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The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat

By Nahuel Moreno

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INTRODUCTION

When major Communist parties in the West, such as the French, Spanish, and Italian CPs, withdrew the slogan of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" from their program, a widespread discussion began of the phenomenon which has come to be known as "Eurocommunism." This involves abandonment of the Marxist-Leninist conception of the state, together with mild criticism of the worst features of the governing Stalinist bureaucracies.

In this discussion of Eurocommunism, as in every great polemic in the past, all the teachings of Marxism, as corroborated or enriched by more than a century of revolutionary experience, are at stake.

In order to defend these teachings, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International last year published a resolution entitled "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." At the time the resolution was published, its authors also called for a public debate on its contents. This was a timely move, since the question has aroused considerable interest throughout the European and Western left.

It is hardly accidental that there should be such interest, since the Communist parties are dropping the slogan of proletarian dictatorship just at a time when Europe is witnessing a working-class upsurge that has spread to Latin America, the United States, and the colonial masses of Asia and Africa.

In dropping that slogan, the CPs are in fact merely adjusting their theory to conform to what has long been their daily practice: abandonment of the class struggle and its conclusion, the dictatorship of the proletariat. And they are doing so just at the time when their respective imperialisms have stepped up the pressure on Communist and Socialist parties to accept austerity plans.

The strongest Communist parties in Western Europe are under pressure from two different forces: the offensive by the imperialists of their own countries against the living and working standards of the working class, and also the workers' resistance to paying for the crisis of the capitalist regime.

In order to confront the resistance of the workers, the imperialists—whether European, Yankee, or Japanese—appeal to bourgeois democratic prejudices. Through their fantastic information media, the imperialists subject the masses of those countries to a permanent campaign of praise for the virtues of bourgeois democracy and bourgeois-democratic freedoms, while at the same time criticizing the workers states on this score. Instead of comparing the colossal conquests of the working class,

such as expropriation of the bourgeoisie, planning, secure employment for the whole population, etc.—things that would tip the balance in favor of the workers states—they compare formal freedoms, and talk about the repressive, totalitarian character of those countries.

Day after day through the mass media they confront the left parties with the following argument: "We give you the most extensive freedoms with which to fight us. We only use repression against you if you rise up against the democratic constitution of our country, if you carry out, say, destructive strikes or terrorist acts, or if you try to impose your own wishes without waiting for the results of elections, without accepting the solution adopted by a freely elected parliament. In the workers states, on the other hand, they have concentration camps, and every citizen has to think the way the ruling Communist party says. If they don't, they wind up in jail or in psychiatric hospitals. We are democratic. We give you the freedom to think and write what you please, to run in the elections, and even to take power if you want. The choice is between the freedoms of the capitalist countries or the totalitarianism of the proletarian dictatorships. *It's true, of course, that in order to maintain the system we have, you've got to make some sacrifices, work harder for less.* But which do you want: freedom or totalitarianism?"

These questions are aimed at the Western workers' bourgeois-democratic prejudices. Anyone who has been active in the milieu of students or workers in the advanced countries is familiar with this sentiment, which basically consists of believing that under capitalism, in spite of all its problems, people have freedoms, they can decide for themselves all sorts of things (where they will live, what job they will have, what courses they will study, etc.)—yet without realizing how relative those privileges are. Worst of all, people who think this way fail to understand that what little they do have comes as a result of living in one of the rich countries that are exploiting all of humanity.

The development of these prejudices has gotten a boost from the Communist parties, which in recent decades have joined the Social Democrats in affirming such sentiments. Another contributing factor has been the economic boom, which has permitted an improvement in the standard of living of the working class and of the modern middle class. And then there is the tragic spectacle of the bureaucratic regimes in the workers states of Eastern Europe—above all the USSR. And there is also the terrible experience of life under fascist totalitarian regimes, and most recently the victorious struggles against the Greek colonels, Salazar, and Franco, which opened up for the masses a new period whose benefits in terms of democracy they would hate to lose.

Nevertheless, each imperialism confronts the workers' parties of its country, especially the Communists, with such questions as: "Are you willing to help us overcome the crisis of the national economy, in order to safeguard democratic freedoms and our parliamentary system? Are you going to be serious politicians, worthy of confidence, who will convince the working class that it must sacrifice itself on the altar of development of the national economy?"

Are you for the motherland and the development of our national economy, or for the defense of the USSR and of the sectoral interests of the workers?"

Many Communist parties are immune to this kind of pressure for the time being. Given their weakness and their lack of parliamentary, trade-union or state posts in their own countries, they continue to depend on aid from Moscow for the existence of their leadership. This is what causes them, for the time being, to stick to their traditional positions.

But for the stronger ones, such as the Italian CP, the meaning of the imperialists' questions is: "What do you want? To lose the millions of dollars you rake off from trade with the USSR and from municipal accounts? To lose thousands of supporters who would be left without jobs? To give up control of the enormous part of the bureaucratic apparatus you control in the most important cities? To wind up depending on the USSR like the weakest CPs? Why should you? You think you might lose influence within the parliamentary regime because of the austerity plans? Our regime will guarantee you your posts and your privileges. Is it too much to ask in return that you discuss labor laws and contracts with us, in order to convince the workers to earn a little less and work a little more?"

This explains why those Communist parties have accepted with open arms the idea of cooperating with the bosses' austerity plans, as we have seen them do in Italy and Spain.

But since they realize that such a policy can provoke serious crises for them, that they could get swept aside by the mass movement or at least lose votes in the elections, they try to compensate by offering concessions in other areas. Fundamentally, these are the same sort of concessions that the bosses make, cloaked in a Marxist disguise.

They "democratize" their programs and policies, and try to divert everything into discussions which draw their own members and the vanguard away from resistance to the economic plans of the bosses' governments. For example, they attack Yankee imperialism—taking advantage of the masses' justified hatred of it—instead of pointing to the imperialist bourgeoisie of their own country as the main enemy. For the same reason they raise questions about the monopoly of power and the one-party system maintained by the despicable ruling bureaucracy in Russia, and they criticize some of the most repugnant examples of the implacable repression carried out by governments of the USSR and other bureaucratized workers states against oppositionists at home and also against other workers states. They rehabilitate some of the victims of the Moscow Trials. They defend other victims of Stalinism. They defend Czechoslovakia.

When they withdraw the dictatorship of the proletariat from their programs, and openly defend the concept of universal suffrage and the parliamentary system, they do it in order to channel the false democratic [democratistas] hopes of the workers and to win credibility with the bourgeoisie. They offer the perspective of unqualified political pluralism both before and after the conquest of power, again taking advantage of the workers' illusions that it will all be taken care of through reformist, peaceful, parliamentary means. They have even gone so far as to pledge that if, once in power, they should lose an election to reactionary parties, they would turn power over to the

winners, since their respect for universal suffrage is sacred. And, inevitably, they have begun to proclaim patriotism toward their own imperialist country. This is in contrast to the old, blind "patriotism" for Russia that characterized the Stalinists in their early years. For the same reasons they have started to hint—much more timidly—about the right to dissent within their own Communist parties and the workers' organizations controlled by them.

They confront Trotskyists with arguments similar to those of the imperialists: "Don't be dogmatic. Abandon once and for all the class struggle, revolution, and the workers dictatorship envisioned by Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky. You've got to adjust to modern times, to advanced Western societies. Why don't you promise, as we do, to provide unlimited political freedoms if you take power? Why don't you just drop mistaken concepts like class struggle, workers revolution, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, in favor of democratic freedoms and the parliamentary system? Why don't you defend universal suffrage and democratic, parliamentary means of governing with the majority of the population?"

It was precisely to answer the Eurocommunists and defend the positions of Lenin and Trotsky on these questions that the United Secretariat of the Fourth International drafted and published its resolution. And that would all be quite commendable, it would have our unconditional support, were it not for the fact that in so doing the United Secretariat has committed a real theoretical, political, and historical crime—they attribute to the dictatorship of the proletariat a purpose and program ninety percent of which resembles the Eurocommunists' program and is diametrically opposed to that of our teachers.

According to the United Secretariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat should always, from the day it takes power guarantee "unfettered political freedom" to the restorationist bourgeoisie and its parties, so long as they do not carry out an armed uprising or launch a civil war:

"This is our programmatic and principled norm—unfettered political freedom for all those individuals, groups, tendencies, and parties who in practice respect collective property and the workers' constitution."¹ [See footnotes at end.]

What is meant by "in practice"?
"This means that freedom of political organization should be granted to all those, including probourgeois elements, who in actual practice respect the constitution of the workers state, i.e., are not engaged in violent actions to overthrow workers power and collective property."²

It seems absurd that we should have to explain why there cannot be "unfettered political freedom" or "universal suffrage" under a class dictatorship, or that we must carry on a discussion to establish the fact that *dictatorship* is counterposed to "unfettered political freedom" for all citizens, since it signifies some form of oppression, or political compulsion against someone, because otherwise it would not be a dictatorship. But when we proceed to the world of politics and fill out this formula with its real content ("unfettered political freedom for Somoza, Pinochet, and the shah of Iran up until the day when they launch armed uprisings against the workers dictatorship, with no possibility of trying them for their past crimes"), the discussion goes from being absurd to downright tragic.

To justify its position, the United Secretariat tries to base itself on Lenin and Trotsky. Nonetheless, it can be

simply demonstrated that this new program of theirs has nothing to do with what Lenin and Trotsky asserted both in words and in deeds.

As far as Lenin was concerned, the only thing "unfettered" under the dictatorship following the October Revolution was its dictatorial power—not "political freedom."

"The scientific term 'dictatorship' means nothing more or less than *authority untrammelled by any laws, absolutely unrestricted by any rules whatever, and based directly on force.*"³

In *The State and Revolution*, Lenin quotes Engels:

"... so long as the proletariat still *needs* the state, it does not need it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist."⁴

And in the Program of the Communist Party, written by him and reaffirmed in 1936 by Trotsky, Lenin insisted on "restrictions . . . of freedom" so long as socialism has not been reached, so long as the exploitation of man by man has not disappeared:

"... disenfranchisement and *any restrictions whatsoever upon liberty* are necessary solely as temporary measures. . . . In proportion as the objective possibility for the exploitation of man by man disappears, all necessity for these temporary measures will likewise disappear. . . ."⁵

And in *The Revolution Betrayed*, the same book in which the United Secretariat finds a supposed basis for its "programmatically and principled norm," Trotsky insists that under the dictatorship of the proletariat there must be "strict limitations of freedom:"

"To be sure, a revolutionary dictatorship means by its very essence strict limitations of freedom. . . ."⁶

Around the time of his exile, Trotsky has foreseen that:

"... naturally, the dictatorship of the proletariat is inconceivable without the use of force, even against sectors of the proletariat itself."⁷

And in 1938, in the *Transitional Program*, Trotsky reiterated that:

"... the formulas of democracy (freedom of press, the right to unionize, etc.) mean for us only incidental or episodic slogans in the independent movement of the proletariat. . . ."⁸

The traditional programmatic norm of Marxism is thus sufficiently clear: "unfettered political freedoms" will only be extended when "the objective possibilities of the exploitation of man by man disappear"—that is, when imperialism has been definitively defeated and classes disappear. In the absence of such objective possibilities there will be a "strict limitation of freedom," as Trotsky put it, along with "disenfranchisement" and "restrictions of freedom," according to Lenin.

This "unfettered power" will be necessary to defend the national and international socialist revolution. We will not wait for counterrevolutionaries to start a civil war against the new government before we place restrictions on their freedom; we will prevent them from organizing and arming themselves. For that reason we do not promise to grant them "unfettered political freedom," although this does not mean that we will ban them at all times. They will have *limited* "political freedoms" subject to the needs of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We think these quotations, together with our comments, should suffice to demonstrate that the United Secretariat

has completely revised the revolutionary Marxist position on the dictatorship of the proletariat. At this point we are not saying that their position is wrong. We are simply pointing to a fact that is quite significant in and of itself: the present position of the United Secretariat is the opposite of that traditionally upheld by Marxists. And it is recognized as such by one of its most enthusiastic supporters:

"I think that concretely it represents a positive and necessary *rectification* [emphasis in the original], and we were glad to see it happen. It is therefore *incumbent on us to state this clearly*, and also to make clear the material bases and the political reasons that led us to take this position. Because otherwise the resolution might seem to imply that this always was the traditional position of the Fourth International, of the Left Opposition, and of the "Bolshevik-Leninists"—*which is not the case.* . . .

"The program in this period is by no means identical to that of the Bolsheviks in 1917, *nor to the one that we have traditionally upheld.*"⁹

The reader will probably wonder what brought on such a change. Since it cannot be passed off as a theoretical "mistake" or "oversight," is it some kind of trick? If not, what is it? What exactly is going on?

What's going on is that a sector of the Trotskyist movement in Europe and in the West has turned into a transmission belt for the Western workers' bourgeois-democratic prejudices, along with ideological vestiges of the European student ultraleftism they were influenced by until recently.

Those prejudices are manifested in their program of "unfettered political freedoms," and the ultraleft influence shows up in their formal, academic rejection of bourgeois-democratic institutions.

Although this ultraleft influence is declining, it is being replaced by bourgeois institutions, as shown by the fact that Mandel wants to impose "universal suffrage" on the workers dictatorship.

What is happening in the ranks of this part of the Trotskyist movement is a symmetrical phenomenon to Eurocommunism: The program of the United Secretariat and that of the Western CPs is the same ("unfettered political freedoms"), although the former is raised as a program for the dictatorship of the proletariat while the latter is for a capitalist transitional regime. And the reason is similar in both cases.

The Communist International under Lenin, and later the Trotskyists, stressed the existence of bourgeois-democratic prejudices among the masses in the West. The political expression of such prejudices can be seen, appropriately, in the strength of the Social Democratic and Communist parties. Those parties embody an ideal synthesis: they are "working-class" parties, and they agree with the workers on bourgeois democracy. They are not imperialists; their criticism of the workers states are made from a "democratic" standpoint.

But the crisis and the new upsurge in Europe have begun to erode those prejudices, even though paradoxically it strengthens them at first. How? It's quite simple. The upsurge—which signifies an advance, which implies power in some sense—leads the workers to believe it is possible for everything to be resolved once their parties get into the government by peaceful means, through elections.

This poses a theoretical and political problem for us. In Europe and in North America, the Fourth International is

immersed in a society, in a mass of workers, which is full of bourgeois-democratic prejudices. An inevitable consequence of this must be that deep down inside leaders and currents of our movement reflect these prejudices.

Whom are we referring to? Unfortunately, to pose the question this way is to answer it: *the majority of the United Secretariat*. Who else could it be? Think back a minute. Around the end of the 1960s, when the European student movement swung massively toward supporting the Cuban revolution, with Che Guevara as their hero and guerrilla warfare as their method, this political and social phenomenon also had its transmission belt inside our International. It could not have been otherwise. It always has been that way, and always will be. A living International—one that is not just a sect—will always reflect the political and social processes in which it is immersed. But reflecting such processes shouldn't mean turning into a mouthpiece for them. We still believe, as Trotsky said, that to lead a revolution we will have to "swim against the current."

The present United Secretariat of the Fourth International, however, in all its documents and in its political line, is the expression within the ranks of Trotskyism of total capitulation to the bourgeois-democratic prejudices of the masses in the West. Its resolution on "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is the most highly developed synthesis to date of the new revisionist tendency now taking shape. Trotsky, in his time, compared fascism and Stalinism as parallel phenomena provoked by the advance of counterrevolution in the world. Today we can say that Eurocommunism and the present political line of the United Secretariat are roughly symmetrical phenomena caused by the same political and social factors: the rise of the workers movement in Europe and the weight of the masses' bourgeois-democratic prejudices.

