approved at the Tenth Congress does not even mention the struggle of the Portuguese colonies nor its direct relation to the European revolution.

In opposition to this, the European document of the PST characterized the document of the IMT with this subtitle: “A Document That Stands Mute Before the Vietnam of European Imperialism, the Portuguese Colonies.” The PST stated: “The program put forward by the majority in their document leaves out a fundamental point that reflects their evident forgetfulness about the imperialist character of Europe. They say nothing about European imperialism’s Vietnam: the guerrillas and the national liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies.” Later, in describing the war, the conclusion is definitive: “This is the reality of the class struggle in the Portuguese colonies; it is truly the Vietnam of European imperialism.” (“A Scandalous Document,” op. cit., pp. 57-58.) And the following question was asked: “Do the majority comrades perhaps believe they can ‘build revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe’ in this period without giving primary importance to the struggle against European imperialism, the assassin of the African people?” (Ibid., p. 58.) This query still remains valid, not only for the Portuguese Trotskyists, but for all the European Trotskyists. We repeat: What results might have been obtained in the development of all of our European sections if the Fourth had carried on a central,

systematic campaign oriented toward a mobilization against Portuguese imperialism, for the withdrawal of its troops from the colonies and against the support forthcoming from the other bourgeoisies of the continent? The question likewise remains directed to the leadership of the SWP, which repeatedly refused to incorporate this document of the PST and the necessity of supporting the struggle of the Portuguese colonies in the official documents of the LTF.

The African anticolonial struggle likewise furnished an opportunity to test the two different criteria advanced in relation to armed struggle, which were detailed in the two counterposed programs. Since the Ninth Congress, the IMT had pressed forward a suicidal line of small groups practicing a guerrilla strategy throughout Latin America; at the Tenth Congress, the IMT ratified this line, transforming it into a strategy of armed struggle in the abstract. The line was broadened and reinforced with a policy in Europe of carrying out violent “exemplary actions” jointly with the “broad vanguard”—“exemplary actions,” which, called by their right name, were concretely terrorist actions or other similar variants—and, consequently, the obligation was placed on our sections in this continent of “taking the initiative” in this sense, or, if they could not do so, at least preparing themselves for it as their central task.

Rejecting these Majority proposals favoring violent actions by minorities isolated from the masses, the PST, a member of the LTF, added a proviso of unconditional support to the armed struggle of the guerrillas of the Portuguese colonies, which did emanate from the masses. Thus it said the following in its European document: “Is it not notable that those who defend guerrilla war and armed struggle for Latin America do not even mention the heroic guerrillas in the Portuguese colonies? How can it be explained that they do not raise the need to defend these guerrillas against the brutal attacks of European imperialism? How is it to be understood that armed struggle is proposed for an entire period on a whole continent dominated by Yankee imperialism and not a single word is said about the armed struggle in countries dominated by their own imperialism?” (Ibid., p. 58.)

There are leaders of the IMT who want to play down the grave error in their analysis and policy by saying that if it is true that they did not speak of the Portuguese colonies in the European document, they did do so in the international document. To demonstrate this, they point to two quotations in their *General Political Resolution*: “The progress made by the anti-imperialist armed struggle in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau is beginning to weaken Portuguese colonialism.” They then described the consequences of this weakening without mentioning European and Portuguese imperialism, arriving at the conclusion that South Africa and Rhodesia might open a war against the Black movements, the “repercussions” of which “in South Africa, and in the United States, and for the world imperialist economy, would be laden with consequences.” (*International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 20, October 1973, p. 11.) The other quotation is programmatic; among the more than thirty tasks laid out on a world scale by the IMT is the following: “. . . international support for . . . the revolutionary movements in the Portuguese colonies.” (Ibid., p. 18.)

These two quotations, the only ones on the Portuguese colonies in a world document, demonstrate unanswerably

that the attack of the PST against the IMT was correct. In the two quotations there is not a single reference to the close relation that exists between the struggle of the Portuguese colonies for national liberation and the revolution in Europe, including Portugal. In none of the quotations is a single word said about the need to mount a centralized campaign in Europe appealing to the Lusitanian and European masses to mobilize "for the withdrawal of the Portuguese troops from the colonies."

The comrades of the IMT do not want to listen to the grave charge that we are leveling against them. We are denouncing them for not having selected as the fundamental axis of our policy for Europe a campaign around the African anticolonial struggle as the SWP did in the U.S. around Vietnam. Suppose that the SWP had done the contrary and had not advanced the slogan of withdrawing the troops from Vietnam; suppose that it did not mention this war in its documents for the U.S., or say a word about its policy concerning Vietnam. And suppose that when they were attacked for not having advanced this slogan, and not having taken the Vietnamese war as a fundamental axis for their activities in the U.S., the leaders of the SWP had replied, as the Majority does today: "This is false, since we said, in a sentence in our international document, that among the thirty tasks we propose on a world scale one offers 'support to the Vietnamese fighters.'" It would be a cynical and irresponsible reply to very grave political charges. This is what the IMT is trying to do with the two sentences we have cited.

So that we can end up by making ourselves understood, we ask the following questions: Which tendency pointed out, before April 25, that a campaign for the withdrawal of the Portuguese troops was a fundamental task for the European revolutionists? Which tendency said that these colonies were the "European Vietnam" and thereby ought to be taken as an essential axis of our policy in Europe? Only one: the PST, as part of the LTF. This is the plain truth.

Who Was Right on the Perspectives in Europe?

The IMT has initiated an oral campaign affirming that the Portuguese revolution and the Spanish upsurge have demonstrated the correctness of their forecasts at the Tenth Congress in contrast to those of the LTF. Nothing is falsified. In their European document for the Tenth World Congress, the IMT prophesied that "If a new revolutionary leadership is not built in the time remaining to us, after successive waves of mass struggles . . . the European proletariat will experience new and terrible defeats of historic scope." ("Theses on Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," published in *Intercontinental Press*, December 23, 1974, p. 1824.) And this "time remaining to us" as set forth in the document and in the report by Comrade Germain at the IEC meeting of December 1972 oscillates between three and six years "during which we must regroup the vanguard as a serious striking force within the workers movement in order to lead the masses in a global confrontation with capitalism that has the possibility of winning." (Report by Germain, cited by Mary-Alice Waters in "An Initial Contribution," op.cit., p.12.)

Against this forecast by the IMT, Comrade Mary-Alice Waters replied in the official document of the LTF: "How

is the perspective in Europe to be estimated? Are we in a period marked by a new rise of workers struggles? Of course. Is it correct to say that such a period will not last indefinitely, that if wave after wave of struggle is defeated the bourgeoisie will succeed in forcefully imposing its solutions? Of course. Is it correct to project the possibility of explosive new prerevolutionary crises and revolutionary upsurges in one or more countries in the next four to five years? Of course. Will such explosions have repercussions throughout Europe? Certainly. Are there exceptional opportunities before us in the coming period for party building? Absolutely. But this is *not* what the document says." And she stresses: "It is particularly false and disorienting to project on a continental scale the idea that the decisive battles will be fought out by 1978 and that the relationship of class forces for the whole next historical period will be determined by them.

"Should the comrades in Sweden believe they have only four to five years before the decisive battles, and must they conduct themselves accordingly?

"On what basis do we decide that West Germany has four or five years, as opposed to eight or eleven, before a revolutionary crisis erupts? . . . Isn't it possible that five years from now, Austria will not have experienced any qualitative transformation in the relationship of class forces?" (Ibid., pp. 12-13.)

Today, three years after the Tenth Congress, we are able to verify which perspective on the European revolution has been borne out. And we can state categorically that what is occurring is an uneven development of the revolution as the LTF foresaw, while neither on a continental scale nor in any of the countries of Europe have we seen the fundamental, "global," and "decisive" struggles or the "terrible defeats of historic scope" predicted by the IMT.

What Type of Struggle Has Occurred in the Majority of the European Countries?

In Chapter II of the IMT's European document approved by the Tenth Congress, entitled "Concrete Forms and Content of the Revolutionary Perspectives in Capitalist Europe," it is stated that the perspective for all of Europe in the current period is "dual power." From this analysis is drawn the general program for all of Europe, concretized in ten central tasks.

The axis of these tasks is to advance "a series of demands (essentially around the axis of the demand for workers control)." All the tasks are placed within an economic and organizational framework, mainly "workers control"; there is not one of a democratic character, and with regard to the anti-imperialist struggles they speak only of the need to "organize international propaganda around the themes of solidarity with anti-imperialist struggles."

The comrades of the Fourth International, especially the Europeans, ought to compare this program with the reality of the class struggle in the continent and with their own real activity to determine if it was of any genuine utility. In how many countries of Europe was there an opportunity to raise in a concrete way, as a central policy, the slogans of dual power and "workers control"? As we know, only in Portugal and in an elementary way. Did the English, French, Italian, Spanish, German comrades have to face situations of dual power and "workers control"?

Absolutely not. Consequently, was a document that posed dual power and "workers control" as central political situations for all of Europe useful to them?

Against this position of the IMT, the LTF, without rejecting "workers control," placed it correctly within the context of the class struggle in Europe, which in most of the continent was defensive, and they agitated against the increase in the cost of living and unemployment; that is, they oriented toward defending the workers against the offensive directed against them by the bourgeoisie and its governments. Thus Comrade Mary-Alice points out that "The basic program for any class-struggle tendency in the factories and trade unions *today* would have to include propaganda advocating workers control, but it would have to be much broader and more politically rounded. Workers control is a fundamental concept of our transitional program, and a goal toward which we are trying to lead masses of workers in struggle. It is not the beginning and end of our class-struggle demands. For example, the European document does not point to the problems of inflation and unemployment as being crucial economic problems of the working class. But they are. The transitional demand for a sliding scale of wages *and* hours should be a fundamental part of any class-struggle trade-union program in Europe today."

And she remarks (after referring to a whole series of other demands): "But all these are among the demands that speak to the needs of the masses of workers we hope someday to lead in the struggle. They indicate the kind of platform on which we can build a class-struggle tendency in the mass workers organizations. Struggles around any one of these broad range of demands can set off a process leading in progression toward workers control, dual power, and the socialist revolution. Any tendency to dissolve the richness of the Transitional Program into propaganda for workers control alone would be seriously disorienting." (Ibid., pp. 16-17.)

The European Trotskyist comrades ought to verify whether this program of the LTF dovetailed, as we believe, with the class struggle in Europe and the tasks of our sections. The Portuguese comrades should say whether dual power and workers control were products of great mobilizations for democratic objectives and in defense of the standard of living and jobs of the working masses. Something similar occurred in Spain. The English, French, Italian, and German comrades ought to say whether in actuality the mobilizations that occurred in their countries centered around the struggle against low wages and unemployment.

With regard to the anti-imperialist struggles we will not stop to take up the question of the Portuguese colonies, since we dealt with it above. But we will point out that the LTF made the "defense of the Irish revolution" a matter of principle, while the IMT limited themselves to describing in two sentences "the centuries-old struggle of the Irish people for unity and independence," and, while they called for support to that struggle, they did not offer any concrete policy for it. The LTF, on the other hand, concretized its anti-imperialist policy in favor of Ireland in a demand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Irish soil.

Another bit can be said with regard to the Vietnamese revolution; although the IMT also supported it, they did not in any way make it as did the LTF, into a central

campaign of the European Trotskyists.

Finally, in relation to the democratic tasks and slogans, since we have dealt sufficiently with the Spanish and Portuguese experience, all that remains is to ask the Greek comrades, and those of West Germany—who are now facing repressive governmental regulations—and the comrades of many other European countries whether democratic demands merit the depreciation with which they were treated in the IMT's European document prepared for the Tenth Congress, or whether to the contrary they were a fundamental instrument of struggle as the LTF maintained.

IV. The Portuguese, European, and African Revolutions Accelerate the Crisis in the IMT

The Upsurge in Spain and the Crisis of Trotskyism in That Country

The first expression of the problems in Europe that brought about the combination of the vanguardist orientation of the Tenth Congress and the revolutionary upsurge came in Spain. It could not be otherwise. The political formula is almost mathematical: the bankruptcy of the IMT is directly proportional to the intensity of the revolutionary crisis.

During recent years, the upsurge of the working class and its political revival, the passage of almost the entire middle class into the opposition, the resurgence of the struggles of the oppressed nationalities, forced the Francoists to retreat so that the masses were able to win broader and broader legal openings. The reformists, especially the CP, were able to take advantage of this situation, strengthening themselves enormously. Thanks to an intelligent utilization of the widening legal openings (publication of semilegal journals, utilization of academic freedoms in the universities, taking advantage of the slightest new chink in the fascist union structure), combined with a policy of making bourgeois-democratic demands, of working clandestinely in the mass movement, mainly the workers movement, and giving audacious impulsion to new organizational forms that permitted it to act as the inspirer of the Workers Commissions, the CP was able, in a little more than ten years, to transform itself into a mass party.

The IMT, and the official section at the time, were incapable of doing what the CP did but in accordance with our revolutionary policy: The IMT comrades did not produce public journals, nor make use of the legal openings to give an impulse to the revolutionary mobilization of the workers and students, nor were the IMT and the official section the most ardent battlers for bourgeois-democratic rights.

In an exceptionally good situation for building a workers party, the IMT's line proved to be a failure. After some early successes, the young Spanish section flew apart into two factions when the majority of the organization sought an alternative to vanguardist ultraleftism and tried to find a line that would link it up with the mass movement.

Instead of providing a solution to the crisis, the leadership of the international carried the previous ultraleftism to new heights: an obsession for armed struggle, support to the petty-bourgeois terrorists, no

understanding of democratic demands. And in its public declaration, "The Death Agony of Francoism," it upheld the general strike and the unity of the revolutionists as a permanent, abstract strategy. This policy placed the Spanish IMT in a critical situation.

Centrist organizations (PTE, ORT, MCE), born at the same time as the Trotskyists, advanced day by day, accompanying the CP in its demand for freedom and democracy, although capitulating to the bourgeoisie along with the Stalinist leadership. Meanwhile, the organization of the IMT found itself isolated and falling behind. The preferred collaborators sought by the Majority opted for the company of the Stalinists!