In calling them symmetrical we do not mean that they are the same. The comrades of the United Secretariat formally defend, against the Eurocommunists, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the need for a workers revolution against bourgeois-democratic institutions. They assure us most emphatically that they are defenders of the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky. They therefore try to convince the workers and public opinion that the dictatorship of the proletariat—defined by them as the most lawful, judicious, magnanimous, libertarian, and democratic toward counterrevolutionary parties of all the class dictatorships that have ever existed in the world—is the same one envisioned by our teachers.

But it just isn't so. The United Secretariat majority has the same program for the dictatorship of the proletariat as the Eurocommunists have for socialism and for the capitalist regime. There should be complete clarity on this: The United Secretariat majority and the Eurocommunists agree on the multi-party system and on giving bourgeois parties the most absolute freedoms in all phases of the class struggle, in contrast to what Marxists have traditionally asserted.

Thus it is scientifically appropriate to refer to the present orientation of the majority of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International as *Eurotrotskyism*. We can characterize it as bourgeois liberalism with a high fever—i.e., while being deeply opportunist, it gets ultraleft now and then.

What we're engaged in is a struggle to turn this Euro-

trotskyist current back toward real Trotskyism.

In summary, then, the United Secretariat fails to resist as it should the pressure of Eurocommunism but rather accepts most of the Eurocommunists' premises. And they wind up saying: "We're still for the dictatorship of the proletariat and workers revolution; but don't misunderstand, our dictatorship will give 'unfettered political freedom' to all citizens including counterrevolutionaries from the very beginning; and in place of parliament we will install much more democratic organs, soviets, which will include the entire population and not just workers."

And Comrade Mandel will affix his signature to this capitulation to Eurocommunism, assuring everyone that he is:

"... an intransigent partisan of universal suffrage—before, during, and after the seizure of power by the workers."¹⁰

This hybrid, that results from filling the Marxist concept of workers revolution and proletarian dictatorship with a Eurocommunist content and program, forces the United Secretariat to try to demonstrate a proposition which is theoretically absurd: that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" implies "unfettered political freedom" for counterrevolutionaries.

If the document itself had not already been written, one would surely have thought it impossible that such a position of the United Secretariat—Trotskyist dictatorship with Eurocommunist freedoms—would ever be crystallized in a resolution. It would have seemed, for example, that to do so they would have to falsify history, something like the historians of the CPSU. Thus the resolution cannot get around the double contradiction which the United Secretariat faces with its new program: on the one hand the traditional Trotskyist position, and on the other the reality of the class struggle.

They try to simply talk their way out of the first contradiction, putting an equals sign between "dictatorship of the proletariat" and "unfettered political freedoms." On this question the Eurocommunists turn out to be more consistent than our comrades, since they simply removed the first formulation from their programs. The United Secretariat, on the other hand, clings to that formulation in order not to formally break with Trotskyism, even though it ends up filling the formula with a strictly Eurocommunist content and thus negating it.

To get around the contradiction with reality, the document unveils a new Marxist style: floating above the real world. For example, it makes not a single reference to the sixty years of proletarian dictatorships—and this in a resolution on "the dictatorship of the proletariat!" It contains a section on political parties in which it does not mention by name a single existing party, be it Socialist, Communist, or Trotskyist. The same is true for politics, for practice: they never give contemporary examples of the things they affirm in theory. We don't think that the members of the United Secretariat are losing their sense of reality. On the contrary, we think they realize that in order to successfully defend their position it's better to take refuge in the far-off future. Because a clear example of the application of their resolution would involve telling the Iranian workers today: "When we take power we will do everything in our power to prevent the Shah from being put on trial and we will fight to see that he has unfettered political freedom." Obviously the United Secretariat would not be able to convince a single Iranian revolution-

ist of the correctness of this.

This is what accounts for the fictional style, that sense of unreality, the strange character of the document. It is a resolution that leaps over more than a century—from Lenin before the seizure of power straight to the computerized telephones of the future—ignoring the past as well as all the concrete problems posed for us in the present and the immediate future. They wind up with a literary work of a new genre. Critics would no doubt have considered it a typical expression of late surrealism. Others, perhaps, would see it as the expression of a new school: Marxist science fiction. We must admit that like a science fiction story it provides an intriguing mixture of real scientific facts with more or less plausible possibilities.

But from a political point of view, such games of the imagination are of no interest. A document on the dictatorship of the proletariat ought to pose certain fundamental questions, such as: What has happened during the last sixty years to the proletarian dictatorships that have triumphed? What is our response to the invasions by one proletarian dictatorship against another? And there are many more such questions. But the most important, the decisive one, is: With what party and with what program is it possible for us to achieve—within five, ten, or twenty years—the revolutionary dictatorship we are fighting for?

From these derives another series of questions: Will the revolutionary dictatorships be blockaded? Will they suffer civil wars? Will there be a fight to the death against them waged by the reformist parties both nationally and internationally? Will the first ones, led by Trotskyists, be able to avoid a tremendous civil war against the bureaucratized workers states, against imperialism, the bourgeois parties and opportunist workers? Will things be identical in both backward and advanced countries? (From the document one would infer so.) And how are we going to impose the revolutionary dictatorship? Through insurrection and civil war?

These are some of the problems that will be posed for us, and for which our International should come up with a program. But the resolution of the United Secretariat majority ignores these questions. A Marxist document cannot evade giving answers, and simply confuse its readers with evasive or futuristic formulations. Nor can it make concessions to avoiding clashing with widespread prejudices, to save face or to conceal revisionist positions. To do so cuts across the presentation of a clear line of political action in the coming years.

We must analyze today the inevitable consequences of the revisionist process now underway. This new turn, resulting from the pressure of democratic illusions among the Western masses, is beginning to be generalized. And it is more worrisome than the turn that was actually made under the influence of the guerrillaist mood in the past. Guerrillaism was a sign of desperation to achieve our goals; *this time they're abandoning the goals*. You can't attack one of the pillars of Marxism—in this case the concept of the revolutionary dictatorship—without the whole structure coming down.

The article in defense of the United Secretariat resolution proceeds to leave no doubt:

“What will be the effects of these phenomena, with their new manifestations, on the functioning of the working class? What is the dialectic of the relationship today between male and female workers, adult and young

workers, manual and intellectual, technical, or scientific workers? How will these phenomena operate in relation to the workers vanguard or vanguards, to the masses as a whole? What effects will this have in relation to organs that the masses create? Is the class-party-leadership relationship the same today as it was in Lenin and Trotsky's time? Is it legitimate to answer that the relationship of the vanguard party or parties of today is the same as in 1917? Or the relation of the party or parties to the state? Will the structure of the party be what it was then? Will today's democratic centralism be the same as yesterday's?

“We don't think so, since we are definitely among those who assert that A is not equal to A.”¹¹

The revisionism of the resolution, and this defense of it, signifies an abandonment of the entire heritage of Marxism, Leninism, and Trotskyism. It means hands off the bourgeoisie, no settling of accounts with fascists, and clearly, as a result, a different concept of organization of the revolutionary party, as well as of the stages of the class struggle. These concepts, if not changed, will lead Trotskyist parties to abandon the workers revolution and its conclusion, civil war.

We therefore think that this response of ours marks the beginning of one of the most important discussions that has ever taken place in the ranks of the Fourth International. The purpose of our document is to show young comrades who have recently come to Marxism that by flattering them and pandering to their prejudices, the new and old leaders trained in university classrooms are wreaking havoc with our Marxist heritage. We will try to show that the present majority of the United Secretariat is off course. They are following the road marked out by Kautsky, Martov, Urbahns, Souvarine, and all the centrists and opportunists the world has ever known, not the road of Lenin and Trotsky.

* * *

EXCERPTS FROM CHAPTER 10

Summary of Our Differences

It is not surprising that methodology so far removed from Marxism—as the United Secretariat majority shamelessly displays in its document—should be the basis for a systematic revision of Trotskyism.

So that there can be no doubt about this statement, and at the same time, so that each comrade or sympathizer will know what to watch out for, it is necessary for us before completing this work to sum up and enumerate the differences—the near total differences—we have with the comrades of the United Secretariat. As we have tried to explain in our document, these principled differences are as follows.

1. The first and foremost difference concerns nothing less than the method of the Transitional Program. This method is characterized by a systematic combination of different tasks which respond to the different concrete situations that arise in the course of the class struggle on a national and international scale. This is the reason why the Transitional Program never revolves around a single slogan, task, or method, but is always a dynamic, chang-

ing combination, a system of tasks which is constantly being modified in accordance with the concrete situation. It is an embodiment of the law of uneven and combined development, a program that shifts just as reality does, a dynamic yet systematic program.

Because of this, the Transitional Program, like the theory of permanent revolution or of uneven and combined development, comes under attack from two sources: on the one hand, from bureaucratic opportunists, who only fight for minimal or democratic tasks by means of pressure tactics; and on the other hand from ultralefts who pose maximal tasks as the only immediate ones, leaving aside all other tasks, and always advocating the most extreme methods (general strikes, guerrilla warfare, etc.).

Just as historically no two concrete situations are exactly the same, neither are there two identical transitional programs for two different periods or two different countries. The unifying feature of such programs is their goal of advancing the ongoing mobilization of the workers, and of leading the workers in the conquest of power under Trotskyist parties through a workers revolution and the development of the socialist revolution nationally and internationally. But aside from these historic objectives—which are those of the theory of permanent revolution—transitional programs differ from one country to another and from one moment to another in the class struggle. The United Secretariat, by presenting us in its document with a rigid and identical program for all countries of the world—“unfettered political freedoms” for counterrevolutionary parties—is rejecting the method of the Transitional Program just as surely as it rejects the Stalinists’ advocacy of a one-party system. A real Trotskyist is never wedded to any universal slogan. Rather, he or she uses the method of the Transitional Program, which demands that slogans be modified, systematized, qualified, and relativized in accordance with the concrete situation at each stage in the class struggle. If we were to say, as the United Secretariat does, that from the very first days of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as long as there is no civil war, we will grant the most extensive freedoms to the counterrevolutionary parties, we would be replacing the transitional program with a maximum program of democratic freedoms which for all we know might have to be modified to deal with different stages of the class struggle. “Episodic and incidental” slogans are thus turned into absolute and permanent ones, cut off from the needs of the class struggle and the defense of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

2. This attack on the method of the Transitional Program obliges the majority of the United Secretariat, although they don’t say so, to call into question the theory of permanent revolution. By stubbornly maintaining for all countries of the world the exact same program—an absolute multi-party system, complete freedoms for counterrevolutionary parties and then careful enforcement of the most liberal and rigid penal code when they launch a civil war—the United Secretariat not only casts off the method of the Transitional Program; it also rejects the most important concept of the theory of permanent revolution. This theory asserts that there are no programmatic, constitutional, or penal norms, nor any fixed, immovable, or absolute institutions, to which the ongoing mobilization of the workers must be subordinated or by which it must be constrained. Marx and Trotsky held just the opposite theory: that the ongoing mobilization of the workers will

not yield to any type of norm or institution; on the contrary it will brush them all aside.

3. From this substantial modification of the theory of permanent revolution arise two other extremely serious revisions.

The first is the abandonment of the international socialist revolution against imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world scale as the sole valid basis for building socialism, which must be on a global scale if it is to be at all. The resolution revolves around revolution and the building of socialism within a given country, in struggle against the capitalists of that country. It deals with setting up and developing proletarian dictatorships which will build socialism within national boundaries. Nothing demonstrates this lapse into the Stalinist theory of “building socialism in one country” more than the elimination from the vocabulary of the resolution of such indispensable Trotskyist concepts such as “imperialism,” “international socialist revolution,” “imperialist counterrevolution,” “world-wide dictatorship of the proletariat,” or “liquidation of all national boundaries as the indispensable prerequisite for building socialism.”

4. The second revision consists of forgetting or underestimating the decisive role of the Fourth International both before and after the conquest of power, in the process of carrying out the international socialist revolution against imperialism.

The indispensable role of our International and of all the Trotskyist or semi-Trotskyist parties which succeed in establishing revolutionary dictatorships of the proletariat through implacable struggle against the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties, is replaced in the resolution by soviets and mysterious soviet parties, which take power and develop the dictatorship of the proletariat. This represents a revision of the Leninist theory, enriched and supplemented by Trotsky, which affirms that the only organ capable of carrying out a socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and a political revolution in the workers states, resulting in a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, is a Bolshevik party, and that thus our International is the only organization capable of leading the international socialist revolution against imperialism.

5. The resolution fails to point out as a cardinal axis of Trotskyist politics the systematic struggle against imperialism. This is the only valid framework for beginning to build socialism, something that can only be done once imperialism has been defeated. For the resolution, imperialism does not exist, either as a political program, as counterrevolution, as democracy, as economy, or anything else.

6. Failing to understand that after the seizure of power the proletariat must take up the struggle against imperialism—i.e., that the class struggle will intensify—the United Secretariat falls back on the theory of building socialism in one country. The resolution therefore fails to delimit the two stages in the dictatorship of the proletariat: first, the stage of socialist revolution on a world scale, of the overthrow of imperialism and consolidation of the workers government; and second, the stage of socialist construction and withering away of the dictatorship once imperialism has been defeated. Nor does it point out that in the first stage the development of the socialist revolution is combined with tasks of socialist construction. The United Secretariat dissolves all this into the task of building socialism in one country, and forgets about the

international socialist revolution.

7. Ignoring the fight to the death with imperialism, the United Secretariat places everything within a perspective of peaceful development of the revolution in coming decades, counterposing this to the perspective of an era of "wars, revolutions and ever sharper crises" foreseen by revolutionary Marxists.

8. The resolution fails to orient the Trotskyist movement to carry out one of its most important political obligations: to be in the vanguard of the armed struggle that will have to confront the imperialist counterrevolution before and after the seizure of power. Hence the abandonment of red terror.

The resolution totally revises the Leninist and Trotskyist conception of an armed insurrection of the proletariat, which must be prepared and driven through by a Bolshevik party, as the only way of achieving the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. In place of an armed insurrection, we are presented with an abstract and peaceful socialist revolution, with no armed struggle before and during the seizure of power, commanded by soviets with unnamed leaders, to whom the government belongs thanks to the demonstrative and pedagogical effects of the magnanimity of absolute workers democracy.

9. In its eagerness to defend the peaceful road, the United Secretariat has produced what must be the first Marxist document on proletarian dictatorship and civil war that ever failed to take up as a prime analogy the periods of Cromwell and Robespierre. On the contrary, it takes as examples—although without naming them—bourgeois authors of treatises on criminal justice as the highest expression of proletarian policy in time of civil war. This leads the United Secretariat to try to limit the trials of counterrevolutionaries who launch civil war or armed uprisings against the workers power. They would restrict such trials by means of an extremely liberal penal code, one that prohibits recourse to concepts of "ex post facto jeopardy" or "the responsibility of social groups." They propose this in place of a revolutionary Marxist policy of coercion, of trying counterrevolutionaries on political and social grounds, of giving free reign to the initiative of the masses.

10. The resolution opposes the Leninist and Trotskyist definition of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat as a regime based on force to confront the counterrevolution in a all-out civil war. Instead, it defends the concept of "unfettered political freedom" for counterrevolutionaries.

11. It modifies Lenin and Trotsky's concept of the soviets and the dictatorship as organizations of fighters and revolutionaries, of the industrial proletariat. Instead, it defines them as state organs open to the entire population, including counterrevolutionary sectors.

12. It completely abandons propaganda in defense of the existing workers states and workers dictatorships as infinitely more progressive than bourgeois democracy. It winds up affirming—in a capitulation to bourgeois-democratic public opinion—that the degree of "proletarian democracy" in China under Mao has been the same as it was in China under Chiang Kai-Shek, and that similarly in Vietnam the workers democracy that existed under the French and Yankee occupations was the same as what there is today under the proletarian dictatorship. What's more, it asserts that there is more "workers democracy" in the imperialist countries than in the deformed and degen-

erated workers states.