After these failures, a process of empirical rectifications was initiated: more weight to democratic slogans, shading of the strategy of the general strike, first inclusion of the demand for a republic. But this was not accompanied by a self-criticism of the past nor an explicit denunciation of the IMT's policy, which arouses the suspicion that what is involved is tailing after the Spanish ultras, who are "republican." Thus it is that the Spanish comrades find themselves without clear axes corresponding to the political situation. Lacking characterizations and a concrete program, the comrades are dragged along by events that are developing with increasing speed. The IMT is now trying to cover up the loss of this great historic opportunity by pointing to their growth. The Stalinists carried out the same maneuver in their time when they covered up great political failures by pointing to the quantitative growth of their parties or their electoral showing. Moreover, what the IMT should explain is the reason why this growth has been completely insufficient to modify the lack of weight and political presence of Trotskyism in the Spanish state.

All the groups of the left in Spain are growing as one more consequence of the upsurge of the mass movement. The Majority, like the LTF, is no exception. This affirmation might seem to deny what we said above, that the Majority has come into contradiction with every sharp revolutionary crisis (Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, Portugal). That is not so, since it is necessary to distinguish between a revolutionary process or crisis and an upsurge of the mass movement. In Spain we have not yet undergone a genuine, sharp, revolutionary crisis, nor has one begun. To the contrary, what we are witnessing is an extraordinary upsurge of the masses that has not yet succeeded in overturning the post-Francoist regime, which should certainly transform the upsurge into a revolutionary crisis. The IMT in Spain will continue to grow like every group of the left. But if in the next years, when the upsurge enters its most critical phases, it continues to apply the present workerist and councilist line oriented toward the vanguard and the centrists in place of a correct Trotskyist policy, it will meet disaster.

The Spanish comrades still have time to change this orientation, thus saving what they can from so many years of strenuous and honest, but mistaken, work, and begin to lay the basis for a genuinely Trotskyist Spanish section.

The IMT's Total Failure in Portugal

We have to record that from the beginning a big majority of the Portuguese Trotskyists joined the IMT except for a small group of high-school students, a dozen

approximately, who lined up with the LTF belatedly. Nothing demonstrates more conclusively what we have been saying than the following: approximately a year after April 25, 1974, the pro-Majority group was still publishing clandestine journals. In October 1973—six months before the beginning of the revolution—the same group published four different journals. In November 1973 they published the first number of *Luta Proletaria*, the official organ of the majority group. As against this, the first number of *Combate Socialista*, the organ of the PRT, which sympathized with the LTF, was published as recently as December 1974. The factions started off with a numerical difference of twenty or thirty to one in favor of the IMT. We will not take up a qualitative comparison—prestige, level—in which the difference was much greater.

The time has come for our whole membership to ask the IMT what progress has been made in building the Trotskyist section led by them. They should tell us how many members they had at the end of 1975 and how many they have today. We urge them to say what the whole international knows: the supporters of the Majority are mired in a chronic crisis, with splits, sabotage of activities, bitter factional struggles, which has led to the collapse of the LCI aligned with the Majority. The splitters, when they have not abandoned all activity, have joined organizations that are enemies of the Fourth International. The membership of the international as a whole cannot permit the US to wash its hands of all responsibility for the disaster suffered by the LCI—as it did with the sections of Argentina and Bolivia in their time—for no other reason than the LCI's applying the orientation of the IMT in what it said and what it did. Once again the revolutionary upsurge did not serve the Majority as a colossal lever to multiply and strengthen itself; to the contrary, the upsurge promoted its increasing bankruptcy.

This could not be otherwise, since the IMT clung stubbornly to its schema of directing work toward the ultraleftists ("new mass vanguard"), instead of orienting toward the mass movement and, in particular, toward the Socialist party majority movement. It was not capable, consequently, of taking into account the degree of radicalization and of class consciousness of these workers, linking up firmly with them and elaborating a tactic to mobilize them and bring them to break with their treacherous leadership. They did not even pose this problem—which is fundamental in the Portuguese revolution—since they were occupied with gaining unity of action with the Maoists, the centrists, and the progressive military figures of the MFA (the Portuguese expression of the "new mass vanguard").

The Majority of the international, in bending itself into the tail end of the "new mass vanguard," played along with the various maneuvers cooked up to delude and divide the Portuguese proletariat, as when it went along with the adventures of the FUR and contributed to sowing illusions among its own activists in the "revolutionary" officers of the MFA. The IMT did well in criticizing the FUR, but it forgot to acknowledge by way of self-criticism that the Portuguese LCI did nothing else than carry out to its ultimate consequences the line formulated by the Majority of the international itself.

With regard to the regime, the IMT went way off base. During one stage of the revolution, the IMT refused to qualify the MFA and its government as the main enemy of the Portuguese proletariat, at the same time the IMT

treated the embryos of dual power in a formalistic way by calling for them without simultaneously raising those democratic and transitional slogans that took into account the aspirations of the masses, principally the Socialists. The strengthening of workers democracy and the organs of the class was seen by the IMT as incompatible with the defense of bourgeois-democratic rights. The lack of understanding of the role played by democratic struggles led the IMT into committing such errors as tail-ending the Portuguese CP in the case of the daily *República* and of the Constituent Assembly and of ignoring the agrarian question in the north of the country, interpreting the role of the small peasants in this zone as solely that of supporting the counterrevolution.

The Majority characterized Soares as "public enemy No. 1" of the revolution, thereby losing any possibility of a dialogue with approximately 70 percent of the workers, and, to cap it off, the IMT presented him the gift of not disputing his role as "defender of democracy" against the marked Bonapartist tendencies displayed by the MFA, especially under the Vasco Gonçalves regime.

For us, the current discussion in the French League and in the United Secretariat on the presidential elections in Portugal is only of tactical significance. Whoever limps after Otelo, claiming that he is a "nonbourgeois" candidate voicing the radicalization of the rank-and-file workers, without acknowledging that because of his populist, petty-bourgeois, Bonapartist character and because of his independence from the workers movement he is an agent of the counterrevolutionary plans of the MFA and the bourgeoisie, is doing nothing more than being consistent with the tradition of the IMT, an ultraleft tradition with opportunist lapses, with an additional catch: that they publicly advanced this position when a "majority" group, the LCI, was orienting correctly toward supporting a working-class candidate like Pato. In the same way it is not accidental that the IMT saw only the reactionary victory of Eanes and the SP in the results of the November 25 putsch. They refused to see the other face of the same phenomenon: the provocative role of the "new mass vanguard," which was the protagonist, together with the CP, of the ultraleft putsch that the reaction utilized for a counterattack and initiation of its offensive against the mass movement.

The consequence of all these accumulated errors could not be anything but loss of a historic opportunity to build a great Trotskyist party rooted in the masses.

Capitulation to the Angolan MPLA

In accompaniment with its capitulation to the "progressive officers" of the MFA in Portugal, the IMT capitulated in a no less negative and opportunist way to the Angolan MPLA. The motivation was the same: orienting toward and tail-ending the European and Portuguese ultraleft, which in turn was tagging behind Lusitanian Stalinism.

So long as the main enemy of the Angolan people continued to be Portuguese imperialism, and our program consequently had to bring all the nationalist movements together in a united front that would end up by expelling it, the IMT supported the MPLA in a fratricidal war that pitted it against the other two Black nationalist movements, mistakenly maintaining in unison with the MPLA that the main enemy was the FNLA-UNITA.

That is why the IMT was incapable of denouncing the MPLA for the negotiations it conducted with the occupying Portuguese army to combat the FNLA and the UNITA. Leaders of the IMT raised the slogan that the Portuguese army, upon withdrawing, should turn its arms over to the MPLA, a position that denied the people of Angola the right to resolve their fate through a constituent assembly and free and democratic elections. Thus in *Inprecor*, Comrade Gabriel attacked the soldiers who refused to go to Angola to fight, saying: "And refusal to go to Angola directed 'against imperialism and social imperialism' obviously amounts to refusal to support the MPLA, which is implicitly designated as the 'agent of Moscow.'" This position was also advanced by the LCI in Portugal at the time of the mobilizations of soldiers who refused to embark for Angola. The pronouncement of the IMT in favor of the MPLA against the FNLA-UNITA signified a grave abandonment of the traditional policy of Lenin and the Third International, a policy that in this situation could have no other interpretation than to make an unflagging appeal to the Black movement as a whole to unite in a single, united, anti-imperialist front against Portuguese colonialists.

Later, beginning with September 1975 when the main enemy of the Angolan people was no longer Portuguese imperialism but American imperialism and its agent, the racist government of South Africa, the false position of the IMT was filled with a new content, since the FNLA and the UNITA became converted into allies of the new invaders. From that moment on, its position of giving military and not political support to the MPLA became correct, since the latter was the movement that was struggling arms in hand to defend Angola against the military-colonialist front of the U.S., the South African government and army, and the FNLA-UNITA.

But, as we shall see when we criticize the position of the SWP and the LTF in this stage of the Angola revolution, the lack of understanding of the policy of a united anti-imperialist front of the Black African and world masses led both tendencies to a false position with regard to the Black revolution as a whole.

V. The IMT's Draft Theses for Europe, and the 'Portuguese Laboratory'

The 'Portuguese Laboratory' and the Spanish One

The IMT's draft theses offer a felicitous image in saying that the Portuguese revolution has been a laboratory. Actually, we think that Portugal has anticipated many of the essential features that the other European countries will have to adopt. Nevertheless, our agreement with the IMT begins and ends with the word "laboratory."

According to the IMT, the Portuguese process "... has been characterized by the spectacular weakening of the bourgeois state apparatus, the crisis of leadership of the bourgeoisie, the explosive character of class contradictions and antagonisms, the beginning of decomposition of the bourgeois army, tumultuous initiatives of the masses around the questions of workers control and factory occupations, and the emergence of bodies of self-representation of the masses of workers, poor peasants, and soldiers. All these factors ... dominated the Portuguese scene. ..." ("Draft Theses ..." p. 4.)

This summary is no more than a joke in bad taste, since it describes, point by point, any revolutionary crisis in any country in the world, before or after the Portuguese revolution, while with regard to the latter, it stands in an Olympian way above characterizing it in specific terms. Thus it ignores the determining feature of the Portuguese process: its close relation with the anticolonial war in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau; an omission so scandalous that, rather than being due to an oversight, it appears to be the result of pure imperialist prejudices, and involves nothing more nor less than a slap in the face to the Black anti-Portuguese fighters.

And this is not the only grave oversight, it does not mention the fundamental importance in the Portuguese process of democratic demands and tasks, such as the Constituent Assembly and liquidating the repressive apparatus, and the conquest and defense of bourgeois-democratic rights, especially with regard to the development of workers power.

This oversight is closely linked to another one: the IMT does not compare the courses followed by the revolutions in Portugal and Spain. From the description provided in the document, up to now the characteristic of the Spanish revolutionary crisis that stands out is its bourgeois-democratic trajectory.

Does this signify that the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions have followed diametrically opposite courses, or, as we think, quite comparable courses?

Other characteristics of fundamental importance in the Portuguese revolution—likewise forgotten by the IMT—are:

a. The appearance in Portugal of popular-front governments that serve the bourgeoisie as reactionary weapons, and the counterrevolutionary coups.

b. The decisive role played by the united front of the Communist and Socialist workers and their respective parties in the big leaps forward of the Portuguese revolution (April 25, 1974, and the two replies to Spínola's coups).

c. The strong growth in membership of the reformist parties as a product of the upsurge of the workers and the masses.

d. The counterrevolutionary role played by the Communist party, which served as an agent of the military governments of the MFA that tended toward Bonapartism; and the similar role of the Socialist party as an agent of the bourgeois-democratic counterrevolution.

e. The provocative and ill-fated performance of the "new mass vanguard," especially in the November 25 putsch.

What these characteristics show as a whole not only contradicts the forecasts made by the IMT in their document for the Tenth World Congress, but in addition, and this is the worst, it openly refutes the analysis now offered for the Eleventh Congress. In the "Portuguese laboratory," the historic development demonstrates irrefutably the bankruptcy of the analyses and policies of the IMT. The same is happening in Spain.

Changing Something So That Everything Remains the Same

A series of modifications were made in the draft of the document on Europe for the Eleventh Congress that the IMT presented initially to the United Secretariat, so that the definitive document that was finally adopted differs from the draft. Two of these changes are significant, and,

consequently, it is instructive to underline them.

The first draft reverted back to stressing the same policy as the one voted for at the Tenth Congress when it spoke for ". . . the corollary of this central political project, namely the struggle for Marxist political hegemony within the broad vanguard. . . ."

This "corollary" was eliminated in the final document, which is apparently an advance, but which is so in name only when all that is done is to merely erase a paragraph. It is indispensable, in addition, to draw up a balance sheet, placing before the entire Fourth International the results gained from having adopted at the Tenth Congress the central line of winning political hegemony in the "broad vanguard," the successes that this orientation brought us, the number of our European sections that have actually succeeded in winning political leadership of the "broad vanguard," the strengthening and the drive the Trotskyists have succeeded in gaining in sectors of the masses. If this balance sheet turns out to be negative, it is necessary to declare openly that the orientation voted for at the Tenth Congress was incorrect.

The other important change in the final draft is the addition of a whole subchapter dedicated to the possible formation of popular fronts, a topic that was totally ignored in the original. Likewise another new paragraph was added referring to the feminist movement.

Despite these changes, the new draft, analyzed as a whole, still carries the whole cargo of previous deviations. The apparent change results from the evolution of the ultraleft "vanguard" itself, which has been crystallizing into centrist formations. This obliges the IMT to orient directly toward the centrists, that is, toward the "new vanguard" in its present condition, abandoning the ultraleft organizations. If the IMT at the Tenth Congress oriented toward the ultraleftist "broad vanguard," for the Eleventh it is thinking of bending toward the centrists.

Save for this formal difference, the IMT is repeating for the Eleventh Congress the policy of councilism and of the abstract development of organs of power that it posed for the Tenth Congress, and is reverting to outlining a workerist program, with some modifications of importance in relation to the former. In sum, the current position of the IMT is characterized by a centrist orientation, an organizational policy for the organs of workers and popular power, and a workerist program.

An Orientation Toward Centrism Accompanying the 'Evolution' of the 'Broad Vanguard'

After four years of failure in the attempt to win political leadership of the ultraleftist "broad vanguard," especially the Maoists, the IMT decided to "abandon" them to their fate. But, unfortunately, not for the preferable orientation toward the broad reformist masses and the oppressed nationalities, but to search for a new sector of the ultra "broad vanguard" with which to construct Trotskyist parties. The new companions of the IMT in this stretch of the road are the centrists.