13. It abandons the Trotskyist program for political revolution in the USSR and the bureaucratized workers states, which defends a multi-party system including only soviet parties—that is, parties which the soviet has decided by a majority to legalize. Instead the resolution defends the most absolute freedom and political legality for all parties, including counterrevolutionary ones.

14. It leaves totally aside—as one more consequence of ignoring imperialism—the Leninist definition of bourgeois democracy as imperialist democracy. Instead it falls back on the ultraleft definition of bourgeois democracy in general, a category which confuses or equates the democracy of the imperialist countries with that of the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

15. It abandons the Trotskyist concept of combining bourgeois-democratic and proletarian tasks and institutions in the working-class mobilization and revolution against the imperialist counterrevolution prior to the conquest of power. Instead, it raises the ultraleft concept of defending only proletarian tasks and institutions.

16. It abandons the Marxist definition of political parties as the representatives of classes or sectors of classes, and substitutes a sort of demographic and rationalist definition.

17. It tosses out the theory of the Communist International and of the Trotskyist movement which asserts that workers parties can be divided into essentially two types: on the one hand the opportunist and reformist parties, representatives of bureaucratic and privileged sectors of the workers movement and direct or indirect agents of imperialism; and on the other hand the Trotskyists, who comprise the only authentically internationalist and revolutionary parties. Instead, it lays out a vague spectrum of workers parties of undetermined sex. Failing to distinguish sharply between these two political poles of the workers movement, it loses all hope of correctly characterizing the ultraleft and centrist organizations, which it defines as progressive if they orient toward Trotskyism and regressive if they incline toward the counterrevolutionary workers parties.

18. The resolution thus falls into covering up for the sinister counterrevolutionary role of the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties, both today and in the early stages of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. As a result of this it fails to prepare our parties for a head-on confrontation with the counterrevolutionary bureaucracies in all fields. This is all the more serious given that such a confrontation will inevitably occur, and is the most important fight we have to wage within the workers movement.

19. It throws overboard the dialectical method by advocating norms and institutions as absolutes, rather than seeing them in relation to the goals and the needs of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the development of the international socialist revolution against imperialism. The fundamental laws of Marxist dialectics regarding the contradictory relationship between ends and means, necessity and freedom, the whole and its parts, and form and content, are thus scrapped, and replaced by a formal method in which everything depends on the development of the most absolute rights and freedoms for all, with no relation whatsoever to the goals and needs of the proletarian dictatorship.

20. Without saying so openly, the resolution calls into question the whole policy carried out by Lenin and Trotsky

in power, since they did the exact opposite of what the resolution prescribes as the obligatory norm for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

21. In effect it disowns the policies advocated by Trotsky for the USSR up until 1934. The axis of those policies was unconditional defense of the monopoly of state power by the Communist Party, the one-party regime, and the banning of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. Against this historical position of Trotsky and the Trotskyist movement, the resolution asserts that under the dictatorship of the proletariat a multi-party system should always prevail. The only exception it admits is during periods of civil war, when the plurality of parties should be regulated by a restricted and very liberal penal code.

Seven Essential Characteristics of the Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat

The sort of juridical, formal conception that characterizes the United Secretariat's theses lead to a complete failure to point out what is the real content, the function, of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Why do we want it anyway? Or more precisely, why do we need it?

As far as the United Secretariat is concerned, after the seizure of power the ongoing mobilization and revolution cease to be the supreme goal. Thus the authors of the resolution paint the picture of a proletarian dictatorship without a precise, well-defined political objective. For them the most important thing is the automatic mechanism of the most absolute democracy of the soviet type, the defensive tasks of "preventing the reestablishment of private property," and the systematically repeated goal of "building socialism." Not once does the United Secretariat state that it is necessary to go on fighting for the international socialist revolution against imperialism.

We assert clearly that the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is the organization and domination of the state by the working class in order to go on advancing the socialist revolution nationally and internationally. That's what we want it for; that's why we need it. To carry forward the ongoing mobilization of the workers until the socialist revolution has triumphed on a global scale.

Based on all we have said, we can sum up briefly the seven essential characteristics of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. In our opinion these flow from the objective stated above, and from the criticisms we have made.

1. The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, headed by a Trotskyist or semi-Trotskyist party, has as its main task during the initial phase of confrontation with the imperialist counterrevolution to drive ahead with the revolution against imperialism on a world scale. Combined with this main task and subordinated to it is the job of laying the foundation for socialism through planning of the economy, rapid development of the productive forces, and raising the level of consumption of the masses. This will be done through soviets, workers control and/or some other form of self-organization of the workers and the masses, which will educate the masses in the birth of a new society and in ongoing mobilization against imperialism and the influence of the exploiters.

2. This self-organization is rooted in the economic structure of production, with the largest and most modern factories and the industrial proletariat as its axis. Its basic

organization will in no way be territorial or popular in character.

3. It will not include the *entire* proletariat, nor *all* the working masses, but rather the majority of the proletarians and workers who are mobilized to drive through the revolution and the revolutionary soviets.

4. It requires the strictest class discipline, and imposes rigid duties and obligations, to such an extent that those who do not respect such discipline and such duties, even though they be workers, will be forced by repression to comply with the decisions to the workers power.

5. It is led by a revolutionary Marxist party, an internationalist party ready to do anything to bring about the victory of the world revolution. In this sense we can say that it has to be a Trotskyist or semi-Trotskyist party.

6. The most extensive democracy exists only for the industrial proletariat and the revolutionary workers—that is, by those who respect and fight for the decisions adopted by the revolutionary working class in power. Only these sectors have the most absolute right, as employees or individual workers, to raise criticisms in all bodies and assemblies of the workers and revolutionary movement against any political *individual* right of every revolutionary worker or employee is absolute and total. Depending on the situation of the workers dictatorship, this absolute individual right may or may not be transformed into the right of tendency, or into the pluralism of revolutionary parties or of all soviet parties. The general programmatic principle, however, is that of pluralism of soviet parties, which implies that it is the revolutionary soviet which decides by a majority whether to legalize or to ban parties that apply for legal status.

7. These six characteristics do not in any way mean that opponents of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat—be they working class or bourgeois—will always and at all times be repressed or subjected to coercive measures. The opposite will tend to be true. In the absence of set precedents or "categorical imperatives," the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat will tend to grant the most extensive freedoms of press, opinion, assembly, ideology, propaganda, and politics, so long as the overall conditions of the revolutionary struggle against world imperialism permit it. This will tend even more to be true in the case of all sectors of the workers and labor movement, even though objectively they may be serving the interests of counterrevolutionary parties.

Bogotá, July 1978

Footnotes

1. "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," *Intercontinental Press*, Vol. 15, No. 28, July 25, 1977, p. 871.

2. *Ibid.* (Emphasis in original.)

3. Lenin, "A Contribution to the History of the Question of the Dictatorship," *Collected Works of Lenin*, Volume 31, April-December 1920, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1966), p. 353. (Emphasis added.)

4. Lenin, "The State and Revolution," *Collected Works*, Volume 25, (1964), p. 440. (Emphasis in original.)

5. Quoted in "The New Constitution of the USSR," *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1935-36*, (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1977), p. 301. (Emphasis in original.)

6. Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, (Pathfinder, 1972), p. 276.

7. No source noted; unable to verify quotation—Translator.

8. *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, (Pathfinder, 1977), p. 141.

9. From an article that appeared in Paris in August 1977, entitled "On the Resolution of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International about *Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*," signed by A. Heredia—N.M. (Emphasis added, except where noted.)

10. *El País*, Madrid, July 8, 1978.

11. *Ibid.*

Declaration and Platform of the Bolshevik Faction

The Bolshevik Tendency, at its July 1978 meeting, decided to transform itself into a faction in order to fight at the Eleventh World Congress for a radical change in the orientation and leadership of our world party.

We have taken this serious step because we feel that from the time of the establishment of the Bolshevik Tendency up to the present, the crisis of leadership of the Fourth International has become generalized. It now encompasses all spheres—theoretical, political, organizational, and moral. The crisis has reached such proportions that it threatens to sink the sections and sympathizing organizations that follow the orientation of the present United Secretariat majority into total prostration.

In the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," in 1976, we pointed out the sharp contrast that had developed between the favorable situation created by the worldwide mass upsurge and the chronic crisis of our international leadership, which would prevent us from taking advantage of the upsurge. We said that the crisis had its origins in the disastrous policy put forward and applied at the time of the Ninth and Tenth World Congresses by what was then the International Majority Tendency (IMT).

In the "Declaration" we also analyzed the crisis of the former Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF), to which a large part of the founders of the Bolshevik Faction had belonged. We said that the crisis of the LTF was the result of its inability to respond to the political questions raised by the Portuguese and Angolan revolutions.

Less than a year after the founding of the Bolshevik Tendency there was a development that would have great repercussions in the life of our International: both the IMT

and the LTF decided to dissolve themselves, with the aim of salvaging their prestige and escaping their crisis, hiding it under the mantle of a call to unity. They resorted to the maneuver of declaring that all the documents that had governed the International's policies from the Tenth Congress on were "historic." They hoped in this way to prevent the next world congress from discussing what should be the first point on its agenda: a balance-sheet of the Tenth Congress.

This dissolution of the factions led to the establishment of a new leadership of our International, one that was different from the one that existed when the IMT monopolized political responsibility. This new leadership was formed out of a peculiar unity: without a prior balance sheet being drawn up of both paths and without a program that would clearly define future policy. *It was an organizational unification, without analysis or politics, whose only points in common were the struggle against the BT and the plan to maintain themselves in the leadership.*

For this reason we characterized the new leadership as an *Unprincipled Bloc*, which we still hold to be the case.

This Unprincipled Bloc presented its "agreement" to the ranks, asserting that through the agreement the crisis in the International would be overcome. But, as the Bolshevik Tendency had predicted, the opposite took place: the crisis deepened. This is the only thing that could have happened, because when you add two crises together the result is a much larger crisis. The *organizational* solution to the *political* crisis, which had its first origins in the IMT, only served to deepen the crisis and spread it to all spheres.

CHAPTER I

THE REAL SITUATION IN OUR INTERNATIONAL LED BY THE UNPRINCIPLED BLOC

1. Two Analyses, Two Predictions

We should pause to look at the analyses and predictions of the BT as counterposed to those of the IMT and the United Secretariat with regard to the perspectives of our International. The BT has been categorical. For example, a

subtitle of our "Declaration" says: "Either We Overturn the Orientation of the Majority Or the Crisis Will Deepen." Another: "Let's Prevent the Crisis of the Majority From Blowing Up the International."¹ [See footnotes at end of

Chapter I.]

In response to these characterizations and predictions by the BT, the leadership of the ex-IMT, headed by Comrade Walter, replied: "The image of an International shaken by a deep crisis, one that would be unable to make gains from the revolutionary crises that have taken place in the last years owing to the 'disastrous' course of the IMT, an image that runs through the 'Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency,' has no relation to reality."²

And Hugo Blanco, referring to the "mythology" of the Bolshevik Tendency, says more or less the same: that according to the mythology "the sections that are not led by the Bolshevik Tendency are falling apart and in disarray."³

As we can see, there are two diametrically opposed analyses of the perspectives of our International. The BT maintained that all the sections led first by the IMT and then by the Unprincipled Bloc of the United Secretariat would go from bad to worse, would go through a chronic, permanent crisis.

The present leadership of the United Secretariat, the Unprincipled Boc, answered us by saying that the situation was thriving, and that it would get constantly better. Mandel summarized these differences when he asserted, speaking in the name of the United Secretariat, that "while Comrade Moreno began his remarks with the sentence 'the International is going from disaster to disaster,' I have already said that we have increased the organizational strength of the Fourth International by ten times in recent years."⁴

Remember these words well: "we have increased . . . by ten times."

In order to illustrate this magnificent situation in our International, the IMT and the present leadership always hold up the Colombian PSR as a model to follow, and three other "model" parties: the French LCR, the Spanish LCR, and the Mexican PRT. These four parties are on the two continents where our International's largest forces are concentrated.

The moment has come to put both analyses and both predictions to the test of fact in order to determine the real situation of these parties and to see who was correct.

By drawing a balance sheet of the activity of all these "model" sections we can already outline the general characteristics of the crisis they are going through: (1) all are going through an accentuated crisis in membership, finances, and press; (2) all are undergoing crises of leadership; (3) they function through diplomatic agreements and the method of consensus.

2. The Tragedy of the French Section

March 15, 1976 is a date that all Trotskyists will remember with emotion: this was the date of birth of the daily *Rouge*, the first daily in the history of the Fourth International, which came about through the colossal advance of the French section since 1968.

In the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," some months after the appearance of the daily *Rouge*, we said that "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."⁵

However, we sounded a warning: "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."⁶

In the year 1977, accompanying the dissolution of the LTF and the IMT, an air of euphoria swept over the ranks of the French section, torn by the internal confrontations and by the incapacity of its leadership, which is subordinated to the United Secretariat. All the members, with the exception of a small handful of comrades who followed, the BT, happily told themselves "now yes, all united, we will achieve new political successes and we will show the factionalists of the BT what we can do if we dissolve ourselves, if we put aside the tendency and faction struggles and achieve a good climate for common activity."

The Closing of the Daily 'Rouge'

Now, nearly three years after the birth of the daily *Rouge*, we have to add another date to our calendar, Sunday, February 4, 1979. But this date is not one of happiness and pride, but rather of tragedy, especially for the comrades of the French section: on that day the daily appeared for the last time. The crisis that has now led to its death had already been foreseen and explained some time ago by the BT.

They can tell us that the publication of a daily paper was a conjunctural tactical error, and that the situation of the section is good. We believe, on the other hand, that the closing of the daily *Rouge* is simply the most visible expression of an entire crisis of the French section, which is seen in all its spheres. We will examine them one by one.

The Congress of Decline

This crisis of the whole organization was expressed with total clarity at the last congress, which was held in January 1979. Last July, when the Bolshevik Faction was set up and when all the resolutions that brought this declaration into existence were approved, it was decided to wait until the congresses of the Spanish and French sections were held, in order to be able to analyse their results and include that in the final version of this declaration.

The congress was an event that clearly showed the decline of the French LCR, the section that was put forward as a "model" for our International first by the IMT and then by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). The statistical fact most worthy of emphasis was its 370 delegates, which indicates—since representation was one delegate for every five members—that the LCR had 1850 members!

Among these 370, representation was granted to various regions that had not paid dues for some time. These cold figures indicate two undeniable facts: first that the French LCR has lost several hundred members since the Tenth Congress, since previously it had more than 2000. But that is not all. What is decisive is the second fact. The OCI, the Lambertist organization, has today become the organization that has hegemony in the French Trotskyist move-

ment, displacing the LCR from that position. The supremacy of the LCR was unquestioned until now and flowed from May 1968. This fact of unusual gravity did not occur without being foreseen.

As in all the congresses, central committees, etc., of the sections that follow the new majority leading the United Secretariat, the Third Congress of the LCR was unable to approve a national political document or elect a recognized leadership.

The political documents presented by each of the different tendencies received more votes against than votes in favor. As a result, the party has been left without a political line. For this reason, when the leadership implements an orientation for the membership, whatever it may be, a comrade can say, rightly, "I don't want to carry out this orientation in my activity and I don't have to do it: I remember full well that I, and a majority of the comrades, defeated this policy at the congress."

As regards the leadership, the Central Committee is made up of twenty comrades for each of the two majority tendencies and nine and one comrade respectively for the two minorities (one tendency declined to have representation on the Central Committee).

In summary: for an entire period and at least until its next congress, the French LCR will be non-led by a non-leadership on the basis of a defeated political orientation.

As with all the tragedies our movement is going through, this bankruptcy has been developing for years and has been seen in other facts that we are going to quickly enumerate.

The Electoral Bankruptcy

In reporting the results of the March 1978 election campaign, the daily *Rouge* provided percentages of the vote, with a few exceptions. It never gave an exact figure, whether total or partial; always imprecise data. For example, *Rouge* reported that the LCR got half the votes that Lutte Ouvrière got. Thus, since LO had gotten approximately 500,000 votes, one might suppose that the LCR had gotten about 250,000 votes. They also speak of 0.9%, which meant approximately the same thing, some 250,000 votes. This way of giving the results of an election—proportions or comparisons instead of absolute figures—provides cover for a maneuver by the leaders of the Fourth International and the LCR. They want to hide the truth that the LCR got 73,979 votes out of a total of 28,950,406 (figures taken from the *Le Monde* supplement of March 1978). Until we are shown the contrary, we must continue to believe that these were the results and that the LCR and the International leadership lied. That the LCR did not get half as many votes as LO, which ended up with 467,371.

But the electoral campaign was not solely a failure in terms of figures: it was also a failure in its political content. The LCR had very correctly pointed out that, following the breakup of the Union of the Left, the big problem for the French workers movement was unity. But during the election campaign this characterization took the form of the slogan for a united front of the big workers parties (CP and SP) to overcome the political and trade-union divisions of the class, without being concretized regarding the question of stepping down in the second round in favor of the workers candidates who had done best in the first round of voting, nor regarding the question of a workers united front against the Barre Plan.

In this way it remained simply a propagandistic and abstract slogan. Compare this slogan, for example, with the document presented by the French Tendency 5 at the Third Congress of the League. T5 said that the major slogan and task should be the unity of the workers movement in order to fight against the Barre Plan (the austerity plan).

Comrades of the leadership of the French LCR: we hope that you can show us that we are mistaken, both in the number of votes and in our evaluation of the political line. We hope that you can force us to make a self-criticism, where we tell the whole International and the masses that the March 1978 election campaign was not a defeat.

A Leadership That is Chauvinist and Has No Policy Against Imperialism

Everything we have pointed to above has the appearance of symptoms or effects of an incorrect policy. But there are other, very different, errors that are direct causes of the crisis.

One of these, which we are systematically trying to counteract, was that the LCR was playing the game of French imperialism. The Argentine PST has consistently denounced the fact that the French organization did not have a program of clear struggle against the imperialism of its own country. Such a program is a fundamental prerequisite in a metropolitan country if a party is to be considered revolutionary.

In November 1973, in an official document of the PST(A), Moreno noted that in two years the question had been mentioned only in three articles.⁷ He showed with an abundance of quotes and facts that the LCR did not hold the struggle against French imperialism to be a basic activity. And he added another criticism: that if we did not frontally attack French imperialism we would not be able to orient our work toward the immigrant workers, a sector that had to be given priority in our confrontation with imperialism, since it brought together the national question and workers question within the metropolis itself.

The leadership of the LCR became indignant and defended itself by assuring us that the two activities were being carried out, although in a somewhat clandestine form. The Argentine PST leadership's response was that it was criticizing the public, official policy and not the secret one. And furthermore, that we were against clandestinity on this point.

At any rate, the PST(A) felt that the fact that the leadership of the LCR defended itself on this point was to a certain extent a recognition of the need to confront imperialism both in its oppression of the African semicolonies and of the immigrant workers; that this defensive response was positive, that they were going to make a change. They did not, and the political errors cost dearly.

The lack of a consistent policy against its own imperialism is the concrete expression of hidden chauvinism, which makes the leadership of the LCR unfit to belong to a revolutionary International. The United Secretariat's complicit silence or support of this policy of the LCR is a stain on our International. A true political crime against Trotskyism.

In order to see who is right, we will yield the floor to the LCR's International Commission: ". . . the general situation of internationalism in the LCR [. . .] has reached a critical level, [reaching the point of] the total disappearance of international work." "The International Commis-

sion was supposed to organize the immigrant workers who are around the party into cells, by nationalities. These 'fractions' do not presently exist . . ."

And in order to leave no doubt as to the responsibility of the United Secretariat, the International Commission itself went on, pointing out that it had to work in close liaison with the United Secretariat's commissions by sector ("Arab," "Africa," "Orient" work, etc.). The failure is particularly evident in two sectors: in the "Arab" work the commissions of the LCR and the United Secretariat had to be dissolved because of the "accumulation of political differences, and personal and political animosity" and because of the LCR's inability to carry out discussions and project tasks in the face of the problems of pressing urgency (Lebanon, Sahara, etc.). "In the 'Latin American' work we were not able to organize the Latino members of the LCR to do solidarity work."

And with respect to the "Campaign against French imperialism. . .," "the balance sheet is totally negative, since nothing was done despite French imperialism's multiple armed interventions on the African continent. Nonetheless, the International Commission refuses to accept the responsibility since its initiatives were systematically boycotted by the Political Bureau."

"The least we can say is that they (the international campaigns) were conspicuous by their absence." With respect to "the campaign against our own imperialism . . . the balance is, to our way of thinking, serious, even very serious. We have let numerous French military interventions on the African continent pass with out the slightest response. . ."⁸

Comrades of the Fourth International, listen: against French imperialism . . . "the balance sheet is totally negative," "since nothing was done." This says everything. Every serious militant must give deep thought to this situation.

The Crisis of Leadership

In its August 1978 "Balance Sheet of the Political Bureau," the leadership of the French LCR has pointed out quite correctly that it "is not surprising that the problems of the French leadership are the same as those that exist in many European sections."⁹ And the official documents, semiofficial documents, and documents by leading comrades of the French party constantly attempt to pin down this phenomenon.

In this same balance sheet they speak of the "incapacity of the national leadership"; "the crisis of national leadership is summarized in the problem of the Political Bureau"; "the fact that the Central Committee has not taken on a series of tasks and problems was an important element in the failures of the national leadership"; ". . . the degree of the crisis of leadership, which will become irreversible if the opposite process is not applied."

This crisis, so well described by the comrades, is common to many European sections, is summarized in the fact that the leadership can no longer provide solutions to virtually any problems. Comrade Bourgueil, quoted by the leadership itself, has pointed out that "to the phrase so common in our ranks that 'an organization, like a fish, begins to rot at its head,' I must add that the weakness of the organization is the weakness of its leadership." And in this vein he continues: "the Political Bureau seems to be a rudderless ship . . ."¹⁰

The Method of Consensus

The party functions through "agreements" or diplomatic relations that have replaced traditional Trotskyist discussion. It is an empirical method. The French LCR describes this phenomenon very clearly: ". . . The members of the PB administer the store from day to day, without daring to alter the slender political equilibrium that permits them to survive. Any political or organizational tension within the PB almost immediately poses the danger of breaking this equilibrium and destroying the PB . . . without an alternative leadership appearing."

"In such a situation, the Political Bureau is no longer a leadership capable of implementing a policy directed at the organization, but rather a team of 'political administrators': 'the secretariat of the PB . . . rather plays the role of a buffer structure between the contradictory requirements and pressures of various sectors' (Bourgueil)." "One would also have to say that it plays a role of administrating the central political discussions, mainly in the discussions between the ex-minorities. This is due to the existence of the already noted tendency to reproduce the old differences in place of moving forward . . ."

And Morian said: "The PB . . . is a sum of individuals (who) meet once a week to make sure that no major differences have arisen since the previous meeting; this type of functioning does not tolerate disagreement, even secondary disagreements." ". . . It can be said that the PB sometimes tended to play the role of a brake, not only through its organizational practices and the vacuum created around it, but also through a certain 'political conservatism' with regard to the possible evolution of the discussions in the organization." All this "was also due to the leadership's tradition of empiricism (with all the advantages and defects of empiricism)."¹¹

The Crisis of Membership

These methods would discourage anyone. The self-sacrificing members of the French LCR could not be an exception to the effects of the incorrect policy; and the diplomatic methods make themselves felt even on the level of daily activity. The comrades have no analysis regarding this, but it must be pointed out that at the last congress there were regions that were not paid up but were given representation. Referring to the 1977 municipal election campaign in an internal bulletin, Comrade Renaud said that "the election campaign has not been carried out by the whole organization in Seine St. Denis: we can say that only one-sixth of the League was mobilized."¹²

But the best description of the crisis of the membership was given by a rail worker from the French CP who sympathized with *Rouge*. In a letter that the leadership of the newspaper considered "a true challenge," he said: "This battle [to save *Rouge*] cannot be carried out without a precise plan, discussed by the whole organization and applied to the letter. How do you expect us, readers who for the most part are politically some distance from you, to have confidence in your ability to organize the working class if, after asking us for money for so long, we never see people selling the paper at factory gates, at subway entrances, etc. There has never been a poster in the streets of Paris, there has never been a public collection. If you don't begin to do all this, you will never increase the number of readers and, worse still, you will lose the confidence of the comrades who have given you financial

aid."¹³ A Communist worker telling the Trotskyists how they should function!

A Generalized Crisis

Obviously, all the factors we have pointed to are part of an overall phenomenon, of an illness our French section is suffering from. It is hard to say where one must start in order to solve something. The only way to proceed seriously is to begin by recognizing that there is a crisis on all levels, because there is no sector of work that resists the analysis.

In the "Balance Sheet of the Political Bureau" it says that the "organizational crisis was in fact enlarged by a series of problems of orientation . . ." And a little before that ". . . the principal problem (although not the only one) that is posed is to compare the projects proposed by the theses with what was actually carried out. What we see is . . . the non-achievement or late or incomplete achievement of the projects . . ." The same report tells how the principal orientation of the party, which is toward the workers movement, is going: The "leadership of the party's work among industrial workers does not exist as an activist force."

A group of comrades, pointing out some omissions in this balance sheet, added: "The trade-union petition voted on by the Political Bureau for the legislative elections did not take place in the minimal sense." And it continued: "The attitude of the Central Committee regarding the spring [March-April] strikes: for the first time in our organization we encountered a total inability of the leadership to analyze the events in detail and to arm the members who were intervening in them."

The same comrades make a comment regarding work among women: "The resignation of women comrades, which is becoming increasingly massive, has reached the point that in many important cities there is no longer a single woman in the organization."¹⁴

The article in *Rouge* reporting on last January's Congress summarized it by saying that it was "marked by a certain crisis."¹⁵

In summary, the closing of *Rouge*, chaos in the leadership, electoral defeat, "nonachievement of projects," "non-existence of work in the working class," "organizational crisis," "resignation of women comrades." We did not say this, the reports say it.

The time has come to ask all the responsible members of our International, not the servants of the United Secretariat who accept anything: Who was right? The Bolshevik Tendency or the United Secretariat? Is the French LCR in crisis or not? And if it is, who brought on the crisis?

3. The Crisis in the Model of Models: the Spanish LCR

In the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" we warned about the future of Spanish Trotskyism under the leadership of the IMT, saying: "The IMT in Spain will continue to grow, like every group on 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."¹⁶

The Ultra-Optimistic Reports of the IMT and the United Secretariat

The representatives of the United Secretariat and the IMT have very vigorously rejected these assertions, maintaining that we were lying, since the LCR was the largest party in the International. At the end of 1976, in a report given for the Bloque Socialista, Comrade Mandel asserted: "the Spanish organization that the IMT supports is called LCR-ETA VI because half of its membership, several *thousand* comrades who came from the Basque nationalist movement, whom we have won to the Fourth International and to Trotskyism because we were the most dedicated and most resolute defenders of the right of the Basque people to self-determination. How could a small Trotskyist organization have been able to win *thousands—not hundreds—thousands* of members of a Basque nationalist organization . . .?"

And further on he added (in his stirring intervention about "multiplying by ten times"): "I only hope for one thing: that we will continue on the road to disaster that we are now on [alluding to Moreno's attack]. *In another three or four years of disaster like the past years we will already have a mass party: not a small party; a very strong mass party. We have gone from 600 to 6000 members in Spain.*"¹⁷

As if in a real championship race to see who can paint the rosier picture of the situation of the Spanish LCR from 1976 to the present, the unconditional agents of the United Secretariat have been adding 1000 more members every time they have the chance to speak or write. Thus we could make up the following chart:

Mandel said in 1976 there were	6000
Riel, in 1977 ¹⁸	7000
Hansen and Riel ¹⁹	8000
The paper of the Spanish section ²⁰	10,000

This was a spectacular campaign to contradict the Bolshevik Tendency, which was speaking of "failures." Mandel and other comrades underlined it in the "Response to the Bolshevik Tendency" by shouting: "Long live a dozen failures like these to transform the International!" Concluding, some lines further one, that in relation to Spain "*here the 'Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency' is consciously leading into error comrades in far-off countries who cannot directly verify the assertions of the BT.*"²¹ Well, comrades the moment of truth has come.

Who is Lying?

On July 5, 1978 the Central Committee of the LCR solved the riddle. The result was that there were not 6000, not 7000, not 10,000—but rather 718 members!

That's right. You honest members who want to read black and white, you have read correctly. There is no zero missing! In the report that the LCR's Political Bureau prepared for the Central Committee, which had restricted circulation, it states that there are 718 members listed "in good standing," who can take part in the congress.²²

This July 5 will go down in the history of the world Trotskyist movement, but in its hall of shame, because in this report the United Secretariat's campaign of falsehoods and lies was exposed, and all the Bolshevik Tendency's predictions and analyses were corroborated in a stunning way. There were only 718 members who were in

"good standing"; meaning they complied with the elementary obligation that exists in any social club or any union: to pay dues. And, including those who don't pay, there were a total of 2,203.*

(*The leadership of the LCR has defended itself by saying that these figures were not the figures for members who had or had not paid their dues, but rather were figures for dues received at the center. They say many more than 718 paid, but their regionals did not send these dues to the center.

If this is so, it raises an even more serious problem: the LCR is not a Trotskyist party in Spain, but rather, in the best tradition of petty-bourgeois nationalism, a federation of parties of the various nationalities or regions.

Moreover, even the figure of 2,203 "declared members" is between a third and a fifth of the figures reported to the International by the leadership of the LCR and the International. How do these leaders explain this difference? Has the International lied or not? Or, perhaps, were between 4000 and 6000 members lost in Spain? If that is the case, why were they lost?)

The "thousands" of Basque militants about whom Mandel told us, were, according to the report, 761. Thus we ask again: Who "is consciously leading into error comrades in far-off countries"? The Bolshevik Tendency or the members of the United Secretariat?

The Crisis of the Newspaper

Riel, one of the most fantastic inventors of figures our world movement has ever seen, reported that the newspaper *Combate* "which the LCR puts out, 35,000 copies of which are bought and paid for each week, . . . is in the opinion of the International leadership without doubt the best weekly that any section puts out today."

This was stated officially; it is on tape, as an official report in the name of the United Secretariat to the Central Committee of the Colombian PST.²³ Mysteriously, some six months after this assertion was made, we learned that there was a campaign in this newspaper to see that "*Combate*" lives," and "We must save *Combate*," a campaign that had already been going on for three weeks and whose objective was to secure 5000 subscriptions in two months.

We doubt that if *Combate* sold and was paid for "35,000 copies" a week, it would be in such dire straits that it is forced to say: "Our newspaper is on a tightrope." But let us look at the development of the subscription campaign.²⁴

In *Combate* No. 113 dated June 8, 1978, under the above headline, the comrades point out: "We have been publishing *Combate's* weekly results for four weeks now. We have received a total of some 400 subscriptions. On the average of 100 subscriptions per week. In fact it is somewhat less, since many have been sold before. . . . Moreover, the subscriptions that we have received are basically from militants and local areas who had been holding them from before . . . next week we would like to announce that we have passed the psychological barrier of 2000."

The comrades were three weeks late in passing the psychological barrier, with *Combate* No. 116 finally announcing the figure of 2163 subscriptions. "And according to our files, the majority of the subscriptions are from members."