The IMT affirms the existence of advanced social currents that have broken with Stalinism, and later with "Mao-populism," and that "In spite of an incontestable propensity toward centrism . . . can make an important contribution to the building of the revolutionary Marxist party." (Ibid., p. 26.) Elsewhere the document clearly

indicates that the political expression of these currents is organizations like Lotta Continua and the French PSU among others.

We disagree with this characterization of the evolution of the ultraleftist "broad vanguard." It is true that this sector took a progressive step in breaking with Stalinism and reformism, although it moved away from the latter only on very rare occasions. But this progressive period of moving toward us was notably brief and gave way to a process of degeneration that went through an ultraleftist and then centrist stage. Save for the experiences in France and partially Spain, our international missed the opportunity to win these sectors to Trotskyism when they were ripe for it. Still worse: by capitulating politically to them, the IMT hastened their degeneration. Today, far from a dynamic bringing them toward our positions, they are moving further and further away from Trotskyism: they are crystallized centrist organizations orienting toward reformism, mainly its Stalinist variant.

Ignoring this reality with regard to the European centrist organizations, the IMT is not only directing itself to them but is posing a policy of common actions and programmatic debates, which it believes "could lead, at least in some cases, to the possibility of regroupments and fusions on the basis of the revolutionary Marxist program." (Ibid., p. 22.)

Comrade Mandel, main theoretician of the IMT and editor of the European document, goes still further in the same direction. In an interview conceded to the Spanish magazine *El Viejo Topo* [The Old Mole] (Barcelona, November, 1976, No. 2, pp. 5-9), Mandel upholds the following:

"In my opinion, *the future of the revolutionary movement lies in a type of groupings broader than those that define themselves as Trotskyist.* Groupings that are *uniting*, nonetheless, with sections of the Fourth International. What is of interest to us is a program (classical communism), a strategy (permanent revolution and transitional program) and a democratic organizational structure (freedom of tendencies and of discussion, acceptance of factions, rejection of democratic* centralism, no repression of internal discussion not even of some public discussion). If there is agreement on all this, I do not see any reason why some comrades who share these fundamental points cannot constitute together with us a national party and an international. *I am very optimistic with respect to the future of this unification: in many countries it is already under way and I hope that it will soon be in Spain.*" (Emphasis added.)

With these affirmations, Comrade Mandel is opening wide the doors, not to the building of strong sections of the Fourth International, but of new POUMs in Europe and the entire world. The characteristic of the POUM was precisely to "agree" with Trotskyism on all these general programmatic questions, but to differ with Trotsky and the genuine Spanish Trotskyists on the burning political questions of the moment. Any attempt to base the construction of a revolutionary party on these general agreements, leaving aside the big concrete political questions, actually leads toward "a type of groupings

*This is the way the text actually reads in the original. We believe that a mistake in the transcription is involved and that Mandel must have said "bureaucratic centralism."

broader than those that define themselves as Trotskyist"; that is, to centrism, to the POUM. To make things worse, Comrade Mandel informs us that this tragic perspective is not a mere scheme: to the contrary, "in many countries it is already under way."

We categorically deny that our sections can be built on the basis of "regroupments and fusions" with crystallized centrist groups that are moving toward reformism, like the European groups toward which the IMT and Comrade Mandel are directing themselves. We affirm that we must orient our work fundamentally toward the oppressed nationalities (including the immigrant workers). We hold that the revolutionary upsurge will cause strong, highly progressive, centrist currents to rise within these mass movements and organisms, and that these currents cannot be mixed up—as does the IMT—with the crystallized centrism of the "broad vanguard," since they come under opposing signs: the degeneration of the latter, while the former follows an objective dynamic toward Trotskyism.

We maintain that the centrist currents that will rise in the mass organisms will be fundamental in transforming our European sections into parties with mass influence; that we must work on them, developing their orientation toward revolutionary positions. This work also passes through unifications and fusions, but not on the basis of mere general agreements; we can unify with these currents even when they do not agree completely with our program, so long as they are in agreement with our policy for the mass movement at a determined moment in the class struggle. This policy is the opposite of that posed by the IMT and implies that we abandon the current centrist organizations to their fate. This does not mean that on certain occasions and for tactical reasons, we would not work on them to divide them and attract some of their sectors to our positions. But this tactic cannot be elevated into a strategy for building our parties.

In standing for this policy, our Bolshevik Tendency assumes the duty of alerting the entire international. The IMT has not changed; what has changed is the "new vanguard." When it was ultraleftist, the IMT was ultraleftist; now that it is centrist in the majority, with strong opportunist tendencies and clear sympathy for the Stalinists, the IMT is beginning to take steps in that direction. We must stop them before they fall into the same cycle that, to the misfortune of the Spanish revolution, trapped ex-Comrade Nin!

The Real Contradiction Is Not the Ultra and Centrist 'Vanguard' Versus Reformist Parties, But Trotskyism Against Reformism, Ultraleftism, and Centrism

Although the IMT no longer speaks about working on the "broad vanguard" as a central task, it maintains, both in its analyses and in the policy it proposes for the construction of our parties, a vanguardist deviation that amounts to the same as the previous one or worse.

Thus it transforms the "new vanguard" or "far left" into a fundamental category that includes the Trotskyists, converting this category into a socio-political factor of the first magnitude, and putting it into opposition to reformism. It is not uncommon to hear the leaders of the IMT say that the situation in Spain is magnificent because the entire ultraleft and the centrists (including us, the Trotskyists) make up 25 percent of the workers commissions, confronting the Stalinists. The entire IMT document

is filled with references making the point that the fate of the workers movement and the European revolution will be determined by the outcome of this battle of the "new vanguard" and the "far left" (Trotskyists included) against the reformist mass parties and the union bureaucracy.

Thus the IMT contends that "the capacity of our sections . . . to initiate some exemplary struggles . . . will deeply influence the further march of the class struggle" ("Draft theses," op. cit., p. 24.); that "The broad vanguard . . . and above all the revolutionary Marxists" have the possibility of "reducing the desynchronization" of the upsurge "in different parts of capitalist Europe" (ibid., p. 29); that "the emergence of a broad workers vanguard and the progress in the construction of the revolutionary party" can "lead as far as significant splits" within the traditional parties (ibid., p. 17); that "the weakness of the mass vanguard" is one of the decisive factors making "the outbreak of a prerevolutionary crisis . . . less likely." (Ibid., p. 5) Comrade Mandel, as we will show further on, even asserts that the vanguard can succeed in making the policies of the French Communist party revolutionary.

For us, all the processes mentioned by the IMT are of an objective nature; consequently, they are not determined by our parties or by the "vanguard." Until we wield mass influence, the effect of our "exemplary actions" in "the further march of the class struggle" will be infinitesimal or negative. For the same reason, neither the revolutionary Marxists nor the "broad vanguard" have any possibility of "reducing the desynchronization" of the upsurge in Europe. Neither will the "significant splits" in the reformist parties come about because of our actions and those of the ultra vanguard; they will result from great mobilizations, provoked by the objective situation, bringing the masses into conflict with their leaders. Finally, against the opinion of Comrade Mandel, we maintain that no factor exists, still less the weight of a vanguard, that could make the policies of French Stalinism revolutionary.

The IMT's idealization of the new vanguard does not stop here. The IMT affirms that the "emergence" of the new vanguard "accentuates the modification of the relationship of forces between the traditional bureaucratic apparatuses and the far-left organizations within the working class and the trade-union organizations." (Ibid., p. 2.)

This illusion of the IMT is not new; at the Tenth Congress they held that ". . . the process of radicalization is already for the most part unfolding outside the traditional organizations"; and the number of French workers "who see Social-Democratic ministers as forces capable of overthrowing capitalism" is "even smaller" [than the number of British workers]. ("Draft Theses," *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 9, No. 5, November 1972, p.19)

The facts refute in the most absolute way these affirmations made at the Tenth Congress and the analysis that the IMT proposes for the Eleventh. The number of French workers who have confidence in the Social Democracy has grown enormously since the Tenth Congress up to now. The "process of radicalization" is not "unfolding outside the traditional organizations," but inversely: the radicalization, a product of the upsurge, has brought great masses into the traditional organizations. Nor is it true that the "relationship of forces between the

traditional bureaucratic apparatuses and the far-left organizations" is inclining in favor of the latter while the former remain static. The multitudinous upsurge, which brought thousands of workers to the ultraleft, moved millions toward the reformist parties.

Likewise false is the affirmation of the IMT that "the development of a new mass vanguard . . . has powerfully stimulated the rise of workers struggles." ("Draft Theses," op. cit., p.1) For us it is sufficient to point to the example of Portugal to demonstrate that the political role of the "new vanguard" or far left is not to "stimulate the workers struggles," but to aid the bourgeoisie in defeating them. The "overpowering action" that the Portuguese "vanguard" carried out November 25—the most important of its "autonomous initiatives"—served only to fortify the bourgeois reaction. In contrast to what the IMT maintains, the upsurge in workers struggles, the revolutionary conquests and the embryos of workers and popular power were "stimulated" when the Socialist and Communist masses struggled together; on the other hand, they suffered heavy reverses when the "new mass vanguard" took the "initiative" on November 25, 1975, hoping to "overpower" on its own account.

As can be seen, for the IMT the "new vanguard" or "far left" (in which the Trotskyists are included) is a fundamental factor in all fields. Nothing is impossible for it: from synchronizing the revolution in all the countries of Europe up to provoking splits in the traditional parties, along with "stimulating" the struggles of the workers, creating organs of workers power, detonating prerevolutionary situations, etc. From this the IMT deduces that Trotskyism is merely a sector of this "new mass vanguard," historically allied to the "far left," of which it forms a part, engaged, together with this "vanguard," in struggling against the reformists.

We disagree absolutely with this analysis, which leaves out all class considerations. The two fundamental currents within the mass movement have to be seen as being either with the petty bourgeoisie or with the proletariat. These currents consist, on the one hand, of the reformists and ultras (centrists included) which, although they have a workers base, reflect in their politics the petty bourgeoisie in all its variants as agent of the bourgeoisie; on the other hand, us Trotskyists who constitute the politically consistent workers current. If the IMT have another class definition for the far left and the centrists, let them say so; it would provide a solid theoretical basis for a polemic between tendencies. The workers who break with reformism, if they are not won by us, fall for other, probourgeois politics—that of the ultras and the centrists.

This has been the traditional Marxist analysis of ultraleftism and centrism; it was the one made by Trotsky of the POUM and Spanish anarchism. Here we have to make clear that the analysis of ultraleftism in the Third International made in Lenin's time is not the same as the one we are making of the ultraleftism to be seen in the Fourth, which does not represent probourgeois currents.

Every ultraleftist or centrist current is progressive at the time it breaks with reformism and orients rapidly toward Trotskyism. When this does not occur, and it becomes stabilized in ultra or centrist organizations (as has occurred in Europe), it is converted into our enemy, into another petty-bourgeois political barrier, which interposes itself between us and the mass movement. As such it has

to be dealt with politically, the same as the traditional reformists and bureaucrats.

A False Definition of the 'New Vanguard'

For the IMT, the "new mass vanguard" is made up of worker and student fighters who have broken with reformism and enrolled, in almost all countries, in ultraleftist and centrist organizations. (In counterposition to this, the old vanguard would thus be reformist.) Starting from this, the Majority mixes up all the terms and defines as "far left" this whole celebrated "vanguard," including those belonging to centrist organizations; this in itself is already an error, because for Trotskyism there are precise differences between ultraleftism and centrism.

The definition given by the IMT to the "new vanguard" fails from the beginning when it includes only those who have broken with Stalinism and the Social Democracy. Every struggle of the masses has a vanguard composed of rank-and-file leaders, whatever their political definition may be. Consequently, these leaders (the vanguard) of the struggles can be reformists, ultraleftists, centrists, syndicalists, apolitical, nationalists, or Trotskyists. In France, for example, the vanguard of the great student struggles at the end of the sixties were Guevarist in the majority. In Spain in the last ten years, the vanguard of the mobilizations and of the organization of the workers commissions has been mainly the young Stalinist workers. Thus the "new vanguard" is the one leading the "new struggles" although it is not of the "far left" (as the IMT maintains); in the same way the "old" vanguard was the one that led the former struggles, although it was not reformist (as an example we can cite the "old" French student vanguard, which was guerrillaist).

The IMT mixes up the class struggle with the politics to which the sectors involved in it adhere. To lead a social struggle, to be the vanguard of a demonstration or of a strike, does not signify favoring a more intransigent class struggle on the political plane. Generally the contrary holds true. The rank-and-file leaders of the mobilizations ordinarily are politically in favor of class collaboration, as occurs with the Stalinist, Socialist, centrist, or ultraleftist fighters. That was the case with the latter in Portugal: the Maoists, for example, stood for a "national front against the imperialists"; in the elections, the major part of the ultra groupings supported Saraiva de Carvalho, a bourgeois candidate.

They can be very combative, then, in social struggles and very opportunistic politically. There were none more combative than the Asturian miners in 1934; yet nothing was more reformist than their adherence to the Spanish Social Democracy. This is precisely the contradiction that we have to meet (and know how to take advantage of) in the struggles of the masses and in dealing with their vanguard. The IMT rejects seeing this contradiction and deduces that those most combative among the rank and file are also so in the political field when in reality this does not hold: the ultraleft is opportunistic in all the fundamental political questions.

As we have already seen, the Majority orient all their work toward this (supposedly) new ultra and centrist vanguard; they do not combat it politically as required nor abandon it to its fate, but seek unity with it, thus isolating themselves from the great reformist masses and, consequently, from the majority of the European workers

vanguard. They choose as the favored place of work for our parties those sectors where the influence of this "new" vanguard is most pronounced.

Our tendency, contrariwise, holds that we Trotskyists must orient our work toward the great struggles of the mass movement, no matter what the political sign of its vanguard may be. The location of the ultra vanguard (which the IMT denominates as "new") does not put any place of work in a more favored position. Where great mass struggles explode or are on the point of exploding, we Trotskyists must intervene with all of our forces and our program of mobilization, whether the vanguard is Stalinist or Social Democratic. In the trade-union field, we cannot give preference to the places where the ultra or centrist "vanguard" may be the strongest; preference must be given to the factories or branches of industry that are in battle (or are moving toward it), even if the vanguard is Catholic.