We never do learn the final result of the campaign. When the two projected months had passed, the editors informed

us that "from 60 to 70% of the objective" has been reached.²⁵ We do not doubt therefore that *Combate* continues to be on the "tightrope."

That is to say, with great enthusiasm, the comrades have been able to sell somewhat more than 2500 subscriptions. If there are 2200 of them, it means that they have gotten 300 people outside the party to subscribe. If 2200 members were needed to get 300 subs, then the Spanish LCR has reversed the traditional method: in place of each member getting 7 subscriptions, 7 members were needed to get one.

But we do not think that this is what happened. We are sure that *Combate* continues to be on the tightrope, because in reality the LCR has 700 or 800 members, or perhaps as many as 1000 real members, who are the only ones up to date in dues, the only ones who worked in this campaign, and they got 3 subscriptions each. We are sure that they are not bad members. No, they're good members. But they have to carry on their shoulders not only the crisis of their leadership, but also the consequences of some irresponsible and demagogic numbers that were shouted to the four winds by this leadership regarding the real situation in the LCR.

The overall picture is this. *Combate* is unable to pass over the hurdle of 3000 subscriptions and the LCR is unable to pass over the hurdle of 800 dues-paying members, and this leads us to state that the LCR as a whole, including its organ *Combate*, is in a crisis.

Another Paralyzed Leadership

We will take only a single quote from the analysis made by the Spanish LCR, although there are many. But that quote is sufficiently categorical. A balance sheet of the Central Committee's work was prepared by the Political Bureau for the CC meeting held prior to the congress. That report says the following. "The last sessions of the Unified Central Committee (UCC) have shown total incompetence in its functioning: only the minimal quorum is achieved, the debates are poor and generally take place between the different areas of struggle (the secretariat of the Political Bureau itself practically acts as one more area of struggle, although there is no homogeneity in the positions of its members), there is no political consistency, and it is difficult to predict what the UCC's decision will be on the majority of the questions; the UCC has lost its political authority before the party and before itself."²⁶

Once Again the Method of Consensus and Empiricism

"In this period," the leadership of the LCR itself says, "a whole weight of political-organizational problems is now beginning to accumulate, which are going to worsen in the period following the elections and will be inherited by the UCC. The crisis is brewing!"²⁷

As in the French section, the response to the multitude of problems pressing down on the party is to seek "accords" and to cover over the differences.

According to the Spanish LCR's Political Bureau, the whole crisis is due, among other things, to the adoption of "methods of consensus in debates in place of proceeding to a frank and clear discussion from the beginning . . ."

And the comrades of the PB state: "we should add one more factor to those previously noted . . . that has to do with the internal functioning of the PB: the application of a policy of permanent consensus in discussion and deci-

sions, even on vital questions. (This was done, for example, on the positions at the previous congress regarding the new vanguards, and positions on the united-front policy throughout the year.) In debates where differences appear, this policy of consensus tends to prevent us from carrying the discussions to the point where the positions become clear (whether or not there are final disagreements). Instead we search for a common framework. In the majority of cases this common framework has to be ambiguous. That ambiguous framework is then presented to the party as the orientation.

"This consensus will produce incorrect forms and methods of leadership. The reason for these incorrect methods is not, however, 'organizational,' but rather political. It stems, on the one hand, from the empiricism with which the PB directs the party's activity, carrying out different tactical turns, without dealing with the different basic questions that appear and reappear behind each orientation.

"It also stems from the propagandism inherent in this policy of developing only general lines that has characterized the central thinking since the last Congress."

"A new version of the old error of the consensus reappears here; a way is sought to prevent integration from giving rise to tensions, even at the cost of 'diluting' the political differences rather than giving priority to the effort to clarify the existing differences."²⁸

We appeal to all honest comrades in the International to study and restudy this brilliant analysis of the crisis of the Spanish LCR, which was worked up by its PB.

The Spanish Members Are Not an Exception

As we would have to expect, the comrades of the Spanish LCR are also feeling, in their activity, the impact of not having a clear political line. It leads to organizational problems, to being charged with heavy tasks, such as a subscription campaign which was too much for them. We have already noted that 70% of the members recognized by the section do not pay dues, or pay them late.

During the election campaign, various regions publicly called for breaking party discipline and voting for the CP. The leadership itself recognizes that because of the bad orientations at the Trade Union Conference, the party's worker activists proposed whatever occurred to them, without any centralism or discipline. There have been slogans that contradict each other from one region to another. There is no on-going membership activism.

All this has been summarized by the Spanish LCR when it speaks of the "progressive disappearance of membership discipline, which has brought about a serious relaxation of the party's internal life."²⁹

A General Crisis That was Recognized Late

For a long time, Mandel, Riel, the IMT, the United Secretariat, and all its agents assured us that everything was going along perfectly well. Mandel responded to our warning with an ironic "Long live a dozen failures like these!"

But now the September balance sheet of the LCR's Central Committee recognizes, to its sorrow, that everything the Bolshevik Tendency was saying was completely correct. For example, that the IMT and the LTF unified in Spain in the midst of a crisis in both organizations, and not in the midst of constant progress: "The unification of the LC and the LCR thus took place in a critical situation

in both parties . . ." ³⁰

In some activities the generalization of the crisis has made itself obvious. In July 1977 the LCR, together with two small far-left groups, got barely 35,000 votes in all of Spain! How is it possible that an organization that has—so it is said—10,000 organized members, and sells close to 35,000 newspapers obtains barely 0.2% of the votes cast in the country? Are we dealing with a leadership that makes fantastic, unreal calculations regarding the possibilities? Or with a laxity among its members that hinders the carrying out of decisions? It is both things.

The leadership of the LCR recognizes this when it says: "The crisis is brewing." Unfortunately it is not brewing, it is already there and fully developed.

4. The United Secretariat's Latin American model: the Mexican PRT

The United Secretariat couldn't find enough favorable adjectives with which to extol the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores of Mexico—the PRT(M). It used the PRT(M) as a Latin American model of its policy and its methodology. It says that the PRT(M) is the second Latin American party to have more than a thousand members; that its spectacular development will lead to its having two thousand members in the near future. They even say that it will become a stronger party than the PST(A). It sells thousands of papers, etc., etc.

Some interpreters for the new majority have gone even further. Thus, Comrade Hugo Blanco officially reported in Peru that while the PST(A) has been reduced to a nucleus of 250 members, the PRT(M), embarking on the opposite development, has already surpassed 1,000, making itself the most powerful Fourth Internationalist party in Latin America. Carried away by enthusiasm, he added that all the members of the International ought to observe the contrast between the shining beacon illuminated by the United Secretariat in Mexico and the dark shadow that is the PST(A).

In another part of this document we will analyze the situation and development of the Argentine PST. Here we will contrast the United Secretariat's triumphalist predictions and analysis of the PRT(M) with reality.

The Last Plenum of the Central Committee of the PRT(M)

If the congresses of the French and Spanish sections clearly reveal the crisis situations those parties are going through, exactly the same can be said of the last two Central Committee meetings of the Mexican section. In particular, the last one (January 7-9, 1979) brought the party to the brink of a split.

The most important point on the agenda of this Central Committee meeting was the question of how to approach the elections. Three clearly delineated positions were put forward. One was put forward by the majority of the Political Bureau (which follows the orientation of the United Secretariat). This position can be summarized by saying that in the election campaign we should call for a class vote for the reformist parties of the workers movement that were running (PPS, PST, PCM).

The second position was headed by Comrade Ricardo Hernández, and leaders and cadres of the ex-IMT belonged to it and also headed it up. This position proposed that the election campaign should call for a class vote only for the Mexican CP.

The third position, presented by comrades who follow the orientation of the Bolshevik Faction, proposed that first off it was necessary to begin with a self-criticism by the whole leadership, which for the past period had been carrying out an electoral policy that was solely oriented to the CP, without taking into account the other political and trade-union organizations of the workers movement.

In the face of this, this third grouping proposed to push for the formation of a Workers and Socialist Pole whose aim would be to try to achieve the unity and independence of the workers movement, and at the same time would serve to unmask the reformist and sell-out parties and organizations.

The call for unity would have to be made to all the organizations of the workers movement and of the masses. It would make a special appeal to those reformist parties that are officially registered to put themselves at the head of this Pole and place their registration at the disposal of the candidates this Workers and Socialist pole would put up.

After a heavy discussion, the current that gets its orientation from the United Secretariat withdrew their position and adopted the one put forward by the Bolshevik Faction comrades.

This meant that there were two remaining positions. One called for a class vote for the Communist Party, later changed to being in favor of the Pole, but only with the CP, not with the PPS and PST. The other position was for a Workers and Socialist Pole to be established with all the organizations in the workers movement that agreed with our call, among them the PPS and PST, in order to move forward toward unity and class independence.

The vote was taken and there was a 10 to 10 tie vote. Another vote was taken, and another tie, with 18 for each position. After five speakers spoke for each of the positions, a third vote was taken, resulting in 19 votes for the position put forward by the BF and 17 in favor of the position put forward by Ricardo, with one abstention.

The correct attitude of the majority made it possible to save the party's unity and to come up with a policy attuned to the electoral campaign. However, the sharp division in the CC was only the forerunner of a violent factional struggle that is developing within the party.

Comrade Ricardo, who for months has been violently attacking the majority of the leadership—and Comrade Jacobo in a personal manner—calling the leadership “bureaucratic centralist,” saying it sells itself to the government for the price of some airline tickets, calling it rightist, etc., got together with leaders of the ex-IMT to call for the establishment of the Left Opposition Tendency (LOT). They then demanded that a Special Congress be called to overturn the electoral policy adopted by the CC, which was accepted by the majority of the leadership.

We are not afraid to say that we are faced with a real *political crime* thanks to the LOT and the vacillating attitude the majority of the leadership has adopted in agreeing to open up discussion within the party and prepare a congress, when only one-and-a-half months remained in which to implement the Workers and Socialist Pole policy. The central axis of the party's activity is now the pre-congress discussion, as a result of which it is paralyzed and unable to carry out any regular activity directed outside the party.

After the Special Congress, which will take place April 13 and 14, there will only be two months left to carry out

the electoral campaign, and a month and a half of time will have passed, which could have been used to concretize the Pole.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that the majority of the leadership, oriented by the United Secretariat, adopted the policy put forward by the Bolshevik Fraction comrades, it was incapable of adequately implementing it. If we follow the editorials and articles in *Bandera Socialista* after the Central Committee meeting, we only find articles of a general and sporadic nature that eventually forget about the policy of the Pole and go back to centering on polemics and appeals to the Mexican CP.

We will not find a single article that reflects the party's concrete participation in the campaign. We will not find, for example, that it says “in this trade union we got so and so many people to join our campaign,” or “in that province a committee for the Workers and Socialist Pole was formed,” etc.

Thus, our Mexican section is squandering a historic opportunity to appear before the masses. Its electoral campaign failed before it began.

The Failure of the Campaign to Obtain Legal Recognition as a Political Party

The Central Committee meeting that took place in February 1977 decided to launch the campaign for registration of the party. It would try to get 65,000 affiliates, the requirement imposed by Mexican law for a political party to be officially recognized as such. Registration of the party means having the right to function legally, to legally participate in elections, etc., while at the same time you get a series of quite important material benefits.

Time passed and the campaign was not going as projected. Few affiliates were signed up. What happened was that a large number of the supposed PRT members did not take part in the campaign, did not concern themselves with doing anything for it, some because they said they disagreed with trying to register the party, that it was a rightist policy.

What happened was that the party was not in the habit of acting as it should, and this phenomenon could be seen with total clarity when it had a central activity that it should have immediately concentrated on. Along with the lack of active membership, the leadership was unable to provide clear and concrete plans that would help the members carry out this work.

Faced with the failure of the membership, the leadership, rather than taking the necessary measures, covered up these attitudes and decided to put aside the attempt to get 65,000 affiliates and went for only 5,000. With 5,000 affiliates Mexican law provides registration as a political association, which only provides the right to function legally, without the right to participate in the elections under your own name (unless you make an alliance with a party that is registered as such), and without the material benefits.

The campaign for registration of the party was a failure, and the registration as a political association was only partially achieved (although legally it was obtained) because of the more or less 7,000 affiliations that were obtained, far fewer than 5,000 actually complied with the requirements of the law.

In June 1978 the leadership once again decided to try to win legal recognition. This time it projected obtaining, between 50,000 and 65,000 signatures during June, July,

and August (we say 50,000 or 65,000 because the figure varies according to which comrade or party body is giving the report. The anarchy that reigns in the PRT(M) never made it possible to know the exact figure.)

In September the general-secretary of the party unequivocally acknowledged that "the campaign for registration is in fact the most important, and practically the first, big national party campaign of this magnitude carried out not only by the PRT but by Mexican Trotskyism. In particular, it is extremely significant for the PRT because it constitutes its first and basic political test, at least as far as external political work is concerned."³¹

This campaign, like the earlier one, was a total failure. We never learned how many signatures were collected. Comrade Hernández asserted—and no one refuted him—that "... it is obvious that we are extremely far from having collected even 10% of the number [of signatures] projected."³²

The editors of the newspaper also acknowledge this failure and the anarchy when they report that "even today we don't have figures for how many signatures for the registration of the PRT were collected."³³

The fact that the PRT is today divided into tendencies regarding the electoral tactic is due to the failure of the campaign to register the party. If it had been able to run in the elections under its own banner the discussion would have taken place on different terms.

When trying to get signatures for legal recognition, there is only one way to proceed. Once the necessary number has been established (which the government decides) you discuss *how to go about getting them*; then you vote *yes or no* whether you can do it.

This type of campaign to achieve a number imposed on us from outside is very different from campaigns to win members to the party or sell subscriptions to the newspaper. In those campaigns we generally decide our goal on the basis of our strength. But in this case there is an element that we cannot modify—the amount imposed by law—and all our strategy is adjusted to that.

Then we do special things, like doing special work in some city in order to see if we can massively sign-up people.

If we launch a financial campaign to get 100,000 dollars and we only obtain 70,000 or 80,000 dollars, we can speak of relative success. But if it is a question of obtaining 50,000 signatures and we get 49,999, we have to say that the campaign has been a total failure. If the comrades had gotten 80% of the needed signatures we would still criticize them, but the fact that they obtained 10% indicates that the party embarked on an activity that was far beyond its strength or, at least, beyond the capacity of its leadership.

The Crisis of the Press

As is the case in all the parties where the influence of the new majority of the United Secretariat—the Unprincipled Bloc—reigns, the newspaper is wallowing in a deep crisis, just like the daily *Rouge* and the Spanish *Combate*. In January 1979 the editorial committee said that the press run was 8,000 copies. But at the same time they report that the debt accumulated in the provinces is 66,800 pesos (\$3,000 U.S.), and that the back debt of the Mexico City area and the total debt are unknown.

In the same document the editorial committee says: "While grave problems have existed in other aspects of the paper, it is clear that the area with the most errors has

been that of distribution, especially in the Mexico City area . . . Delays in payment by the cells, issues that are not picked up, cells that don't sell the paper on the pretext that they don't like it, cells that pay for it but do not sell it, etc.

"The result of the chaos in distribution is also known; of the total amount that should be taken in each week in the Mexico City area, we actually collect between 60 and 70%, and the rest passes into the uncollectable debts column."

"... the fact that a cell does not like the appearance, or the content, or both, of the party's newspaper is not a reason not to sell it." "In the matter of sales of the newspaper there is obviously a political problem that expresses itself. The activity level on the average can be classified as lax, which causes many cells to not sell the paper, or to sell fewer than they could sell, or not to pay on time for those they sell because they distribute it late, etc."³⁴

So, they don't sell the paper because they don't like it? Is there any limit to this democracy? If they don't like the paper, they should make strong criticisms of it, and even change the editorial committee and all the directors. But in the meanwhile they should continue selling the earlier issue in order to pay for the subsequent one. The crisis of the press is the crisis of the membership's activity level. We were not sure whether to include this in this subsection or the other one.