On the political plane, we will do the same: we will try to intervene in the great political struggles that drag along the reformist masses; not in the "overpowering" minority "initiatives" of the ultras and centrists. For example, in face of the danger of a coup d'etat against a popular-front government, our work will center on the reformist masses in order to convince them that they should unite, mobilize, and arm themselves against this danger. We will not waste time with the "far left" or the centrists.

Within this trade-union or political work, we will do everything possible to recruit to our parties the currents and leaders of these mass mobilizations (that is, the *real* vanguard of the struggles occurring at the moment). To accomplish this, *we will combat* the reformist, centrist, or ultra orientation of the parties to which this vanguard may belong, demonstrating in practice that their policies are disastrous for the development of these struggles of the workers and the masses.

For the Bolshevik Tendency, the party is not built by confronting reformism only, in alliance with a supposed ultra or centrist "new vanguard"; on the contrary, we will construct the party, battling, as Lenin said, against *two* enemies: reformism and the "far left."

A 'Councilist,' Organizational Policy Separated From the Genuine Struggles of the Masses

The IMT's draft theses for the Eleventh Congress carries further the organizational deviation of the Tenth Congress with regard to the organs of workers power when it maintains that to develop these organisms "the revolutionary Marxists . . . will *successively* emphasize" five tasks, all of an organizational character, in order to "move toward the exercise of functions of power" that "contest the power of the bourgeois state." (Op. cit., pp. 8-9. Emphasis added.) This organizational character of the IMT's conception is aggravated by maintaining that "the masses may create structures of self-organization that *progressively* exercise the functions of power," and by affirming that in Portugal "the emergence of a situation of dual power . . . came about *progressively*." (Ibid. pp. 8-9. Emphasis added.)

We disagree with both aspects of the formulation: for us a "succession" of organizational tasks for the construction of organs of workers power does not exist; and these organs do not develop or exercise functions of power

“progressively.”

The sample book of organizational generalities that the IMT presents us has no relation with the concrete situations that the movement of the workers and the masses are experiencing in Europe. It is useless for formulating policies in meeting the millions of workers, who, in voting for the CP in Italy or for the Union of the Left in France, create the conditions, not for realizing these “progressive” dreams about the organs of workers power, but for setting up popular-front governments.

Nor does it correspond with the reality in Portugal and Spain, where organisms of this type have arisen or have tended to arise. In these countries, the development of the autonomous organizations of the movement of the workers and the masses—committees of workers, tenants, and soldiers in Portugal, and workers commissions in Spain—have not occurred through “successive” “extension” of organizational tasks, but, to the contrary, have developed, in the case of Portugal, in close linkage with the great democratic mobilizations and with the united front of the Socialist and Communist workers and their parties against Caetano and Spínola, and, in the Spanish case, indissolubly linked to the massive economic and democratic struggles against Franco and the post-Francoist dictatorship. By ignoring these facts, the IMT presents us with an evolutionary and organizational type of development of power separated from the great struggles of the masses.

Consequently, we are against our policy being that of getting the organs of workers power to undertake a series of organizational tasks in a fixed sequence. We Trotskyists must contribute to their development and extension by proposing that they undertake strictly those tasks that arise from the changing objective situation, that is, the political, economic, and organizational tasks that the masses are mobilizing for or are ready to mobilize for.

Nor do we agree with the affirmation of the IMT that the organs of workers power were progressively installed in Portugal, that they will become installed in the same way in Europe as a whole, and that they will progressively exercise functions of power. It is not permissible to speak of “progressive installation” of these organs, the most sensitive to ups and downs. These ups and downs have always been, and always will be, convulsive, and as a result the organs of power follow the same course, “installing” themselves or suffering heavy defeats in accordance with the outcome of the political confrontation between the classes.

In Portugal, the organs of workers power, which did not exist before the downfall of Caetano, arose in the following stage, disappeared almost completely during the Spínolist phase, arose again with greater force after Spínola’s attempts at a coup, and fell again palpably after the reactionary victory of November 25, 1975. Their “installation” then, was not “progressive” but convulsive, as it will likewise be in the rest of Europe.

We do not believe, finally, that it is true that organs of workers power will “progressively” exercise functions of power, that is, will tear more and more power away from the bourgeoisie until it completely appropriates it. The experience of the sole triumphant soviet revolution and that of the defeats has shown just the contrary: the organs of power undergo a series of oscillations in the period of dual power that culminates either by placing the whole

power in their hands or in liquidating them with a counterrevolution.

There is a final aspect of the reality that goes against the possibility of a “progressive” development of the organs of workers power. The IMT points this out correctly when it speaks of the ferocious opposition of the reformist parties to these embryos of workers and mass power, and when it succeeds in understanding that the ultraleft, with its criminally sectarian policies, always tries to transform them into collateral for its organizations, thus contributing to their rapid degeneration.

Nevertheless, the Majority does not draw a consistent political conclusion: that the defense and development of the organisms of workers power depends on the political battle waged by the Trotskyists against the reformist and ultraleft parties. That is, that the fate of these organisms depends not only on the results of the mass struggle, but also on the advances of the Trotskyists in the process of ridding the workers movement of the petty-bourgeois currents: both the reformists and the ultralefts.

The action of these sworn enemies of genuine workers power and the weakness of the Trotskyists explain the embryonic, veiled, spasmodic character that workers power took in Portugal; these realities imply that no possibility exists for the “progressive” development of such organs of workers power; and they foreshadow a similar process at this stage in any country in Europe.

Nothing demonstrates this better than the current state of the Spanish workers commissions as organs with certain presoviet characteristics. They have had a tumultuous development because of the upsurge in the mass movement and the support given them by the Communist party. However, right now, when the course of the class struggle opens better perspectives than ever for them, the workers commissions are undergoing a critical relapse as a result of the criminal policies of the Communist Party, which is tending to transform them into trade-union organisms. Their development is not “progressive,” but convulsive; with very pronounced steps backward provoked by the retrocessions of the workers movement or by the policies of the reformist parties.

A Workerist Program

With the eclecticism that characterizes it, the IMT falls into the same contradiction that it presented in its document for the Tenth: the deviation in the program is different from that in the text. For the Tenth Congress, the whole document was vanguardist and sovietist, while the program turned around economic and workers control demands. Now we are faced with a vanguardist and councilist text, which is followed by a program that does not say a single word about the vanguard or the organs of workers power, and that presents instead a workerist deviation.

The IMT’s “immediate action program” for Europe consists of nine points: (a) defense of the standard of living; (b) the “right of the trade unions to freely negotiate wages” without any parliamentary obstacle, and the “right to strike”; (c) a “freeze on the prices”; (d) “against unemployment”; (e) “against any attack on the rights that have been won in the realm of social security,” social services, pensions, etc.; (f) “against any discrimination against immigrant workers” and “for complete equality

. . . for immigrant workers, with respect for their national specificities"; (g) the "nationalization" of all the big capitalist firms and their "management under workers control"; (h) "for the elaboration by the workers organizations of an emergency economic plan" that "must be centered on satisfying the priority needs of the masses." (Ibid., pp. 18-19.)

Of these eight points, the first five are minimum ones, although some of them are combined with workers control. The latter slogan, which appeared as the axis of the program at the Tenth Congress, has now been reduced to second place without any explanation.

After all these economic and defensive tasks, the program poses, as its ninth and last point (i) the only political task, and this is neither more nor less than the "establishment of a workers government, the only government capable of implementing such a program." This government must "immediately proclaim the independence of all colonial territories still ruled by the bourgeoisie" and "convoke a great European congress of labor to defeat all attempts at economic blockade by the international bourgeoisie and draw up before the world proletariat and the semicolonial peoples a project for the creation of the Socialist United States of Europe and the World." (Ibid., p. 19.)

This program, typically workerist, nine-tenths defensive, throws maximum tasks into the political arena, such as establishing a workers government, and delirious ones like proposing as a task for "immediate action" following the Eleventh Congress the convocation of a great "congress of labor" against the "economic blockade" by imperialism against the first workers state in Western Europe, a "congress of labor" to propose "the Socialist United States of Europe and the World." We agree that our slogan for power must figure in every program, but what sense is there in posing in terms of "immediate action" a congress of labor to combat an imagined economic blockade against a hypothetical Western European workers state, when neither one nor the other exist, and there are no real immediate possibilities that they will exist?

The other face of this maximalism in the political slogans is the total absence of any that could actually serve for "immediate action" for the European workers and masses. It would appear that for the IMT the workers and masses have no political tasks until they succeed in establishing a "workers government," and they must limit themselves to defensive economic struggles, combined with workers control, without intervening in politics until the eve of taking power.

As consolation for being left so helpless politically, we are told that when the program is finalized, it "must also contain a section devoted to demands concerning the major allies of the working class (youth, salaried petty bourgeoisie, peasant toilers, etc.) which we will not formulate here because the national situations are too diverse." (Ibid., p. 19.) The same reference is applied to our intervention in the women's liberation movement. However, these chapters, although they are necessary, do not fill the abyss left open between the first eight workerist points and the ninth, political but maximalist point, of the "program for immediate action."

This absence of democratic and transitional political slogans characterizes not only the IMT's program for Europe, but also the meaning of the policies of this tendency as a whole.

Not a Single Democratic Task

Blind to the Portuguese experience and what they themselves say about Spain, the IMT does not pose a single bourgeois-democratic task in their program for immediate action in Europe, thus refusing to recognize the enormous importance of these tasks. The sole exception is in reference to trade-union tasks, such as the right to strike.

The IMT ignores the two basic factors that give the bourgeois-democratic tasks such an important place in the European revolutionary processes. One of these is the reformist education absorbed by the European working class during the past forty years, beginning with the popular fronts, which has impregnated it with a bourgeois-democratic conception that must indispensably be taken into fundamental account to mobilize it in an immediate way.

The other factor is the totalitarian tendency of contemporary imperialism. The resistance of the workers and the people to the Bonapartist tendencies, although correct, reinforces the development of the bourgeois-democratic consciousness within the movement of the workers and the masses.

The enormous objective weight of these phenomena explains the predominant importance of these bourgeois-democratic tasks and demands in this period of the European upsurge, not only in the countries that have experienced fascist or Bonapartist regimes, but on the continent as a whole. Likewise it explains the leaps and bounds in the growth of the reformist parties as the first political product of this upsurge of workers and masses imbued with a democratic consciousness.

In addition to what we have pointed out in relation to the bourgeois-democratic tasks in Portugal and Spain, it is worth adding, only as some examples, the following: the mobilizations of women for democratic objectives like the right to abortion and divorce, the bourgeois-democratic struggles of the oppressed European nationalities, the battles of the Greek workers and people for bourgeois democracy, the democratic demands raised by the French soldiers, the beginning of resistance by the West German workers against the repressive laws of the bourgeois government, and a thousand other examples.

The IMT indicates some democratic tasks in their document (such as a constituent assembly), but do not specify that in this first period of the European upsurge the democratic tasks, together with the economic tasks, will be the driving force of the immediate mobilization of the masses.

We have disagreed with the LTF because from an established fact—the bourgeois-democratic consciousness of the Portuguese masses—they have drawn a mistaken strategic and programmatic conclusion: that the Trotskyist program must center its axis on democratic demands and tasks. For us Trotskyists, the democratic demands are only "incidental and episodic," and cannot be the backbone of our program. But the validity of this affirmation not only does not deny, but on the contrary, necessarily implies that we are able to recognize the current enormous importance of these demands that take into account both the reformist, bourgeois-democratic consciousness of the European proletariat and the necessity of mounting resistance to the Bonapartist tendencies of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The IMT, in ignoring them,

commits an error symmetrical to that of the LTF, and makes abstract and propagandistic its apparently correct program and its strategy for developing workers power.

A Policy and a Program That Stand Mute in Face of the New European Vietnam: the Basque Country

The program, and in general the whole IMT draft for Europe, falls into the same errors as the draft for the Tenth Congress. In the first place, they forget to underline the intimate relation between the antibureaucratic political revolution in the East and the socialist revolution in the West, which in the case of the German revolution is of immediate importance, since only the combination of both revolutions will be able to solve the problem of unifying this country.

In the second place, they ignore the imperialist character of Western Europe. The document for the Eleventh Congress deepens this error still further; in the one for the Tenth Congress they at least said it was necessary to "organize international propaganda around the themes of solidarity with anti-imperialist struggles" ("Theses on Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," *Intercontinental Press*, op. cit., p. 1828); today, the workerism of the IMT has brought it to not listing any anti-imperialist task in its program of action, and to omit from the list of "major allies of the working class" the anticolonial revolutionists, like the Blacks of southern Africa and the fighters of the oppressed nationalities in Europe, beginning with the Basques and continuing with the Catalans and the Irish.

In fact, the only anti-imperialist task that is posed is relegated to the Greek calends, when the workers take power, since the IMT mentions the colonial problem only in saying that the "workers government" must "immediately proclaim the independence of all colonial territories." Within this position is a paternalistic attitude toward the colonial and semicolonial peoples, who have never waited for the workers to take power in the country that dominates them before launching a struggle for their own liberation—as was seen most recently in the case of the Portuguese colonies—even gaining victory as in China, Cuba, and Vietnam. This error of the IMT is aggravated by their not mentioning the revolutionary Blacks of southern Africa, as if their struggle had nothing to do with the European revolution.

Even worse is the criminal silence around the struggles of the Basque country; this alone is sufficient to annul the whole document, since the struggle of the Basque people for their national independence from Spanish imperialism stands in the vanguard of the revolution in the continent: it is the current Vietnam of European imperialism. And will the Spanish LCR, adhering to the IMT, make their rank and file vote at the next World Congress for this document that does not contain as the basic programmatic axis of the European revolution support to the struggle of the Basque people? It would be a servile vote having nothing to do with the action and the experience of the Spanish Trotskyists.

For the proletariat, for our European parties, and for "immediate action" it is a fundamental task to support the present anti-imperialist struggles of the oppressed European nationalities and the colonial peoples subjugated by European imperialism. We must demand, in support of the

Black revolutionists, that all political, military, and economic interference by European imperialism in southern Africa be terminated. We must give top priority to the demand for self-determination of the Basque country, and together with this, that of the Catalans and the Irish. We must call on the European proletariat to struggle themselves for these demands against the imperialist bourgeoisie of their own countries; and not suggest to them that they wait patiently until a "workers government" proclaims "the independence of all colonial territories."