In reality, it is part of the general crisis. The newspaper is bad; the dilettantes use this as an excuse not to sell it. The leadership does not function and cannot improve the newspaper or impose discipline to sell it. The Mexican PRT is falling apart at the seams, and the newspaper is only one aspect of the crisis.

The Financial Laxness

We now move to another barometer: the financial situation. At the beginning of 1978 *Bandera Socialista* reported in a triumphal tone on the financial campaign of this fantastic, incredible, dynamic party of nearly two thousand members, according to Hugo Blanco. (Poor Hugo Blanco! When he was a member of Argentine Trotskyism he was a serious and objective person.)

The newspaper notes that after six weeks of the campaign "approximately 250,000 pesos (\$11,360 U.S.) has been collected."³⁵ If the party has one thousand members this means that in six weeks—six weeks!—they have collected \$11 U.S. per member. Saying this says everything.

What does the Political Bureau say? In the report of meeting No. 28, in an assessment of other financial activity we read: "Jaramillo reports on the balance sheet that the Secretariat of the Political Bureau presented regarding the two days of 'street collections' that the party undertook to obtain funds for the registration campaign.

"While it is true that 175,000 leaflets were distributed during the national 'street collections,' the amount of money collected barely reached 33,000 pesos (\$1,300 U.S.). This last figure represents a decline in comparison to what was obtained last November, when more or less the same amount was collected in only one day of 'street collections' and only 100,000 leaflets were distributed."³⁶

The Mexican section is like a soccer club; its disaster is such that the financial crisis is unable to alarm them to the same extent it would other sections. There are continually more debts, they put out a poor paper, the fulltimers

are paid less and as a result can do less because they have to have other jobs, they don't have the money to travel when they need to, etc.

Therefore, in the face of this economic disaster of the Mexican comrades and their apparent indifference to it, we have called it financial laxness rather than crisis.

Active Members or Dilettantes?

In various reports the leadership of the PRT(M) has taken up the problem of active membership. For example, celebrating in advance the "success" of the first registration campaign, it says that "an important number of comrades have not been assimilated into practical work."³⁷ And in the Political Bureau meeting of March 23, 1978, Comrade Jaramillo said: "It is necessary to carry out a census of the party and make up clear lists in order to find out how many members we presently have."

"In the discussion that the Regional Bureau of the Mexico City area had, some of the comrades who have actively participated in the activities of the campaign have displayed sharp resentments, resentment directed against the members who have not participated."³⁸

In the meetings of the PB and CC there were similar reports, coming from all the regions. Let's look at several examples. "The failure of the 'street collections' is principally due to the fact that probably more than 50% of the party in the Mexico City area did not participate in the activities."

"In practice we can say that there is a wide periphery that is not well assimilated within the party." "One of the origins of the problem is our overestimation of forces. We have been counting on a strength that exists only relatively, inasmuch as it involves extremely uneven levels of commitment: that is, a very unstable strength."

"The party has neglected to apply discipline in a more defined way (without absurd exaggerations, and taking into account the priority of the political questions). The unevenness in activism can only grow as long as we tolerate having comrades who do practically nothing. Even in terms of education, particularly among the most committed comrades, it is necessary to more clearly establish the bases of discipline."

"It is one thing to have comrades who are in the process of being integrated, and it is something quite different to have comrades who do nothing, who are undisciplined and who are really only at the level of sympathizers." ". . . the party ranges from the most exemplary activists to the most exemplary dilettantes."³⁹

Therefore, and in accord with Bolshevik criteria, many of the full members of the PRT(M)—who have the right to vote on the line, to elect the leadership, and to be elected to it, etc.—are not *activists but dilettantes*. In discussing the rules for participation in the Special Congress, it was decided—against the motion of the BF and a sector of the leadership—that anyone who was paid up to date (even if they had been a year behind) had the right to participate. And the real activists, once again, had to carry on their shoulders the dead weight of the "dilettante members" and the falsified figures given to the entire International regarding the real size of the Mexican PRT.

The Real Number of Members

Leaving aside the criteria of how many are Bolshevik members and how many are dilettante members, let's see if it is true that the PRT(M) has more than a thousand

members and is growing at an accelerated rate; or if Comrade Hugo Blanco, who has given us this information, has been bitten by the bug of the systematic lie, which is characteristic of the United Secretariat and the leadership of the SWP.

Let's see if Comrade Blanco has been converted into a loyal disciple of Comrade Hansen, who tarnished the immense prestige gained in a life of exemplary militancy in the service of Trotskyism and the truth by, shortly before his death, lying to our entire International when he solidarized himself with the assertion—knowing full well that it was a lie—that the Spanish LCR had 8,000 members after the BT had already exposed the falseness of this figure. The BT was joined in this by the PST(A), which has never lied and when it has been mistaken has publicly acknowledged it.

What then is the real figure? Around, 2,000, as the members of the United Secretariat say, or much less than 1,000, as the BT asserted?

In October 1978 the leadership of the Mexico City region, where approximately 60% of the membership of the PRT(M) is concentrated—finally carried out what had been proposed months before: an exact census of the number and the situation of the members.

This census counted 497 members, of whom 54% are not consistently active. This means that in the Mexico City area there are 268 consistently-active comrades. If they make up 60% of the membership, then *the party has fewer than 500 active members*.

What facts, as opposed to mere assertions, will Comrade Hugo Blanco use to counter this? Careful, because if you lie, it is possible—as you yourself say—that we will find some class basis for your conduct.

The Crisis in the Leadership and Its Methods

We have already seen that in analyzing the PRT's election campaign—we should say lack of an election campaign—the Central Committee was divided, and one of its tendencies was able to paralyze the party. Let's now look at the situation in the Political Bureau, the highest leadership body for the daily activity of the party.

In the June 5, 1978 meeting of the PB, Comrade Jacobo said: "On the national level, centralization and coordination of work is, in fact nonexistent. The PB—and even more the CC—has not functioned as a team in this respect." And in his report to the September meeting of the Central Committee Jacobo says: "Not having a more politically homogeneous leadership team has, however, impeded the advances of the campaign [for registration]. If we had such a team it would surely have acted more rapidly."

And drawing a picture of what in other parties (the Spanish LCR for example) has come to be known as "leadership by consensus," Comrade Jacobo characterizes the Mexican leadership with these shining sentences:

"Because it is necessary to openly recognize that the present leadership of the party is not the best integrated. This leadership was chosen, in the final analysis, as *the product of necessary political compromises*. In the final analysis the leadership had to guarantee representation for the tendencies and organizations that had unified. *The governing criterion, in all its magnitude, could not be the needs of the party and the capabilities of each candidate*. The criterion of representation had to be placed above the tasks and functions to be carried out by each leader. This

is a big limitation and at times like this is even an obstacle." And he concludes: "This is why a real leadership team has *still not* been built on the Political Bureau level, not to speak of the CC level."⁴⁰

The Mexican comrades say "still not." We reply "never," because the non-bodies of the Mexican PRT are so federative and heterogeneous that they have brought the party to paralysis.

Generalized Chaos

There are no reports that don't speak of "the partial or total failure of the campaigns carried out." This is reflected in the newspaper, that is to say, before the masses. A campaign is announced, and after a short time disappears without a trace.

Summing this up, the regional leadership of the Mexico City area stated: "In conclusion, we can say that while the party is not in a crisis, it faces a very delicate situation."

Failure of legal registration, consistent nonfulfillment of the campaigns voted on; crisis of membership that is reflected in the loss of active members and the increase in dilettantes; a leadership that neither leads nor centralizes, nor provides a line, nor can impose the slightest discipline, etc. They call all this "a delicate situation." We call it crisis.

5. The Colombian PSR, a Party in Ruins

Colombia provides a first rate experimental laboratory, unique in the International. This is because it is the only country where there are currently two parties that are part of the International and are clearly aligned—one, the PSR, is aligned with the United Secretariat and its Unprincipled Bloc; and the other, the PST, is aligned with the Bolshevik Faction.

This means that it is a favorable situation in which two different conceptions of party building—the United Secretariat's and ours—can be looked at, and nearly touched. The Peruvian experience is not as clear and obvious due to the extreme weakness of both those who follow the United Secretariat and those who are with the Bolshevik Faction.

The United Secretariat and its spokespersons have taken it upon themselves to spread the legend throughout the International that the Colombian experience has categorically shown that the United Secretariat's methods are the correct ones and that the factional methods of the Bolshevik Faction have led the PST to disaster.

They say that the PSR, in contrast, is growing daily and is being transformed into a large, impressive party, one that will surpass 1,000 members. How many rank-and-file members of the International have not heard the story of the nasty Argentines destroying the Colombian PST and of the good members of the United Secretariat, Peter and Jean-Pierre, helping to build a big party, the PSR?

Colombia was to be the grave of the BF and the triumph of the "definitive penetration" of the United Secretariat into South America, with its exemplary PSR. We believe that, in fact, it is the greatest example of what awaits all the parties influenced by the United Secretariat. Let's look at the facts.

How Many Members Does the Colombian PSR Have?

In January 1978 the Proletarian Democracy Tendency of the Colombian PST, which was headed up by Ricardo

Sánchez, Socorro Ramírez and others, broke with the party, claiming they had the greater part of the party's members, 317, and that despite having nearly a majority, the leadership would not call a Congress during the election campaign.

The United Secretariat, which was behind this whole factional maneuver and this split, certified by means of the report of Riel and Galois that these more than three hundred members existed. And they brought a letter, supposedly signed by these 317 members, to the United Secretariat, guaranteeing its authenticity and the existence of these members of the party.

Ever since, the PST leadership has demanded that it be shown a copy or the original of this letter and the list of the 317 members of the party who had followed the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. The United Secretariat has turned it down, although it vouched for the validity of the list. At the same time, the members of the United Secretariat stated that the PDT was going to unify with the LCR and with two other organizations. Not only that, but that the LCR had more members than the PDT.

In July 1978 the joint Central Committee of the four organizations that were going to unify reported in writing that the fusion would mean the establishment of a party of 718 members plus 70 candidates. Several weeks later, at an August 20, 1978 public plenary meeting in Lima, Comrade Peter Camejo reported that after the founding congress of the Colombian PSR the International would have its third party of more than 1,000 members in Latin America.

And the newspaper of the PSR reported on September 4, 1978: "Nationally, the PSR now has 900 members and candidates, and at its founding congress in September will have 1,000 members."

But in fact this congress, which took place October 20, 1978, had 38 full delegates, one for each 10 members or major fraction thereof. If the PSR needs a little help, let's assume that the 38 were each representative of 10. This would give a total of 380 members. We'll give them another 20 to round it out to 400, and then we'll ask: How did they lose 500 members—more than half—on one month? We have the right to believe that they never existed; that this congress demolished the United Secretariat and PSR leadership's mountain of lies.

A United Secretariat-style May Day

On May 1, 1978 the PST in Bogota marched in its own contingent. The forces of the LCR and the PDT marched together with a sector of the URS and Ruptura in the UNIOS contingent. The total UNIOS contingent in Bogota had 250 participants. Either this indicates how little importance the parties that follow the United Secretariat give to May Day, sending only a small portion of their members and not inviting a single worker from outside their ranks, or the PSR didn't have the number of members it said it had. In either case, it is a "United Secretariat-style" May Day.

A little while earlier, a widely publicized meeting to protest the arbitrary official decision to not allow Socorro Ramírez use of the TV channels, a question that constituted the central axis of the electoral campaign, a meeting that was jointly held with UNIOS, attracted 71 comrades when it began. At its height there were not more than 100. All this is documented with photographs.

An Annual or a Fortnightly?

At the congress they voted to begin publishing a fortnightly. Since this decision was made last October this periodical appeared once. This leads us to wonder: was there a typographical error in the printing of the congress resolutions, and should it have said "annual" rather than "fortnightly"?

If that is the case, we apologize to the comrades for our criticisms, since they are then carrying out the resolution.

Two Dollars per Member to Solve the Financial Crisis

In order to solve the "extremely grave situation" that inexplicably existed at the founding of the powerful PSR, the comrades voted for a financial campaign to raise 250,000 pesos (some \$6,000 U.S.). At the end of the one month period, a balance sheet of what was collected indicated that it was about 70,000 pesos. Less than one-third!

What does Comrade Peter, who had announced that this party would rapidly grow to one thousand members, say now? That this fantastic organization was only able to collect two dollars per member? Perhaps, he would now say, as the PSR does (without explaining why) that less than 400 members pay dues in this powerful party.⁴²

At any rate, even this would mean the miserable sum of \$4.50 per member, meaning that every member gave a dollar a week and that none of the [money-raising] posters which were in all the bookstores were sold. Is there anybody who would defend this campaign?

Crisis of Leadership

The desolate panorama that the party presents has deeply affected the best elements in its leadership. We should begin by noting the case of Comrade Gustavo, organizational secretary of the party, one of its most enthusiastic founders and builders, who has completely abandoned membership and is presently settled in Spain.

But he is not the only one: Comrade Amín, a member of the CC and leader of the Medellín zonal organization, has abandoned membership in this regional in order to dedicate himself to his university career. Comrades Lorens and Bacerra, members of the CC and of the leadership of the Valle regional, have abandoned membership.

But not all the leaders who have broken with the PSR have done the same thing. A group of members and leaders of the coastal area—among them Comrade Medina, whom Mandel considered one of the best leadership cadres—has taken a decisive step forward by joining the PST.

In a December 11, 1978 document by three PSR leaders in Cartagena, one of the most important regions in the country and also of the north coast, it says: "... with the close of the election campaign and the continual postponements of the congress, the campaign to organize and centralize the party remained without a political basis, it remained up in the air, on a regional level and throughout the party. This produced a general relapse and initiated the crisis of leadership."

"... the crisis of the Regional Leadership Committee has deepened: several of its members have abandoned their leadership responsibilities, some maintain them formally, others are going into retirement. It has become a reduced circle with many limitations."⁴³

We have another invaluable document: the February 17, 1979 letter that these comrades sent to their ex-comrades in the PSR. The comrades begin by explaining that "our

withdrawal from the PSR is due to the fact that we feel that this party is going through a crisis of leadership from which it will be hard to recover. This situation is having unquestionably deep repercussions in the life of the party and on each member."

They go on to explain how the crisis is manifested, in terms that amply confirm our analysis: "... from more than 800 members . . . there are now less than 50% of that number." "More than three months without a national press." "Total inability to carry out the policy determined by the founding congress of the PSR . . ." "Total economic bankruptcy and inability to resolve this problem . . ."

The letter concludes that: "... it remains clear that the leadership (mainly the majority sector that controls it) has no solution, that it is simply trying to preserve the PSR, no matter what condition it is in, as a tool in the factional struggle within the International. For them that is enough. In the hands of the present leadership the PSR will never be able to resolve its crisis. It is moving toward the abyss."

The conclusion that the signers of the letter draw is the only one possible for militants who want to continue as militants:

"The solution to the crisis of the PSR will take place through the political defeat of its present leadership. Not having any immediate possibility of defeating and rooting this leadership out and, moreover, since we are not willing to continue riding along in the crisis, and the 'speeches' of the present leadership are not enough for us, we have decided to leave the ranks of the PSR and support the political course that the PST represents and is developing."

After the authors of the letter summarize the PST's advances in the last period and show that they agree with the party's policy and program, the letter ends with an appeal:

"Comrades, our position is clear: we cannot be members of a party in which we see no political perspective. We are convinced that our attitude is the only one possible for the members of the PSR who want to build a strong Trotskyist party in Colombia.

"Of course the leaders of the PSR are waging a McCarthyite campaign against us and in their desperation are carrying out a whole campaign of slanders. This does not matter. They have no alternative left. We await them in the PST."

Some months earlier, the same thing was pointed out by an important group of comrades who had participated in the course of the PSR as members or sympathizers. We should note that among them were about 20 trade-union leaders who came into the PST together with Comrade Medina.

The Crisis of Activism

Any comrade in the International who wants to get a first hand view of the Colombian PSR's form of membership, could do that in one day. You will never find them at any factory gate. If you try to find out what they are doing by going to see them in their headquarters, you will find that it is always closed.

The most important region of the party, the Coast, says in its internal bulletin number 12, November 1978: "As yet a big sector of the membership has not developed consciousness about party building, which is reflected in the financial problem. Only 40% of the membership is in good standing in terms of party dues, which is hampering some

practical tasks.”

And in the Cartagena comrades' document it says that: “Since that point . . . the party's ability to carry out activity and its general functioning have profoundly declined to the point that some cells no longer meet, their members have disappeared from sight, and the crisis of the Regional Leadership Committee (of the Coast) has deepened.”

Therefore it is not surprising that the official documents of the strongest region of the PSR say things like this: “Following the plenary session where the groups fused, the shortcomings were reflected in the irregular functioning of many cells. The member's duties to the party were constantly unfulfilled as in the case of dues, the press, etc. There were approximately some 200 members on the books, but in practice less than 50% were functioning; the cells were not functioning regularly, much less carrying out the plans for intervention in the sector.”⁴⁴

Another “classic” example of the moral fiber of membership that the United Secretariat's orientation produces.

Crisis of the Party

“With the end of the electoral campaign the party was left without political initiatives and without a focus of activity in the mass movement. Unquestionably this weakened its unity.” And it goes on: “. . . from that time a process of general confusion began in the party, from the leadership to the ranks; we would say that a political crisis developed in the party, which was summarized in a crisis of leadership.” “The party still does not have a focus of political activity.”⁴⁵

A party that is left without members, from which the leadership cadres flee, which collects from \$2 to \$4 per member in its financial campaign, which puts out its fortnightly paper every three or four months, which brings 100 people to its biggest meeting: what is such a party? A party in crisis or a party in ruins? There can be no doubt: This is the youngest ruins in the world Trotskyist movement.

Now we are going to explain something very simple to Hugo Blanco: The Bolshevik Tendency says that “the sections that are not led by the Bolshevik Tendency are falling apart and in disarray” because BT members “believe that none of the other Trotskyists know how to work in the mass movement or build revolutionary parties”—because, thanks to the United Secretariat, “none of the other Trotskyists” do. Is that clear?

And the BT says “every deviation has a class origin” because that's the way it is. And “the Bolshevik Tendency, of course, always has a ‘proletarian’ position” because it is immersed in the movement of the proletariat.

Footnotes to Chapter I

1. “Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency,” published in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin [IIDB], Vol XIV, Number 1, January 1977. In English.

2. “The Real Situation in the International and the Tasks That Confront It (Reply to the Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency),” by Aubin, Brewster, Lelia, Duret, Riel, Alfonso, Riós, Carlos Rodriguez, Sandor, and Walter, Cuadernos de Discusión Internacional [CDI], No. 3, PRT (Mexico), July 1978, p. 16. In Spanish.

3. “To the Latin American Comrades: Notes on the Bolshevik Tendency,” by Hugo Blanco. IIDB, Vol XVI, No. 2, May 1979, p. 3.

4. Mandel: Tape recorded at the Bogotá plenum of what was then the Bloque Socialista, November 1976.

5. “Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency,” p. 5.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

7. “A Scandalous Document—A Reply to Germain,” by Nahuel Moreno, IIDB, Vol XI, No. 4, January 1974, p. 59.

8. “Bilan de la Commission Internationale,” Cahiers de Recherche Socialiste [CRS], BI No. 89, French LCR, August, 1978. In French.

9. “Bilan du BP,” CRS, BI No. 86, August 1978, Paris, LCR.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. BI, No. 60, French LCR.

13. “There is No Right to Create Illusions,” letter signed by TM, rail worker from Paris—St. Lazare, *Rouge*, No. 476, November 5, 1977.

14. “A propos du Bilan du BP,” CRS, BI No. 86.

15. *Rouge*, No. 848, January 29, 1979, article signed by Michel Tomas.

16. “Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency,” p. 11.

17. Mandel: tape recording of the Bogotá meeting of the then Bloque Socialista, November 1976.

18. “Report by J.P. Riel to the Central Committee of the PST (C), December 7, 1977,” Boletín de Polémica Internacional, No. 12, PST(C), Bogotá, 1978. In Spanish.

19. “Leadership Report No. 18 (week of December 19-26),” San José, Costa Rica, OST, December 1977.

20. *Combate*, weekly of the Spanish LCR, March 2, 1978.

21. “Respuesta a la TB,” pp. 17-18.

22. “Número de delegados en función del estado de cuentas actual de las nacionalidades/regiones,” Political Bureau of the Spanish LCR, June 5, 1978.

23. “Report by J.P. Riel to the Central Committee of the PST (C), December 7, 1977.”

24. *Combate*, No. 112, June 1, 1978.

25. *Combate*, No. 119, July 20, 1978.

26. “Balance del CC,” Political Bureau of the Spanish LCR, Madrid, September 7, 1978.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. “Balance general de la campaña por el registro del PRT,” by Felipe García, Jacobo Jaramillo: *Cuadernos de Discusión Política* [CDP], No. 3 Mexico, PRT, October 1978, P. 3.

32. “Balance y posibilidades del PRT en el período actual (respuesta al ‘Balance general de la campaña por el registro del PRT’ presentado por Jacobo y Felipe),” by Ricardo Hernández and Augusto León; CDP, No. 3, p. 3.

33. “Informe sobre el periódico,” presented by the Editorial Committee to the Central Committee meeting of January 7-8, 1979.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Bandera Socialista*, No. 54, March 4, 1978, p. 7.

36. Minutes of the Political Bureau, No. 28, March 3, 1978.

37. *Bandera Socialista*, No. 54, March 4, 1978, p. 7.

38. Minutes of PB, No. 28.

39. “Balance global de la situación interna del partido,” Regional Bureau of the Valle de Mexico, undated (approximately April or May, 1978).

40. “Balance general de la campaña por el registro del PRT,” CDP, Mexico, PRT, p. 37.

41. Boletín Interno No. 9, "Congreso de fundación del PSR," November 1978. [Location of footnote not designated in text—Translator.]

42. *Combate Socialista*, No. 4., November 15, 1978, report on the Founding Congress of the PSR.

43. "Balance Político Organizativo," signed by Arcadio Buendía, Nicolás León, and Antonio Céspedes, Cartagena, December 11, 1978.

44. Boletín Interno No. 12, Regional costa norte, Colombian PSR.

45. "Balance Político Organizativo," Cartagena.

CHAPTER II THE ILL-FATED TENTH WORLD CONGRESS

With its sole aim being to keep from breaking down into its component parts, the Unprincipled Bloc is opposed to the agenda of the next world congress including a balance sheet of what was adopted at the Tenth World Congress, the results of its application, and the criticisms made by the Leninist Trotskyist Faction of the leadership during that period. As part of this maneuver they have declared that the documents of that Congress are "historic," meaning, outside the scope of discussion.

The Bolshevik Faction, for its part, emphatically insists that this balance sheet be drawn up; not only because it would be inconceivable that the Eleventh World Congress not discuss and evaluate the analyses, perspectives, and program of the previous congress, but also, in this concrete case, *because the Tenth World Congress is the basis for all the disasters that have taken place since it was held*. It is the primordial cause of the crisis our International has fallen into.

The Significance of the Tenth World Congress

The Tenth World Congress has a significance of its own; it is not simply the continuation of the Ninth. Its harmfulness was not just that it reaffirmed the guerrilla warfare line for Latin America; it spread its suicidal line to new areas, generalizing and theorizing on a new method for the International. The Tenth World Congress bequeathed us a program foreign to Trotskyism by extending the ultraleftist line to all of Europe, with the strategy of winning hegemony in the "broad vanguard."

The theoretical bases were established for the "exemplary actions" of minority groups. In other words: the Tenth Congress adopted an ultraleftist line of worldwide scope, with tactical variants by continent.

The line of the Tenth Congress prevented our Italian, Portuguese, French, and Spanish sections from becoming parties of several thousand members. Instead, with the exception of Spain, the only organizations that grew were the ones that did not follow the orientations of the Tenth Congress, such as the Portuguese PRT, which went from 10 comrades in November 1974 to 120 at the time of the unification; the Italian LSR which went from 30 to 300; and the Lambertists in France who went from 1,500 to 3,000.

And this is not to say that the PRT, the LSR, or the French Lambertists had a highly capable leadership. On the contrary, the PRT and the LSR were constituted out of small groups of adolescents, high school students, and we all know about Lambertism. This says volumes about the disaster of the IMT's orientation.

Because of the above, it is indispensable that the Eleventh World Congress study the documents of the Tenth and repudiate them and the leadership that drew

them up, motivated them, and put them into practice. It must also adopt the criticisms made by the LTF.

The Formation of the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency and its Transformation into the Leninist Trotskyist Faction

At the Ninth World Congress (1969) an intense struggle was waged by the leadership of the SWP, the PRT (La Verdad), and a few others against the guerrilla tactic that was adopted by the majority for all of Latin America. Following the Congress this tactic was rapidly extended to other continents, and ultraleftist deviations were seen on an ever increasing number of programmatic points. The Majority was moving toward ratifying this extension of this ultraleft line by systematizing it in its draft European document for the Tenth World Congress.

In March 1973, at the meeting in Santiago de Chile, the minority from the Ninth World Congress set up the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency. The LTT's objectives were twofold: to struggle "for reversal of the Latin American guerrilla-war orientation" as well as "for reversal of the projections of this turn in various fields as it became extended *both geographically and programmatically* following the [Ninth] congress". They added that they stood "for reaffirming the basic program, tradition, and practices of the Fourth International as they stood up to the time of the Third World Congress Since Reunification (Ninth World Congress), that is, specifically, of commitment to the Leninist strategy of building a combat party" in order to assure the success of the revolutionary mobilizations of the proletariat and its allies.

To the above was added the demand "for democratic organization of the coming world congress."¹ [See footnotes at end of Chapter II.] This means that for the LTF the struggle in the International was not exclusively focused on overturning the guerrillaist line in Latin America.

Months later, in the face of the factional maneuvers of the IMT, in the face of the increasing deepening and extension of the vanguardist line in Europe, the LTT was transformed into the LTF. It then ratified the entire declaration of the LTT, pointing out that regarding "the above platform, we would now apply greater stress to . . . opposition to the extension of the guerrilla orientation," and "it is also our opinion that the question of the Leninist method of party building . . . is becoming more and more central in the debate.

New points that justified the transformation into a faction were added to the program. These were the struggle "for a change in the composition of the leadership of the Fourth International to assure a majority pledged to correct the guerrilla-war orientation and its derivatives,

such as 'minority violence'" and the demand that "the general line of 'The Underlying Differences in Method,' by Joseph Hansen" be adopted.²

The fundamental reason for the establishment of the LTF is summarized in the need to change "the composition of the leadership of the Fourth International." As Hansen noted in his letter to Bala Tampoe in February 1973, in the call for the formation of the IMT "the point was made that the division over the European resolution showed that deeper questions than the differences over Latin America were at the bottom of the dispute. *To me, this was a welcome admission. General questions involving method in party building, how to win mass leadership, how to orient correctly in explosive situations or under severe repression are involved.*"³ [Emphasis added.]

Following the Tenth World Congress, in his report to his party on the congress Comrade Hansen stressed the criticism of the IMT saying: "I think that the key lies in their lack of roots in the working class and the labor movement. They lack the steadying influence of immersion in the proletariat." "The line of the International Executive Committee Majority Tendency represents a bending to the radicalized petty-bourgeois milieu from which many young cadres of the Fourth International have emerged and in which they are still working."⁴

All of the above shows that the role and the historic significance of the LTF can only be understood if we understand that it was not fighting just for reversal of the guerrilla line for Latin America, but also "for a change in the composition of the leadership of the Fourth International," in order to provide the International with a proletarian line and leadership. On the basis of these considerations, the LTF made a systematic critique of the of the IMT in all areas, including its methodology. The time has come to confirm who was right at the Tenth World Congress: the IMT or the LTF.

The Tenth World Congress's Analysis

In order to justify its ultraleft line, the IMT made a rounded analysis of the world situation and especially of the European situation, an analysis having a cataclysmic character. It announced that in the short run there would be apocalyptic events in Europe, which prevented us from doing the customary Leninist work of strengthening the Trotskyist party within the struggles of the workers movement and the masses. The European document presented by the IMT in 1973 for the Tenth World Congress stated: "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."⁵

The "amount of time remaining" fluctuated between three and six years, Comrade Germain reported at the IEC meeting in December 1972. In that time, he said, "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."⁶

This is what the IMT argued: In a period that would inexorably come to fruition in 1978 "the European proletariat will experience new and terrible defeats of historic scope" if "a new revolutionary leadership is not built."

In that same year of 1973 the LTF, through Comrade M.A. Waters repudiated the catastrophist impressionism of Comrade Germain and the IMT in the following way: "It is

particularly false and disorienting to project on a continental scale 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?"⁷

Now, in addition to getting a laugh from Comrade Germain's predictions and from the IMT's "revolutionary calendar," the comrades of our world movement can also determine which of the analyses presented at the Tenth World Congress was correct.

Another False Analysis

In the IMT's European document approved by the Tenth World Congress there is another prediction encompassing all of Europe: that a "situation of dual power" would open up, to which they added the strategic conception that all the "demands" were going to be centered "essentially around the axis of the demand for workers' control."⁸

The LTF maintained that this was a maximalist and erroneous perspective of the future of the European situation. Criticizing it, Comrade Waters said: "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."⁹

The document approved by the PST(A) in the same period said something similar: "According to the [IMT's European] document there will be increasing unemployment and a lowering of the standard of living in Western Europe in the coming months and years. This means that at this moment the bourgeoisie has the offensive in its hands in the majority of the European countries and this is the reason for the upset of the equilibrium. This reality is the source of nearly all the current working-class struggles. The European masses are now developing important *defensive* economic struggles; they are fighting to defend their jobs and their standard of living and not to win new economic concessions from the bourgeoisie.

"If this economic offensive against the working-class movement does exist, if the workers have begun to mobilize themselves in their own defense, why is there not one single demand relating to this question in the entire European document? This question is not touched upon. Only in passing is it said that we must intervene in economic struggles, even the most modest and reformist ones. This is very good. But what demands do we raise when we intervene? If we limit ourselves to intervening without raising any general demand that will mobilize broad sectors, are we not falling into syndicalism? Why not raise our transitional demand for 'a sliding scale of wages and hours,' or some tactical adaptation of it? Why don't we raise the demand suitable to this entire period, 'stop the capitalist offensive against the workers movement and its standard of living and working conditions'? Why not begin by pushing the line for a workers united

front to halt this offensive? If we don't apply the line of the workers united front, won't we condemn these economic struggles to remain where the reformists and bureaucrats want to keep them, within their original reformist framework?

"Maybe this first omission has some relation to the latest five year tactic voted for by the majority comrades: to direct our work basically toward the vanguard and not toward the mass movement. But wherever it comes from, the absence of defensive economic demands disarms us in the face of the concrete struggles now being carried on—and those that will continue to unfold in the immediate future—by the workers of important countries on the European continent."¹⁰

In other words, who was right—the IMT, which said in the European document that inflation and unemployment would not be posed as the main problems of the European class struggle in the years following the Tenth Congress; or the LTF and the PST(A), which in contrast maintained that these problems, together with democratic and anti-imperialist demands, would be the axes of the proletarian mobilization in Western Europe?