Against the IMT, our Bolshevik Tendency raises, as the fundamental, decisive political task for immediate action by the European Trotskyists, propagandizing and supporting the just revolutionary struggle of the Basque people against Spanish imperialism, and of the Black revolutionists of Africa against European and world imperialism.

Forgetting the Federation of Iberian Socialist Republics

Portugal is the only European country that has gone through a revolutionary crisis and that continues to be the center of the European revolution. The IMT acknowledges this tacitly but contradicts it when it concludes in an equivocal way that it is Spain, and not Portugal, where the "center of gravity of the revolutionary process" passes. (*Ibid.*, p. 5.) This contradiction originates in the desire of the IMT to minimize the importance of the Portuguese revolution so as not to be obliged to acknowledge the failure of its analyses and its policies in face of the only European workers revolution in the past four decades.

Despite this minimizing of the Portuguese revolution, the IMT could not do less than recognize its "interrelation" with the Spanish revolution. But the IMT stopped there and abstained from outlining an immediate policy for the Spanish and Portuguese Trotskyists based on this "interrelation." Paradoxically, the IMT, which has a policy for a future government of the workers in any country in Europe, does not succeed in supplying itself with a policy and a slogan for immediate action that would organically and politically deepen the linkage between the two revolutions shaking the Iberian peninsula.

As Trotskyists we are in favor of the right of the Basque, Galician, and Catalan nationalities, oppressed by Spanish imperialism, to national self-determination, but we also aspire to uniting, politically and economically, all the peoples against fragmentation of the peninsula into a mosaic of new states. That is why our Bolshevik Tendency raises the banner of "federation of Iberian socialist republics," as the current, immediate slogan to be agitated for by our Iberian and European parties. This is the correct transitional slogan that combines the two contradictory tendencies—that of the unity of the Spanish and Portuguese workers revolutions and that of the bourgeois-democratic struggles for national self-determination. It is the slogan that permits the bourgeois-democratic struggles of the oppressed nationalities of the Spanish state to be integrated into the processes of the workers revolution. With this slogan, the Bolshevik Tendency calls for a united mobilization of the workers of the Iberian peninsula and the Basque, Catalan, and Galician peoples against the imperialist Portuguese, Spanish, and European bourgeoisie in general.

The Role of Popular Fronts and Reactionary Coups

In their European draft, the IMT refuse to point out that the Portuguese experience confirms one of the cardinal analyses of Trotskyism: in a prerevolutionary or directly revolutionary situation, the two main instruments of the bourgeois counterrevolution are popular-front governments and reactionary coups. On the one hand, they do not characterize the governments that have appeared in succession in Portugal as popular-front governments. On the other hand, they do not indicate how the popular-front governments place themselves at the service of the bourgeois counterrevolution, dissolving this definition in a series of very dangerous tactical considerations on how to confront this type of government.

In accordance with this line, the IMT do not specify that governments of the Union of the Left type in France, in which the shadow of the bourgeoisie is projected, have a popular-front character, but dedicate themselves to making distinctions between class-collaborationist governments in which a "substantial" bourgeois party participates and those in which this does not occur. The IMT do not give the categorically imperative definition specifically establishing that governments in which bourgeois and workers parties participate in periods of a strong upsurge are popular-front governments and thereby agents of the counterrevolution, independently of how "substantial" the participating bourgeois sector may be.

The absence of this definition is complementary to the systematic omission of the characterization of these governments as imperialist. The IMT forgets that the popular-front governments are not only agents of class collaborationism at times of sharp class confrontations but in addition have an imperialist aspect permeating them to the marrow and leading them to fight tooth and nail in defense of exploitation of the colonies and semicolonies of their own imperialism.

The resolution predicts future class-collaborationist governments in Spain, France, and Italy; the resolution responds equivocally to this threat, proposing, on the basis of the two great oversights noted above, a dangerously ambiguous strategy. Thus the resolution says that it is not necessary to "formally counterpose these organs" of workers power to a reformist or popular-front "government" "but counterpose them to the bourgeois state, to the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie." (Ibid., p. 14.)

It is obvious to us that this consideration seeks to justify the opportunistic policies of the IMT in Portugal, which in place of centering an attack against the bourgeois, popular-front government of the MFA when Vasco Gonçalves was in power, oriented against the bourgeois parties and the SP. It is an anarchist conception, since it is limited to attacking the state and the bourgeoisie, abstaining from confronting its political representation, the government on duty for the time being.

Against what the IMT says, our strategy of destroying the bourgeois state passes inexorably through denouncing and defeating the popular-front, imperialist, and counterrevolutionary governments that reign in turn, getting the working class to confront them by means of its organs of power until it overturns them. The workers revolution is not—as the anarchists believe—solely an economic revolution against the bourgeoisie, and a social revolution against the bourgeois state, but it begins and is mediated

by a fundamental political revolution against the government that heads this state. Every revolution must be propagandized for and prepared; this means that when a prerevolutionary or revolutionary stage opens, the campaign against the bourgeois government—whether it is popular-frontist, Bonapartist, or democratic—must be stronger than ever, thus paving the way for its overthrow.

This strategy also proceeds through a determined frontal attack against the reformist parties, which, taking part in the popular fronts, play the role of agents of the imperialist bourgeoisie, betraying the workers movement and exploiting the colonies and oppressed nationalities. It proceeds, finally, through taking advantage of the dual situation of these governments, which, although they are imperialist, are too weak and unstable to defend themselves in due form from the offensive of the nationalist movements. Thereby they facilitate the strengthening of their nationalist contenders, a circumstance that we must succeed in utilizing to support the struggles against French, Italian, Spanish, and British imperialism.

But what tends to be opportunism in the strategy of the IMT in face of the popular-front governments, is taken over the brink by councilist ultraleftism in the terrain of tactics. The IMT correctly points out that there will be reactionary coups, and says that it is necessary to struggle against them, "counterposing" the organs of workers power "to bourgeois conspiracies against such governments" of a reformist or popular-front type. And if these organs of workers power do not exist or are too weak as in Portugal? Would not a more adequate slogan be for a united front of the reformist parties to confront the danger of a reactionary coup? Would it not be precisely, as occurred in Portugal and in reverse to the reasoning of the IMT, the mobilization of the Socialist and Communist workers against the reactionary coup that would create the conditions for the development of the organs of power?

This policy of a united front against reactionary coups must always be accompanied by a warning, which the IMT likewise fails to make, that these workers will inevitably be for the politics and existence of popular-front governments and the reformist workers parties that participate in them, demobilizing and disorienting the mass movement and serving the bourgeoisie.

Against the popular-front governments and the counterrevolutionary coups that will inevitably come, our Bolshevik Tendency stands for a policy that has nothing to do with the opportunism in strategy and the ultraleftism in tactics proposed by the IMT. We call for "patiently educating" the masses against these governments, convincing them of their extreme weakness and their imperialist character, and bringing them to see that they are nothing else than agents of the bourgeois counterrevolution. Thus we seek to defeat these governments as rapidly as possible, counterposing to them the organs of workers power and bringing these to assume power.

It is within this strategy, and solely within it, that all the tactics must be implemented, which will be left aside as soon as the masses, thanks to their mobilization and the policies of the Trotskyists, cease placing their confidence in popular-front governments and understand the necessity of overturning them. With respect to the counterrevolutionary putsches, we must denounce these popular-front governments for helping them with their policies, and at the same time we must advance the

consistent line of a united front of the reformist parties and masses to confront them.

A United Front Policy Oriented Essentially Toward the Centrists

It is not accidental that the IMT wishes to counterpose to the reactionary putsches nonexistent organs of workers power in place of a united front of the reformist parties and masses. This is in conformity with the fact that its favored interlocutor in concretizing a united front is the centrist organizations and not the reformists.

According to the united-front policy presented to us by the IMT, what is imperative is a "unitary initiative" with the centrists and other sectors of the far left "to create a relationship of forces such that the problem of unity in action, and even of united front, with the reformist organizations is concretely posed." (Ibid., p. 10.)

That is, for the IMT, we are obliged in general to first reach an agreement with the centrists to be able, on this basis, to pose a united front with the mass reformist parties. And as if this were not enough, they add that our "tactical initiatives" will be subordinated to "the relationship of forces between ourselves and the other far-left organizations."

According to the IMT, then, our whole attitude toward the reformist parties, that is, our whole policy toward the great Socialist and Communist masses of Europe, is mediated by our policy toward the centrists.

We are drastically opposed to this thesis. With the centrists or without them, with the far left or without it, our whole policy must be oriented toward the broad Socialist and Communist masses, as well as those of the oppressed nationalities, who, under a bourgeois or petty-bourgeois, a bureaucratic or ultraleftist leadership, are struggling for national self-determination. We are against any "tactical initiative" that, dictated by our relations with the centrists or the far left, prevents us from carrying out this policy. If the centrists or the far left do not want to pose, together with us, a united front of the reformist parties, we will have nothing to do with them, nor will we subordinate our policy to theirs; we will march alone toward the broad masses, leaving the "new vanguard" in all its variants to their own sad fate.

We know that objective reality, and only this, provokes a united front of the reformist masses, and because of this, already at the Tenth Congress, we disqualified—challenging it as subjective—the IMT's plea that to concretize a united front between the reformist organizations and masses with our parties, a certain numerical "relationship of forces" was required between the far left—including us—and the reformists.

In counterposition to this subjective deviation, our united-front policy is instrumented on the basis of detecting the most immediate and urgent needs of the broad masses and of responding with a valid and understandable reply for unity in action. Portugal has proved that it is correctly posed only in these terms; the united front was concretized there, on the three occasions when it occurred, because of the objective necessity facing the mass movement of meeting an offensive of the bourgeoisie or the danger of such an offensive, and it had nothing to do with either the initiatives of our parties or with the vanguard, or with joint action by the two. This

does not mean that we reject the possibility of exceptional agreements of unity in action with the centrists. Although we are gaining some successes, necessarily rather minor, with the current centrist organizations in response to our bidding for unity in action with them, we consider this to be of secondary importance. And this is the great difference in this respect that our Bolshevik Tendency establishes against the IMT, for whom the centrists are the axis for a united-front policy.

A Very Dangerous Characterization of the Communist Parties

The European ultraleft in general, without ceasing to attack the Communist parties as reformist, considers them to be more progressive than the Social Democratic parties, thus justifying having tail-ended them many times, as in Portugal, where they played the game of the putsch encouraged by the CP and backed its attacks against the Constituent Assembly.

The IMT trails the ultraleft along the same road. It is precisely this tailendism that explains the two diametrically opposed analyses the IMT makes of the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions: councilist and for pure workers power in the first, bourgeois-democratic in the second. The key to this absolute contradiction is provided by the diametrically opposite policies of the Communist parties and the ultraleft in both countries: against bourgeois democracy and "for workers power" in Portugal; bourgeois democracy in Spain.

The IMT draft brings into our ranks this idealization of the European Communist parties made by the ultraleft. And thus they tell us: "It follows that the leaderships of the CPs will probably be compelled to adopt a more nuanced attitude than they did in 1944-45 when they are confronted by powerful mass movements going beyond the framework of capitalist property and the bourgeois state. While attempting to channel these movements into paths compatible with the project of 'peaceful transition to socialism,' respect for parliamentary democracy, and the Kremlin's general strategy of 'peaceful coexistence,' and while seeking to maximally limit the extension of the influence of the far left within the new vanguard of increasingly working-class composition, the leadership of these parties *will be compelled to jettison some ballast, particularly in the realm of respect for proletarian democracy and an acceptance, even if constrained and forced, of a minimum of self-organization of the toiling masses.*" (Ibid., p. 12. Emphasis added.)

Comrade Mandel, without any beating about the bush or sophisms, clarifies the genuine position of the IMT still further:

"The French far left . . . today has real specific weight and possesses the potential capacity of *imposing a revolutionary turn on the reformist leadership of the CP.* . . . Likewise it will be difficult—I don't say impossible, but difficult, yes—for the Spanish CP to adopt a clearly strikebreaking attitude like that carried out by the Italian CP and the Spanish CP itself in some periods of its conduct. And this because the relationship of forces in the Spanish workers movement is very different." (*El Viejo Topo*, op. cit. Emphasis added.)

The IMT as well as Comrade Mandel have abandoned the Trotskyist characterization of the Communist parties as agents of the bourgeois counterrevolution in this period

of the European revolution, defining them as centrists "jettisoning ballast," finding it "difficult" to act as "strikebreakers" in Spain, and even being able to evolve toward a "revolutionary turn" in France. This explains why the IMT defines the Portuguese CP as "sectarian" in contrast to the Portuguese SP, which it recognizes as an agent of the "counterrevolutionary offensive." ("Draft Theses," op. cit., p. 5.) For our Bolshevik Tendency, on the other hand, the two reformist parties have served equally as agents of the imperialist counterrevolution, and therefore we are concerned about this distinction the IMT makes between them.

The Chilean experience demonstrates that a Stalinist party can certainly place itself to the right of the Socialist party at a determined moment. Both of them are our mortal and permanent enemies, and neither of them is clearly located to the left of the other. In Portugal, for example, the SP moved to the left, attacking the fifth bourgeois government, and the CP moved to the right in defending it; but later the SP moved to the right by supporting a bourgeois candidate, and the CP moved to the left, running a working-class candidate.

Our Bolshevik Tendency holds that the inevitable crisis of the Stalinists and their maneuvers to control the mass movement must not be confused with a significant change in these parties causing them to "turn" toward revolutionary positions. We think that the greater the European upsurge is, the greater will be the counterrevolutionary role of the Stalinists, who will not vacillate in turning to the use of repressive methods. In this respect, the differences that can arise with the Social Democrats are tactical and circumstantial, but not qualitative, as the comrades of the IMT maintain.

We think, finally, that it is useless and hazardous to create illusions that the CP leaderships will "jettison some ballast . . . in the realm of respect for proletarian democracy" and the "self-organization of the toiling masses." Concessions will be made, but there will also be frontal attacks in both fields, and, strategically, the attacks will predominate over the concessions. Far from misleading the European workers with false illusions over supposed revolutionary turns by the Stalinist parties of Europe, what we must do is alert them to the counterrevolutionary, antidemocratic, and antisoviet character of these parties, and prepare the workers so that, taking advantage of any circumstantial retreat by the Stalinists, they strengthen themselves in the positions they have taken and entrench themselves to neutralize the inevitable counterrevolutionary counterattack of these parties.

Let's Prevent the Crisis of the Majority From Blowing Up the International

We repeat once more what we have already said so many times throughout this declaration: the IMT is bankrupt and its crisis affects the entire international. Its current orientation toward the centrists reflects and aggravates this crisis. Yet it has no known serious analysis explaining its progressive deterioration; instead it tries to cover it up with an organizational maneuver: it seeks to reunify the groups that have split in some countries in order to display this as a result of the correctness of its policies. At the same time it raises the banner of democratic centralism in the abstract, of discipline, making these independent of

the ultraist political orientation which it feeds. In doing this, it bases itself on the sharpest contradiction which our international is undergoing and which currently characterizes it. If on the one hand the policy of the leadership acts as a factor disintegrating and weakening our movement, on the other hand the successes of some of the national parties, combined with the successes which, in the decade of the sixties, the international itself obtained, have made it continue to be the only Trotskyist pole recognized by the worker and student vanguard on a world scale. Thanks to this, and despite the policies of the leadership, our world party has continued to grow to such a degree that the thousands of new members and sympathizers act as a centripetal force, counteracting the centrifugal tendencies provoked by the ultraleftist policies of the leadership.

The Majority attempts to present this influx of new members, especially in Spain, as a demonstration of the correct orientation of its policies, and its unifying maneuvers are designed precisely to utilize this highly progressive centripetal tendency of the new adherents. But these tendencies are, in the final instance, acquisitions of an accumulated capital which is being wasted, and the unstable equilibrium that has linked the two tendencies, the one originating in the mistaken policies of the leadership and the other that has its axis in the massive influx of new members, cannot be eternal, or permanent, but constantly threatens to break up.

Let us not be dazzled by the maneuvers; let us see through them to ascertain clearly that it is the ultraleftist policies and the present centrist orientation of the Majority that is the cause of the crises, and that there is no sure possibility of overcoming them until we overcome such policies.

VI. The Crisis of the LTF

The SWP and the LTF Defend the Trotskyist Program

During the first year of the Portuguese revolution, the SWP and the LTF, in counterposition to the IMT, correctly posed the Trotskyist program of developing and centralizing the organisms of workers and popular power, combining with them the minimum, transitional, and above all democratic demands that the mass movement sought at the time, especially the sector headed by the Socialist party. In an editorial, the *Militant* (June 14, 1974) indicated the main outline of the Portuguese revolution by means of a parallel with the Russian revolution. Among other things it compared the workers organisms arising in Portugal with the Russian soviets. After recording the tendency of the "Russian workers" to organize "broad councils (the Russian word was 'soviets')," it pointed out that "already the Portuguese workers have taken some steps in this direction."

Later, in a report presented by Gus Horowitz to the National Committee of the SWP (May 1, 1975), this characterization by the *Militant* was elevated into a political line. The following was proposed: "*Demands pointing toward workers governmental power. For rank-and-file committees of the exploited sectors of the population at all levels and with full freedom for all workers parties; for a national assembly of workers committees; reject the pact of the MFA; for a workers government.*"

("Portugal One Year After the Coup—What Is the Armed Forces Movement?" June 1975 *International Socialist Review*, p. 10.)

A few lines before this, the report posed: ". . . for rank-and-file assemblies of soldiers and sailors; . . . link up the soldiers' and sailors' committees with the workers and farmers." (Ibid., p. 10.)

From this listing, the SWP concluded: "Such demands point in the direction of uniting the working class; of developing and extending organized forms that can become soviet-type institutions of workers power; of deepening and extending the alliance between the workers, the farmers, the soldiers, and the other allies of the proletariat; and of preparing the workers to defend themselves against attempts to reverse the direction of the revolutionary upsurge." (Ibid., p. 10.)

In Spain and in Angola, the SWP and the LTF understood how to defend a genuine Trotskyist program. Against the Majority's ultraleftism in Spain, they knew how to condemn individual terrorism and demand work in the mass movement. In Angola they continued to defend the anti-imperialist front of the three nationalist movements against the occupying Portuguese, without playing the game of the MPLA and its Lusitanian Stalinist allies. At the same time, they correctly denounced the war between the nationalists as a fratricidal war that weakened the Black movement in face of the dominant imperialism.

The SWP Abandons Its Trotskyist Policy in Portugal and Provokes a Crisis in the LTF

As the year 1975 went by and the process of the workers revolution in Portugal advanced, with its massive occupations and the development of commissions of the workers and soldiers, the SWP reneged on this editorial, on this resolution, forgetting the struggle for consolidation of the organs of workers power. Abandoning the characterizations and the line cited above, it began to deny the symptomatic importance of the workers commissions and the committees of soldiers and sailors, as well as the occupations of factories, in order to put stress exclusively on the trade-union organisms and purely democratic tasks. It made these the exclusive axis of its characterization and activity, while it turned its back on the demands for the development of new organizational forms of the mass movement, much more democratic and autonomous than the trade unions, mainly those of workers power that arose out of the dynamics of the Portuguese revolution itself.

This reformist course was codified by the leadership of the SWP in its draft of "The Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution," and in the adjustments the LTF made in this draft.

This deviation was pointed out from the beginning by two of the most experienced leaders of the LTF. Comrade Peng, in his commentaries on the draft resolution, emphasized that it did not mention the slogan for soviets, and warned about the "step backwards" this signified in comparison to the editorial in the *Militant* of June 14, where this slogan appeared "though not as centrally as it should have been." Likewise Comrade Chen, in a brief declaration, stated that the central strategy of the Fourth is to call for the creation of soviets—although they might have another name—and that in a revolutionary situation

the slogan for a constituent assembly could not substitute for this call. (The letters of Peng and Chen to the LTF were published in *Internal Discussion Bulletin* No. 3 of the PST in October 1975.)

We believe that a single quotation will demonstrate clearly the basis for the preoccupation of these old comrades. "The future of the mass movement depends on the way the present democratic gains are defended by the mass organizations of the working class and peasantry, utilized in the struggles to better their conditions of life, and emphasized in educating the masses and promoting their self-confidence, and in developing revolutionary cadres." ("The Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution.") [First draft, p. 3.]

This perspective, which sees the "future" of the Portuguese revolution in the defense of the "democratic gains," in the improvement of the "conditions of life" of the workers, in "educating the masses," and in promoting "their self-confidence," is identical, like one drop of water to another, to what Bernstein and the revisionists preached at the end of the past century and the beginning of the present. We challenge the leaders of the SWP to ask the most abject opportunists of European Socialism what differences they have on the way they see Portugal's future. And the Transitional Program? Doesn't it enter into the "future" of the Portuguese mass movement? For a consistent Trotskyist, the "future of the mass movement" in Portugal depends on the workers creating their own organs of power, and developing them, so that, led by the Trotskyist party, they can make the socialist revolution. The defense of the "democratic gains," the "bettering of their conditions of life," like all the gains (which in this regard take on a transitional character, even though they may be democratic or economic), are only episodic, tactical, in relation to the future, since they would be inevitably lost if the proletariat, with its organs of power and headed by us, did not shortly take power. That such tasks may be tactical does not mean that they are not fundamental: they are, but immediately, not in relation to the future.

If the case of *República* sent the Majority trotting at the tail of the ultraleft, the Stalinists, and the "revolutionary" military figures, for the SWP it became the occasion to step off the precipice into the most vulgar syndicalism and democratism, finally ending up by capitulating to the trade-union apparatuses and the Portuguese Social Democracy. In the program for the Portuguese revolution in the document we have cited, the leadership of the SWP shows itself not less reformist: although it recognizes the existence and the great importance of the committees of soldiers and sailors, it does not say a single word about the demand to extend and centralize them. They find the necessity to foster occupations of factories and establishments worth mentioning, but only in passing. Not a single word is said about the agrarian revolution (a bourgeois-democratic task in content) or about the need to extend the nationalizations (on this aspect Peng calls on the LTF not to commit the error of the Fourth in Algeria, where precisely these fundamental slogans were omitted).

In the final instance, in the definitive draft approved by the LTF, additions were made to the SWP's original draft, the better to dissimulate its reformist character. Now it no longer revolved around a formal-democratic program; the struggle for a "workers and

peasants government" was superimposed on it as an axis. But this, rather than correcting the errors, widened them; it was forgotten that in relation to this slogan Trotsky pointed out that it must always be accompanied by our revolutionary program for such a government.

In the case of a workers revolution like the one in Portugal, to limit oneself to defense of "extension" of the trade-union organizations and bourgeois democracy, without taking as the central objective the development of new organizational forms for the mass movement and encouraging the organs of workers power to take power and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat (which is not the "extension" of bourgeois democracy, but its liquidation), means placing oneself outside of Trotskyism. The *Transitional Program* leaves no room for doubt in this respect: "The problem of the sections of the Fourth International is to help the proletarian vanguard . . . to fructify in time the struggle of the masses with ever more resolute and militant organizational measures." The members of the LTF ought to ask themselves: Where in *Key Issues* . . . are the "ever more resolute and militant organizational measures" that the SWP and our faction, the LTF, proposed to the Portuguese masses as they developed their revolutionary upsurge?

The reason for the existence of the Fourth can be summed up in a sentence: to get the workers to create new autonomous organizational forms, broad and democratic, mainly their own organs of power, and to establish their dictatorship through these new forms, overturning the organs of the bourgeois dictatorship—including their democratic form. Whoever leaves aside this fundamental task at the time of a prerevolutionary situation (that is, *at the only, exceptional moment at which this task begins to be possible*), thus renouncing transforming it into a fully revolutionary situation, departs from Trotskyism.

This conduct of the SWP and of its epiphenomenon, the LTF, led it inexorably into carrying out Peng's prediction: "If we take an incorrect position on Portugal we will lose everything. It is of course good to have a correct position in peaceful times. It is a hundred times more important to have a correct position in the midst of a revolution. A real revolution is the most important test of any revolutionary party." (Letter of Peng Shu-tse to the LTF, published in the *IDB* of the PST, No. 3, October 1975, p. 23.) The LTF, oriented by the incorrect policies of the SWP, fell into a crisis and lost everything in Portugal.

The Strategy of the Organs of Power

Members of the LTF have raised two objections to this cardinal line of Trotskyism. They have resorted to the "theoretical" arsenal of Stalinism to argue that soviets are fundamentally political organizations from their first appearance: they are only soviet forms when they "act on the broad social and political questions facing the working class and its allies." ("The Test of Lines in the Portuguese Revolution," *Intercontinental Press*, March 22, 1976, p. 469.) Trotskyism has characterized soviets on just this point, maintaining, against Stalinism, that they arise, initially, as organizations for minimum and economic struggles of the broad masses.

Another objection, which is based on the first one, is that the politico-organizational demand to build soviets must not be raised if they have not been created by the

masses, since we have to center our attention on the broad political issues and we do not "lower ourselves" to pose an organizational question like the formation of soviets or similar forms. Against this, the Bolshevik Tendency affirms categorically that the basic strategy of Trotskyism in any great upsurge of the mass movement, is directed to organizing and developing the organs of workers and popular power, no matter what forms and names they may take. This basic strategy is not subordinated to the prior existence of these organs nor must it give way to tactical questions. In face of a great upsurge of the masses, even if not a single embryo of workers and popular power exists, the Trotskyists orient all their policies to founding them, and in the event that some buds have germinated, they devote themselves to developing, defending, and centralizing them. This strategic line divides the Trotskyists with a proclivity for capitulating to liberal democracy from genuine Trotskyism as taught by Trotsky.

Members of the leadership of the SWP were compelled by the reality, as well as by the polemic that confronted them, to recognize that "Factory committees, representative of dual power on a plant level, began to appear in various areas. These, along with neighborhood tenants committees, and assemblies in some of the units of the armed forces, constitute nuclei that could, under propitious circumstances, develop into soviets (or comparable forms)." (Foley-Hansen-Novack, "For a Correct Political Course in Portugal," *Intercontinental Press*, October 13, 1975, p. 1357.) But this analysis, refuting *Key Issues* . . . which never spoke of "dual power on a plant level," continues to give no reply to the fundamental question: Must an essential part of the Trotskyist program in Portugal be to develop and centralize this "dual power on a plant level" in order to transform it into soviets?

Two False Schemas on Democracy

The Portuguese revolution demonstrated that not only the IMT (this we already knew) has a false conception of the role of bourgeois-democratic demands and institutions in the workers revolution in the imperialist countries, but the SWP has an even more dangerous conception that borders on revisionism. In its polemic with the PST, the IMT had already pointed out that bourgeois-democratic demands and institutions must not be advanced because only democratic workers institutions are to be advanced. The IMT raised this conception to the level of theory, mainly in Portugal, by maintaining that the revolutionary course is a process in which the organs of workers democracy are growing and displacing the organs of bourgeois democracy. The workers revolution, for the Majority, is a struggle between workers and bourgeois democracy. Thus the revolutionary process is no longer considered to be a struggle between classes, extremely dynamic and contradictory, shaken by leaps in all directions, and begins to be viewed as a university polemic over democratic institutions of the workers and the bourgeoisie, in which the Majority polemicist, the defender of workers democracy, defeats the reformist polemicist, the defender of bourgeois democracy.

The SWP utilizes the same method, but to reach exactly the contrary opinion. The SWP maintains that the revolution in Portugal has to take a rectilinear form, by means of an essentially bourgeois-democratic program, which it calls "democratic" in the Kautskyist sense of the

term. For the American comrades, the workers revolution in the imperialist countries is a consequence of systematically widening democratic rights, which go on unfolding until the proletariat is brought to take a qualitative leap that permits it to take power and transform bourgeois democracy into workers democracy. That is, the SWP likewise falls into the university-student interpretation of the workers revolution by conceiving it as a polemic between professors battling over political schemas. But in place of a polemicist defending workers democracy and another defending bourgeois democracy, the SWP sees a polemic between a consistent defender of "democracy" (workers and bourgeois) on the one side, and a contestant defending totalitarian bourgeois reaction on the other.

The position of the SWP loses its working-class character and thereby has revisionist connotations, while that of the IMT is ultraleftist and sectarian. It would seem that when Comrade Novack wrote his theoretical work *Democracy and Revolution*, he was expressing not just his personal opinion but that of his party, in outlining for the United States, the most imperialist country on earth, a mere democratic program. Thus referring to the "revolutionary program" to gain "the most powerful mass offensive for workers' power and socialism," as the "best defense of democracy," he tells us that the "pivot of such a program is the reliance of the working masses upon their own organizations and independent mobilizations to protect democratic rights and extend them." (*Democracy and Revolution*, Pathfinder Press, Inc., 1971, p. 217. Emphasis added.) Not a single word on transitional demands, nor a denunciation of bourgeois democracy with its rights, as possible tools of the counterrevolution.

If for Comrade Novack the "pivot" of the "revolutionary program" is "to protect democratic rights and extend them," for our Transitional Program "the formulas of democracy (freedom of press, the right to unionize, etc.) mean for us only incidental and episodic slogans in the independent movement of the proletariat . . ." In other words: between a "Trotskyist" of the SWP and a genuine Trotskyist, without quotation marks or additions, the difference consists in that the former holds that "to protect democratic rights and extend them" must be the "pivot" of our "revolutionary program"; while the latter interprets them as only "incidental and episodic" slogans.

The SWP forgets that the class struggle is the least "democratic" and the most "dictatorial"; each contender tries by all possible means to impose his will on the other. Within this implacable class struggle, each side uses bourgeois democracy when it is suitable and discards it when it is not useful. The criterion of the class struggle, which is the supreme criterion, has been abandoned by both the IMT and the LFT which have brought our ranks down to the low political level of the student and professorial circles in their respective continents: ultraleftist and now centrist in Europe, liberal democratic in the United States. Against these two erroneous criteria, our Bolshevik Tendency raises the proletarian, Trotskyist criterion of favoring bourgeois democracy in an "incidental and episodic" way when this might prove useful in the revolutionary struggle of the working class, and of combating it when it acts as a retarding force or when it serves the counterrevolution.

The LTF Ignores the Bourgeois-Democratic Reaction and the Role of the Portuguese Social Democracy

The analysis of the November 25 putsch made by the LTF is more correct than that made by the IMT. The LTF points out that a historic defeat was inflicted on the movement of the workers and the masses, and has denounced the disastrous role of the ultraleft, but without stressing that the main responsibility falls on the big reformist parties.

However, this analysis is not sufficient, because it stops midway. In the resolution proposed by the LTF at the meeting of the IEC of the international in February this year, where the above-mentioned analysis appears, not a single word is said about the relation between bourgeois-democratic slogans, the reactionary victory of November 25, and the march of the bourgeois counterrevolution. The LTF abstains from stating whether the bourgeois-democratic gains were extended after the putsch. And, if they were, a paradoxical situation is presented to the LTF. Bourgeois democracy, with its elected governments and expression of the "popular will" was extended enormously in Portugal after November 25, when a government of the military caste, not elected by anyone, changed into a government elected by a parliament (Soares) and by the "people" (Eanes). Were these "popular and democratic successes" a consequence of November 25? Did they signify an advance or a setback for the mass movement?

The LTF does not pose these basic issues in its resolution precisely because it has a revisionist conception of the struggle for bourgeois democracy in the imperialist countries, which we already pointed out in the previous point. By making this struggle absolute as the programmatic axis of Trotskyism, by refusing to view bourgeois democracy as a possible tool of the imperialist counterrevolution, the LTF was not able to foresee the maneuver that Portuguese and world imperialism would utilize on this occasion: the bourgeois-democratic counterrevolution, with the Socialist party as the main agent. The LTF only visualized the Bonapartist counterrevolution of Vasco Gonçalves with the Communist party as agent, and for this reason its resolution ignored the role of the elections as a counterrevolutionary tool and did not give the SP the basic importance it has within this parliamentary electoral game, relegating it to the same level as the Communist party, and mentioning it in only two sentences.

This lack of a categorical definition of the Portuguese SP comes from afar. In fact, the apogee of the committees of workers, tenants, and soldiers, occupations of enterprises and land and other expressions of workers power occurred in the period between the downfall of Caetano and November 25. While the CP sought to deflect this movement and place it under the control of the MFA, the SP sought to deflect and smash it by means of the bourgeois-democratic organs. It was during this period that two key documents were elaborated by the SWP and the LTF: the May 1, 1975, *Report* by Gus Horowitz to the plenum of the National Committee of the SWP and "The Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution," an official document of the LTF.

In the *Report*, Horowitz mentions the Portuguese SP on five occasions; two of them are incidental and the remaining three criticize the PSP for putting "a brake" on the workers struggles and for agreeing to enter the MFA government. In no case does it denounce the PSP for its objective of smothering the Portuguese revolution on the terrain of bourgeois parliamentarism.

In *Key Issues* . . . , point No. 7 is dedicated to the Social Democracy. Here the PSP is characterized as a reformist workers party, but "heterogeneous," and it is singled out as the preferred ally of the Trotskyists by pointing out that "it is much less suited than the Communist party to serve as a transmission belt for the military regime." ("The Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution," *Intercontinental Press*, October 20, 1975, pp. 1432-33.) Does the LTF still believe, after November 25, that the PSP is much less suited to the military regime than the CP?

The PST, on the other hand, with a correct theoretical characterization of the relations between bourgeois democracy and the class struggle, was able to anticipate in December 1975 that the next steps of the "bourgeois-democratic" counterrevolution would be parliamentary elections to confirm Soares as prime minister, and afterwards, new elections to give Eanes the presidency, with the unconditional support of the leadership of the Socialist party.

The LTF Begins to Change Its Program and Strategy

With November 25, the offensive changed hands: from the workers movement it passed to the bourgeoisie. Up to that date, the organs of power "on a plant level" and mass scale were growing and becoming stronger; after that date they suffered a notorious weakening, which led them to disappear in some sectors, as was the case with the committees of soldiers and sailors.

The first draft of the *Key Issues* . . . was drawn up by the SWP amidst the multitudinous upsurge, when the organs of power "at a plant level" and the committees of soldiers and sailors were at their apogee. Nevertheless, as we have said, this document did not indicate a single task or slogan in relation to the "workers commissions." Neither did the LTF's definitive document, which outlined the Trotskyist program and policies for the workers commissions and committees of soldiers in Portugal. The most notorious feature of the policies of the SWP and of Joe Hansen in his correspondence with Moreno is the categorical refusal to raise the policy and slogan for centralizing these committees by means of their holding "regional and national congresses."

The LTF document, drawn up after the November 25 putsch, and presented to the IEC in February of this year, is paradoxical: in the midst of allusions to the setback suffered by the "workers commissions" and the factory committees provoked by the bourgeois offensive, it incorporates in its program and policies what it had never accepted before November 25: "transform the workers commissions into united-front-type action committees" and push for "action committees, and democratic factory committees" and "regional and national congresses" of these committees. (*Intercontinental Press*, March 22, 1976, p. 476.)

When the workers were not on the defensive, but were advancing, the SWP was totally and absolutely against the "strategy of advancing," and now that they are in retreat, they tip their hats and welcome them.

But, intimately linked with the foregoing, another brusque change has taken place in the policies of the LTF. Before November 25, they continued to stress the necessity of centering our policies and program on concrete political issues: the Constituent Assembly, the MFA-workers

parties pact, the *República* case; they opposed laying out strategical and "organizational" lines. Beginning with November 25, their official document refused to take a stand on the most concrete and immediate issue of the Portuguese revolution at the moment: the presidential elections. The LTF soon acquired the features it had attacked so much, it became "organizationalist" and "strategicalist." At bottom the LTF did not change; what changed was the SP. When the SP had a relatively progressive policy in relation to the Bonapartist plans of Vasco Gonçalves and the CP, the SWP accompanied it from the left: Constituent Assembly and democratic rights. But when the PSP became the main agent of the bourgeois counterrevolution in the electoral process, and it thereby had to be denounced as such, here and now, in the elections themselves, the SWP and the LTF opted for proffering "organizationalist" and "strategicalist" generalities, combined with a general denunciation of the reformism of the PSP.

In contrast to this position, the Portuguese PRT systematically denounced the Portuguese Socialist party, and especially Soares, outlining a policy for the electoral campaign that would educate the Socialist masses and bring them to break with the counterrevolutionary plan that was being put into effect.

The SWP Commits a Historic Error in Angola

In January of this year, the National Committee of the SWP adopted a resolution on the civil war in Angola, in which it recognized that the South African army had invaded Angola and that one of its objectives was "military thrusts against the MPLA," ("Angola: Behind the Civil War," report presented by Tony Thomas and approved by the National Committee of the SWP, January 3, 1976. Published in the *Militant*, January 23, 1976, p. 17.) Against the entire tradition of the Black and Trotskyist movement, the SWP did not draw from this fact a clear revolutionary policy: to defend the Black MPLA militarily from the military attack of the white racists. To hide this grave error behind a smoke screen, it was said that the war continued to be fratricidal and thus it was not necessary to defend the Blacks of the MPLA arms in hand.

But in reality the South African invasion, which was part of the colonial war that Yankee imperialism unleashed against Angola, had changed the placement of the nationalist movements. The FNLA and the UNITA, which had previously fought against the main enemy of the Angolan people, Lusitanian imperialism, now united militarily with the South African army and facilitated its invasion. However the SWP did not call for struggle against this colonialist military front, formed by the South African army and the traitor nationalist movements. The SWP went even further: with the aim of demoralizing the anti-imperialist fighters of the MPLA and of Cuba who confronted the South African army and its military allies of the FNLA-UNITA, the SWP asserted that no one could win the war, and that if the MPLA won, imperialism would triumph and a major part of the Angolan population would be exterminated: "In fact, I do not think that any of these groups can 'win' the war . . . If one of them does gain a decisive victory over the others . . . the real winner would be imperialism." (Ibid., p. 17.) "We have to anticipate that the victory of either side in this war may mean pogroms, with victims running into the tens of

thousands. Already leaders of the MPLA have talked about turning the Bakongo areas held by the FNLA into 'another Biafra.' In Africa, the word 'Biafra' is synonymous with the civil war in Nigeria and the immense slaughter that occurred over the so-called tribal issue. A similar perspective is involved in Angola." (Ibid., p. 15. Emphasis added.)

None of these proimperialist predictions were borne out, but, on the contrary, the racists and imperialists were defeated by the anti-imperialist fighters of the MPLA and Cuba, a victory that represented a giant step forward in the Black revolution in the entire southern part of the African continent as is being shown by Angola itself, Rhodesia, and the Republic of South Africa.

When they saw clearly that the MPLA had triumphed over the racists, the leadership of the SWP, embarrassed at not being able to celebrate the victory, tried to recuperate its battered prestige by twisting the facts to confuse its young militants and sympathizers, particularly the Blacks and those in the colonies. It sought to hide its genuine policy in face of the South African invasion by stating *a posteriori* that the SWP supported "the military actions taken by the MPLA against South Africa and the imperialist-controlled mercenaries." (Report by Tony Thomas at the National Convention of the SWP, August 1976. The *Militant*, September 17, 1976.) Nothing falser and more lying than this affirmation! Comrades of the international and of the LTF: read once again the SWP's resolution of last January and try to find a single quotation that says: "We support the military actions taken by the MPLA against South Africa and the imperialist-controlled mercenaries." The search would be useless, since the maximum reached by the SWP in this resolution was to say that the "UNITA and the FNLA must be condemned for collaborating with the South Africans . . ." ("Angola: Behind the Civil War," op. cit., p. 17), but the SWP *never* spoke of giving military support to the MPLA in its just war against this bloc or, as a minimum, against the South African army.

But let us suppose that the SWP had really supported the MPLA militarily against the South Africans. Why did it not then fight the military allies of this army, that is, the FNLA and the UNITA? How can a South African officer driving a tank bearing soldiers of the UNITA be attacked militarily without attacking the latter? Does the SWP have cartridges in its arsenal that hit only white racists when they advance together with Black traitors to occupy a country like Angola?

This policy, which was sectarian toward the MPLA and opportunistic in relation to the FNLA and the UNITA, was extended by the SWP to the whole Black movement in the southern part of the continent. In its resolution it did not raise a single slogan to mobilize the Blacks of the Republic of South Africa against the racist government and for the defense of the Black MPLA. We emphasize the fact, there was not a single appeal to the Blacks held down by Vorster and those of the entire African continent, to unite in a gigantic Black mobilization, overwhelming South African racism and Yankee imperialism, invaders of Angola and attackers of a Black movement like the MPLA.

But the gravest of all is that the SWP does not conceive the struggle of the Angolan MPLA as part of the Black mobilization and revolution on the whole planet, including

the Black people of the United States. The SWP limits itself to including the Black people of its own country within an appeal to the American people, and not as part of a Black world revolution, whose vanguard was the MPLA.

Today still, the SWP insists on ignoring that the Black revolution must be considered as an African-American global process; and, insisting on this negation of internationalism and of the permanent revolution, the SWP does not raise the two fundamental slogans for the Black revolution in the southern part of the African continent: "Black Republics in South Africa and Rhodesia" and "For a Federation of Black Republics in Southern Africa." These slogans are the only ones that permit us to incorporate, within our Transitional Program, the struggle against the procapitalist and reformist government of the MPLA and for a workers and peasants government, combining them with the Black revolution in South Africa, which supersedes the national limits imposed by the old colonial powers on the African peoples and tribes.

The IMT has likewise refused to raise this Trotskyist program for the Black revolution in the southern part of the African continent, going only as far as pointing out the revolutionary consequences that the victory of the MPLA will have for this entire zone. But it was not sufficient to lay out a correct perspective, it had to be accompanied by a Trotskyist and internationalist policy that proclaimed: Blacks of South Africa, struggle together with the MPLA, like the Cubans, to defeat racist Vorster's invasion against Angola! Blacks of Africa and of America, everyone in the struggle against the racist invasion in Angola! Let's support the MPLA militarily, in order to defeat the army of the fascist Vorster and his allies of the FNLA and the UNITA!

This is, for our Bolshevik Tendency, one of the fundamental programmatic axes that separate us from the other two tendencies. Against the national, tribal, and opportunistic conception of the IMT and of the LTF, we raise the internationalist and permanent program of the Black Afro-American revolution.

The Decadence of the SWP Brings About the Crisis of the LTF

It is not surprising that the decadence of the SWP, the undisputed leader of the LTF, likewise affected the faction. The SWP's positions on Portugal were resisted from the beginning by 90 percent of the faction, which in criticizing the draft *Key Issues* demanded that the issue of the organs of power be posed. The clearest and most brilliant opposition came from the leadership of the Spanish LTF, but also Comrade Peng, as well as the PST, drastically opposed the theses of the SWP on the Portuguese revolution (which was published in the *IDB* of the PST in the year 1975). For obscure reasons that escape us, the Spanish leadership of the LTF capitulated completely to the SWP and accepted the second version of *Key Issues* . . . which says practically the same as the former. This provoked a crisis in the faction in Spain, where questions had already been raised over its sticking to a sectarian attitude of not utilizing the numerous legal openings and over following a policy very similar to that of the Majority in all respects except its correct repudiation of terrorism. From that time on, the leadership of the Spanish LTF, which had appeared as a possible opposition to the SWP,

was caught up in its decadence.

This fact accelerated still more the hopeless crisis of the LTF: approximately 80 percent of its members repudiated not only the policy approved for Portugal but also the proposals of the SWP on the Angolan revolution. The vanguard of this rejection was the Brazilian LTF. The members of the IEC who up to then had formed part of the LTF, but who disagreed with its present course and its leadership, the SWP, called at last February's meeting of the International Executive Committee for the constitution of a new international tendency which, without reneging on the heritage of the LTF, would incorporate the new lessons of the Portuguese and Angolan revolutions, which have done no more than confirm the old Leninist and Trotskyist teachings. This means a tendency more orthodox than ever, which will battle the fatal ultraleftist deviations of the Majority, as well as the about-face, the concession to the demo-liberal prejudices of the American student layers, made by the new leadership of the SWP.

Just as the Majority seeks to cover up its crisis by forcing the unification of different national groups of our Fourth, the SWP, instead of correcting the policy that brought it to disaster in Portugal and Angola, is plotting, as a maneuver to reestablish itself, a unification with Trotskyist organizations that do not claim to be for our international. To this end, they show the most eager interest in Lambertism with which any union will be difficult in view of the degree of ossification its sectarianism has reached. It is possible that this maneuver reflects the desire of the SWP to arrive at a federative international, a united front of groups and sects that has no obligations. Whether it is this or some other reason that is motivating them, what is certain is that no one can be against an honest and principled tactic of unification and reunification, provided that this tactic is always placed within the context of our overall policies, and that it is made to serve the purpose of providing our international with a Trotskyist policy toward the broad Socialist, Communist masses, and the oppressed European nationalities. Welcome the organizations that help us to achieve this central proposition; let's abandon the others to their fate.

The Explanation of the LTF's Crisis

Nothing demonstrates better the decadence of the SWP than its degradation of the Marxist method in its explanation of the crisis of the LTF. In place of resorting to historical materialism, it turns to the plots of the old films of the Far West: the Argentine "villains" go around the world doing all kinds of bad things to the "good Americans."

The true explanation of the crisis is simple, and hinges, in the final instance, on the same causes as those behind the crisis of the IMT. The new youthful leadership of the SWP was not forged in the rhythm of the working-class struggle; its medium has fundamentally been the student layers. For a time it played a progressive role by dynamizing the old party leadership, while the latter maintained its proletarian orientation. But to the degree they displaced the old guard, and thereby remained alone with the leadership in their hands, these new leaders lost the capacity to pose, in face of big revolutions like the Portuguese and Angolan, correct Trotskyist replies.

The demo-liberal influence of the American student

layers combined with the backward consciousness of the Portuguese proletariat and masses, making this new leadership fall into a clear propagandist deviation of a democratic type. Another bit happened to it in Angola, where, in place of agitating for an authentic Trotskyist policy of developing the Black revolution throughout the African continent, they were content to raise a democratic-pacifist policy (a policy understandable to the backward mentality of the Yankee student layers) that posed only withdrawal of the South African troops and the mercenaries.

In those countries and regions in which the masses have initiated an upsurge, the LTF has fallen into a crisis and the influence of the SWP has decreased in an absolute way, up to being annulled in some places. This happened in Portugal and Italy, where the number of its partisans has been reduced to the fingers of one hand; this happened in South America, where its partisans, on a continental level, do not amount to more than a proportion of five to a thousand in relation to our Bolshevik Tendency. Its prestige has likewise fallen in Mexico, although this was the country selected by the SWP as a model to demonstrate the virtues of its methodology for constructing a party. In spite of this and in spite of the fact that the "Argentine villains" did not intervene in the tale of Mexican Trotskyism, the LTF fell into a total crisis, precisely as a consequence of the various years of direct influence of the SWP. Today the partisans of the latter constitute the minority of the minorities of Trotskyism in this country.

The only place with a great upsurge of the mass movement where the SWP and its LTF continue to grow is Spain. Something similar to what occurred to the IMT in the same country. But likewise here, although through other mechanisms and coming to the surface in a different manner, the total bankruptcy of the LTF led by the SWP is manifesting itself. From the majority that it was at the time of the split, it has become transformed into a minority, embroiled in permanent crises and with a sharp internal struggle; it has lost the possibility of gaining the spectacular growth that the objective conditions offered it.

VII. The Program Proposed by the Bolshevik Tendency to Overcome the Crisis in the International

The Bolshevik Tendency

The desertion of the SWP compelled the broad majority of the LTF to found a new tendency, which, without ignoring any of the correct criticisms of the Majority made by the LTF, would be the banner bearer of the defense of the Trotskyist program and methodology abandoned by the SWP.

The rise of this tendency is not accidental; it is the reflection in the ranks of the LTF of the upsurge of the mass movement and of the European and African revolutions, and it thereby burst out strong and homogeneous from the beginning, without a crisis, and in steady growth, mainly in the key countries of the European revolution and in the Latin American countries that today are the axis of the revival, like Colombia and Venezuela. This must not make us forget the markedly youthful character of our leaderships and members, nor the fact that the strongest and most experienced sector of our

tendency, the Argentine PST, is a party that, because of the errors of the leadership of the international, found itself obliged to form itself at the margin of the international, which accentuated its provincial character. The desertion of the SWP compelled us to constitute this tendency, despite the fact that we are conscious of our weaknesses. But, as Trotskyists, we know that no one chooses the field of battle; it is the reality of the class struggle or the ideological struggle that imposes this situation. The fact that we did not seek this new tendency struggle does not mean, however, that we are not ready to carry it to its final consequences, which are nothing less than overcoming the vanguardist policy and the present orientation toward centrism that is taking our international from fiasco to fiasco, and which is impeding us from constructing strong mass Trotskyist parties in those countries that are undergoing a great upsurge in the workers movement.

This does not mean that we are seeking to displace the comrades who are leading the international at present, but, on the contrary, we call on them in their capacity as individual leaders to continue making up a fundamental part of the leadership.

With respect to the LTF, and especially the SWP, our strong politico-theoretical criticism has only one objective: to gain its return to Trotskyist policies and its again occupying the preeminent place that logically belongs to it in the struggle against the vanguardist deviation.

To the best leaders and militants of the IMT, our appeal is simple: unite with us in opening a new stage in the life of the international that will supersede the leaderships that come from the student movement and form, in exchange, a leadership closely linked to the workers movement and particularly alert to the concerns and needs of the European Socialist and Communist workers, as well as the oppressed nationalities.

In the final instance, our Tendency arose to combat the capitulations of the other two tendencies and to overcome the student character of their leaderships, providing our international with a new, proletarian, Bolshevik leadership.

Unfortunately, the harsh repression that the PST had to undergo delayed the definitive constitution of this new Bolshevik Tendency, as well as the publication of some of the works already elaborated in the first months of this year, like the one referring to the civil war in Angola. We have now succeeded in resolving these obstacles, and we are in position to present to the entire international what our program is to overcome its crisis.

This is not a program for Europe or Africa, but one constructed around those points that differentiate us clearly from the other tendencies. It is because of this that we do not pose the Soviet Socialist United States of Europe, the struggle for the liberation of women, the democratic rights of the soldiers, or other points in which we agree with the other tendencies.

The objective we are pursuing in specifying our program is to make sure that the comrades of the international have clear basic points of reference on the profound differences that we have with the other two tendencies, mainly the IMT. It is sufficient to compare the nine points of the IMT's program for Europe with our thirteen points, for every responsible comrade to have a solid, summarized basis for taking a stand, although our program is not solely European and does not claim to cover the general

needs of our movement in Europe and Africa.

Program of the Bolshevik Tendency

I. We are struggling for a democratically centralized international, which we can obtain only through a process of constructing an authentic Bolshevik leadership with a genuine Trotskyist policy. The most important and urgent task of this centralized world party must be the construction of Trotskyist parties with a mass influence in those countries that are undergoing revolutionary upsurges. To gain this objective it is indispensable to reverse the current policies of the Majority.

II. For a revolutionary program for Europe that systematically denounces European imperialism. For support to, and propagandization of, the anti-imperialist struggles of the Black peoples of Africa and the other continents. For support to and defense of the Basque and Catalan peoples against Spanish imperialism as one of the fundamental axes, at this time, of this revolutionary program.

III. For overturning the Fourth International's line in Europe. Portugal continues to be the axis of our intervention, since it remains the vanguard of the European revolution. For the development of the Spanish revolution. For the Federation of Iberian Socialist Republics.

IV. For preferential attention to the Black revolution in southern Africa. Against approaching this revolution as a tribal, national, or regional phenomenon. For an internationalist policy that views the Black revolution as a universal Afro-American process. For a policy that incorporates the American Blacks in this process. For explicit recognition that the triumph of the MPLA in the Angolan civil war was an anti-imperialist and antiracist victory, which has given a colossal impulse to the Black revolution in southern Africa and the whole world. For workers and peasants governments to replace the reformist governments of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. For Black republics in Zimbabwe and South Africa. For the Federation of Black Socialist Republics of Southern Africa and the entire continent.

V. Down with popular frontism of the reformist parties, the most perfidious weapon of the bourgeois counterrevolution! The revolutionary upsurge of the European workers movement poses as the most urgent task combatting the policies and the probable popular-front governments, inspired by the reformist parties, which are set up to brake and to derail the workers revolution. Against the idealization of the Communist parties on the part of the IMT, and of the Socialist parties on the part of the LTF; let's return to defining both of them in Trotskyist terms as counterrevolutionary agents within the workers movement.

VI. The other danger to the European revolution will be the attempts of imperialism to impose counterrevolutionary or reactionary governments, as has occurred in Latin America. We must be the vanguard in denouncing these attempts and in calling for unity of action by the reformist parties and masses in order to defeat them, without forgetting for a single instant that the real alternative is: Trotskyist or counterrevolutionary governments.

VII. We reject the ultraleftist speculations of the Majority on organs of power of the masses that march "progressively" toward taking the state. We are for a sovietist strategy in the broad upsurges of the masses, based on a transitional program of mobilization. In face of the opening of the European revolution, we reaffirm the

basic principle of Trotskyism; the central strategy is to construct organs of workers and popular power, which, striking roots in the primary economic and democratic struggles of the broad masses, begins by organizing them for these struggles and terminates by opening for them the perspective of taking power.

VIII. Against the non-Trotskyist program for the imperialist countries that takes as "pivot" the defense and "extension of democracy." For democratic slogans raised in an "incidental and episodic" way when they help in developing the struggle of the working class and the toilers. Against the policy of the Majority of minimizing or ignoring the fundamental importance of these democratic slogans at this stage of the upsurge of the masses.

IX. For the dictatorship of the proletariat. Neither mysterious workers democracies, nor future socialist democracies constitute the essence of our program. We defend the essence of the Trotskyist Transitional Program in this revolutionary epoch: the revolutionary and combative dictatorship of the proletariat to destroy the counterrevolution and the bourgeois state apparatus. Democracies of whatever kind are totally subordinate to the revolutionary triumph and consolidation of the workers dictatorship. For returning to the old Leninist and Trotskyist tradition of raising, not only as theory, but even as a slogan, the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. Against the revisionist abandonment, which characterizes the other tendencies, of the characterization of this slogan as the most important of Trotskyism. This does not mean leaving aside democracy and its fulfillment in society, in the workers movement, and in the "socialist" countries; however, this defense is not absolute but relative in the class struggle and the triumph of the proletarian dictatorship.

X. For the construction of Trotskyist parties with mass influence, orienting our work toward the European Socialist and Communist workers, and toward the oppressed nationalities that are struggling for national self-determination. For coming day by day closer to these workers, to their consciousness, concerns, and needs, in order to draw them away by means of a policy of unity in action with them and their parties, from the influence of their traitorous political, national, and trade-union leaderships. For an energetic intervention by our parties in the mass organizations, gaining for Trotskyism those dynamic and progressive currents, which as a product of the upsurge are rising within these organizations, going beyond them and constituting the genuine vanguard of the

proletariat.

XI. War to the death against the ultraleft, the centrists, and crystallized sectarians divorced from the masses of Europe! These are not our historic allies but our political enemies, because they constitute the other petty-bourgeois current of the workers movement, of the same social sign as the reformists although not such traitors. Against any general orientation of constructing our parties by working on these sectors, or seeking "fusions" or "regroupments" with them that draws us away from the broad masses.

XII. For any unification that strengthens the Trotskyist orientation toward the Socialist and Communist workers and toward the European oppressed nationalities. We must be open to discussions on unification with any current of centrist or sectarian origin that, breaking from its previous trajectory, orients toward our program and toward the workers movement organized in the big reformist parties or in the big trade-union organizations, and toward the masses struggling for national self-determination. But this can be undertaken only within the Trotskyist mass line, as a conjunctural and exceptional tactic for a given country, and never as a general strategy for our parties at this stage in the European countries.

XIII. Against the method of "short cuts" in the construction of our parties, applied by the Majority at the ninth and tenth world congresses. Against its political manifestations: guerrillaist ultraleftism at the Ninth Congress; vanguardist ultraleftism at the Tenth, workerist councilism and orientation toward the centrists at the Eleventh. For a minimum agreement to save the international from the crisis provoked by this orientation and this method of the Majority. For an orientation toward the broad masses that leaves to their fate the "ultraleft," the centrists and the "new mass vanguard" that occupy the attention of the Majority. For a new Bolshevik leadership and policy for our international.

Comrades: Join the Bolshevik Tendency if you are in agreement in general terms with the thirteen previous points, although you may disagree with some of the observations or analyses of this declaration. If you are conscious of the crisis of the IMT and the LTF, join our tendency to leave behind, once and for all, the crisis of leadership in our international, definitively overcoming the Majority policies and orientation of the past seven years, to impose a genuinely Trotskyist leadership and policy.

Bogotá, November 1976