The Ultraleftist Orientation

Today the leaders of the ex-IMT want to conceal the reality of the Tenth World Congress. They say that when they referred to the "new vanguard" they meant not just the ultraleft, but also "militants who are still affiliated with the CP and SP (in certain countries this 'broad vanguard' can make up a majority sector)".¹¹

This is absolutely false: the axis of the Tenth World Congress was quite different. The World Political Resolution for the Tenth Congress said that on a European and world scale "a new mass vanguard" had appeared. This new mass vanguard can be characterized as "the totality of forces acting independently and to the left of the traditional bureaucratic leaderships of the mass movement. What is involved is both a social and a political phenomenon. . . ."¹²

"Within the mass vanguard . . . we must make a distinction between the section of unorganized elements (unorganized, that is, except in mass organizations like trade unions) who are mobilizable for broad struggles and demonstrations essentially but do not take the path of building specifically vanguard organizations, and those elements grouped in vanguard organizations. Little by little, a new organized far left is taking the place of the 'political mass movement' . . ."¹³

This means that the "new vanguard with a mass character" had nothing to do with members and organized sympathizers in the CPs and SPs.

The central task of "the Trotskyists" flowed from this analysis. That task was to win "hegemony within the new mass vanguard".¹⁴

Because the organized part of the new vanguard was found in the "new far left," it was necessary to try "to become the principal pole of regroupment for the far left."¹⁵

We had to try "to bridge the gap that developed . . . between the new far left and the organized workers' movement"; they spoke of "the role of pivot that the revolutionary Marxists are seeking to play between the new far left and the organized workers' movement."¹⁶ In order to achieve all of this, our sections had to dedicate themselves to "organizing national political campaigns on

carefully chosen issues that *correspond to the concerns of the vanguard*, [and] do not run against the current of mass struggles. . . ."¹⁷ [Emphasis added.]

All the errors and catastrophes of our International flow from this vanguardist orientation and this ultraleft political line. It was a capitulation to the ultraleft groups; it was not a policy for the workers movement and masses as a whole, like the one put forward by the LTF.

The LTF argued that this policy would lead us to false confrontations of the vanguard against the supposed danger of fascism, as analyzed by the United Secretariat. This policy had nothing to do with reality. The terrorist actions in Spain, Italy, and Germany, and the vanguardist actions in France and England have served only to confuse the workers movement. The "concerns of the vanguard" were a tragedy for the European workers movement.

Far from denouncing these fatal "concerns of the vanguard" for their erratic, individualistic, putschist, and elitist character, the Tenth World Congress said that our national political campaigns should be "carefully chosen" to "correspond to the concerns of the vanguard."

Our policy should have been to differentiate ourselves from this "new vanguard," from this far left, which was weakening and disorganizing the workers movement through its irresponsible and individualistic actions.

The Absence of Democratic Slogans

The Tenth World Congress's European Document presented a 10-point program, which did not include a single democratic task or slogan.

It should suffice to quote what the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" said about this silence: "In contrast to the IMT's absolute, total silence, the LTF's document 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.

"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."¹⁸

The Importance of the Anti-imperialist Struggles

In the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" we asked: "Were the Portuguese Colonies Fundamental Elements or Otherwise in the European Revolutionary Process?"¹⁹

In the Tenth World Congress European document's 10-point program it says: "Organizing a systematic internationalist propaganda campaign around the axis of solidarity with anti-imperialist struggles. . . ."²⁰ Nothing else! This declaration was simply a declamatory gesture since

the European document did not specify what the fundamental anti-imperialist campaign should be.

In particular, it declined to stress the importance of a European campaign of solidarity with the revolutionary struggle of the Portuguese colonies. For the Tenth Congress, both the IMT and the SWP refused to accept the urgent appeal by the PST(A) to focus on a campaign in favor of Angola and Mozambique and for the "withdrawal of the Portuguese troops."

In "A Scandalous Document," we said: "They [the IMT] say nothing about European imperialism's Vietnam: the guerrillas and the national liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies."²¹ Elsewhere we stated 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."²²

In the same document we wore ourselves out stressing the need to do a great deal of work around the immigrant workers, to make this a fundamental aspect of our activity, as against the French IMT's policy of ignoring them. When today we hear the International Commission of the French section say that they did not fight against their own imperialism and did nothing among the immigrant workers, we should know that the reason for this was the Tenth World Congress, which stubbornly refused to pay heed to the Argentine PST's warning.

Portugal: The First Disaster

The practical consequences of the Tenth World Congress began to be seen several months after it took place.

The great Portuguese revolution triumphed in April 1974, a revolution that repeated many aspects of the experience of the Russian revolutionary process. It was the first great workers revolution of the postwar period and in Western Europe that began with classical characteristics. And it was a magnificent opportunity for the leadership of the International, the IMT, to build a large Trotskyist party with mass influence.

In Portugal the IMT had a group of around 200 members. A year before April 25, 1974, the group that they influenced edited clandestine publications; six months before the beginning of the revolution they were putting out four different publications; in November 1974 the first issue of *Luta Proletaria* appeared as an official organ.

The Portuguese revolutionary upsurge lasted from April 25, 1974 to November 1975, that is, more than a year and a half, during which there were tremendous mobilizations, occupations of land and factories. In short, it was a situation of embryonic dual power—still weak due to the leadership that existed—and large democratic mobilizations, mainly of the Socialist masses. The plans for a coup d'état provoked multitudinous mobilizations.

This summary rapidly sketches the magnificent possibilities these 200 comrades had for the growth of their party. Instead the Internationalist Communist League (LCI) went into a crisis that became permanent, with splits and

sabotage of activity that led them to the precipice.

What was the reason for this crisis in the midst of such favorable objective conditions? Stated simply it was that the Internationalist Communist League, oriented by the IMT, held tight to the schema of the Tenth World Congress. It aimed its work toward the ultraleft instead of orienting it toward the mass movement, particularly the socialist movement that was bringing together the majority of the workers. The LCI was incapable of linking itself to these workers and working out a tactic to mobilize them and lead them to break with the sell-out Soares leadership.

The LCI didn't even pose this question—which was the fundamental question of the Portuguese revolution before the Socialist Party became the government. They were too busy trying to achieve unity in action with the Maoists, the centrists, and the progressive officers of the MFA—the Armed Forces Movement—the Portuguese expression of the "new mass vanguard").

By linking up as the caboose of the "new vanguard," the IMT played along with the various maneuvers hatched up to deceive and divide the Portuguese proletariat, such as when it went along with the adventures of the Frente Unico Revolucionario [Revolutionary United Front] and contributed to sowing illusions regarding the revolutionary officers of the MFA.

The IMT did well to criticize the FUR. But it forgot to self-critically recognize that the Portuguese LCI had simply been following the line traced out by the International majority to its ultimate conclusions.

With regard to the MFA government and especially the Vasco Gonçalves government, the IMT took a directly opportunist position by refusing to call it the main enemy of the Portuguese proletariat once the last Spínola putsch was defeated.

At the same time the IMT dealt with the embryos of dual power in a formalistic way, as the Tenth World Congress resolutions had done, by calling for them without simultaneously raising those democratic and transitional slogans that took into account the aspirations of the masses, particularly that majority who were following the SP.

The IMT saw the strengthening of the organs of the class and workers democracy as incompatible with the defense of the bourgeois-democratic rights. The IMT's lack of understanding of the role that the democratic struggles were playing led it to commit errors such as tailending the Portuguese CP in the *República* case and the case of the Constituent Assembly, which it declined to defend, and to ignore the agrarian question in the northern part of the country, interpreting the role of the small peasants of this region as being solely an underpinning of the counterrevolution.

As a result of this tailending of the ultraleft, the IMT oriented all its attacks toward Soares when he was in the opposition, as if he were the public enemy number one of the revolution, instead of warning that public enemy number one was the Vasco Gonçalves government. This meant it lost any chance to have a dialogue with approximately 70% of the workers.

And to round out the full catastrophe, the IMT paid Soares the honor of not challenging him for the role of defender of democracy against the marked Bonapartist tendencies the MFA had taken on, particularly under the Vasco Gonçalves government.

Therefore it is not surprising that the IMT saw only the reactionary victory of the November 25 Eanes and SP

putsch. It refused to see the other side of the same phenomenon: the provocative role of the new mass vanguard which, together with the CP, was the central mover in the ultraleft putsch that the reactionaries used in order to counterattack and initiate their offensive against the mass movement.

The result of all this was that when we unified in the middle of 1978, the LCI comrades were 60% of the total membership. This means they brought some two hundred comrades, the same number they had four years earlier when they began to build the party. They had not grown by a single member in the midst of a great revolutionary upsurge.

The Capitulation to the Angolan MPLA

Along with the IMT's capitulation to the "progressive officers" of the MFA in Portugal was its equally negative and opportunist capitulation to the Angolan MPLA. The reason for its attitude was the same: the orientation toward and the tailending of the European and Portuguese ultraleft, which in turn was following the footsteps of Portuguese Stalinism.

While the main enemy of the Angolan people was still Portuguese imperialism, and while our program therefore should have been to bring all the nationalist movements into a united front with the aim of throwing out the Portuguese, the IMT gave its support to the MPLA in its fratricidal war with the other two Black nationalist movements. The IMT incorrectly maintained in unison with the MPLA that the principal enemy was the FNLA-UNITA.

Therefore when the MPLA entered into negotiations with the occupying Portuguese army to fight the FNLA-UNITA, the IMT did not denounce this. Leaders of the IMT raised the slogan that when the Portuguese army left it should give its arms to the MPLA, a position that denied the people of Angola the right to decide their destiny through a constituent assembly and free and democratic elections.

That is why Comrade Gabriel, in *Inprecor*, attacked the Portuguese soldiers who refused to go to Angola, saying: "And a refusal to go to Angola that is directed 'against imperialism and social imperialism' obviously amounts to refusal to support the MPLA, which is implicitly designated as the 'agent of Moscow.'"²³

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 IMT's pronouncement in favor of the MPLA and against the FNLA-UNITA signified a grave abandonment of the traditional policy of Lenin and the Third International.

In this situation the traditional policy could only mean making a tireless appeal to the Black movement as a whole to join together in a single, united, anti-imperialist front against the Portuguese colonialists.

Later, beginning in September 1975 when the main enemy of the Angolan people was no longer Portuguese imperialism but was American imperialism and its agent, the racist government of South Africa, the IMT's false position was filled with a new content, since the FNLA and UNITA became allies of the new invaders.

From that moment on, the IMT's position of giving military and not political support to the MPLA became correct, because the MPLA was the movement that was struggling with arms in hand to defend Angola against

the military-colonialist united front of the United States, 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 that stage of the Angolan 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.

The Crisis of the IMT in Spain

We have already seen that the LCR's present leadership, with total honesty, recognizes that when the two organizations unified, both were in crisis. What the comrades unfortunately do not say to complete their analysis is that the crisis was the consequence of the orientation of the United Secretariat and the Tenth World Congress.

In the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" we pointed out that the IMT's European document for the Tenth World Congress did not mention Spain or Portugal. They were apparently viewed as coming under the generalities of the famous 10 vanguardist and ultraleftist points of its program.

The IMT's European resolution for the Eleventh World Congress, which was approved and published in 1976 and then set aside as a nonexistent, historic document, recognized, as the documents of the LTF and the Argentine PST had maintained, that the Spanish masses had been 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..."²⁴

And with regard to this description we said: "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 have 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."²⁵

And we gave the following characterization of what was occurring in Spain and about the future of the work of the comrades oriented by the IMT and the SWP leadership:

"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."²⁶

The consequence of all this can be seen: the crisis of the Spanish section.

The SWP and the LTF Defend the Trotskyist Program

The above subtitle in the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" headed the analysis of the policy they had had regarding Portugal.

"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 will 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."²⁷

Footnotes to Chapter II

1. "Declaration of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency," IIDB, Vol X, No. 3, March 1973, p. 3.
2. "The New Situation in the Fourth International, A Statement by the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction," IIDB, Vol. X, No. 15, October 1973, p. 11.
3. Letter from Joseph Hansen to Bala Tampoe, February 1973.
4. "Preliminary Report to New York Caucus of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction on Fourth World Congress Since Reunification (Tenth World Congress)," by Joseph Hansen, SWP Internal Information Bulletin, April 1974, No. 4 in 1974.
5. "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe (Draft Theses submitted to the 10th World

Congress—4th Since Unification), by the United Secretariat, IIDB, Vol IX, No. 5, November 1972, p. 14.

6. "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, IIDB, Vol. X, No. 3, March 1973, p. 12.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

8. "The Building of Revolutionary Parties. . .," p. 17.

9. "A Criticism. . .," p. 16.

10. "A Scandalous Document—A Reply to Germain," by Nahuel Moreno, IIDB, Vol XI, No. 4, January 1974, p. 62.

11. "Respuesta a la Declaración de la Tendencia Bolshe-
vique," CDI, Mexican PRT, No. 3, p. 8.

12. "Draft Political Resolution," submitted by the IEC
Majority Tendency, IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, October 1973, p.
16.

13. "The Building of Revolutionary Parties. . .," p. 20.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

18. "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," p. 7.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

20. "The Building of Revolutionary Parties. . .," p. 17

21. "A Scandalous Document. . .," p. 58.

22. "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," p. 10.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

24. "Draft Theses on Tactics of the Fourth International
in Capitalist Europe," IIDB, Vol 13, No. 3, November 1976,
p. 5.

25. "Declaration of Bolshevik Tendency," p. 8.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

CHAPTER III

TOWARD THE FORMATION OF THE UNPRINCIPLED BLOC

As the Portuguese revolution was unfolding, accompanied like a shadow by the war for the national liberation of Angola, the tensions within our International were increasing. The crisis of the IMT was deepening and the crisis of the LTF was beginning. At the same time, the alignment of groups and parties that would lead to the foundation of the Bolshevik Tendency in August 1976 had begun to be consolidated.

This whole process began at the end of 1975, developed during 1976, and was concretized in 1977. During this period the prior tendencies disappeared, and the unprincipled front made up of the leadership of the SWP and leaders of the ex-IMT, which now leads the International, arose. By the end of 1977 we find that there is a qualitatively new situation. In intransigent opposition to this leadership, its methods, and its politics is the Bolshevik Tendency.

The Crisis in the LTF

As the Portuguese revolution was developing, the SWP was changing its initial, correct position. That position was to develop the embryos of dual power in order to transform them into soviets, in combination with democratic slogans such as "Constituent Assembly," "freedom of press," "Against the MFA government," "CP-SP united front and government." The IMT refused to raise these last slogans.

The change in the SWP's policy was codified in a document entitled "Key Issues of the Portuguese Revolution," which it submitted for a vote in the LTF. This document dropped the demands for the development and centralization of the demonstrations and the embryonic organs of dual power—the land and factory occupations, the workers and soldiers committees, etc.—and all the transitional and revolutionary slogans in favor of an exclusively democratic program.

The theoretical basis for this reformist policy and program was expressed in Comrade Novack's book en-

titled *Democracy and Revolution*, in which he maintains that the "pivot" of the revolutionary program in the imperialist countries is "to protect democratic rights and extend them."¹ [See footnotes at end of Chapter III.]

This goes against the traditional Trotskyist position, expressed in the Transitional Program, that "the formulas of democracy (freedom of press, the right to unionize, etc.) mean for us only incidental or episodic slogans in the independent movement of the proletariat. . . ."² [Emphasis added.]

The SWP's abandonment of the Trotskyist policy continued to deepen and reached extremely serious proportions in Angola. We should remember that when the Portuguese troops withdrew, the invasion by the South African Army took place, which found allies in the FNLA and UNITA nationalist movements.

The invasion was vigorously resisted by the Angolan people, led by the MPLA with Cuban aid. The SWP declared that the clash between the FNLA-UNITA, allied with the racist imperialist invader, and the MPLA, leading the Angolan people against the invasion, was a "fratricidal war" provoked by old tribal rivalries and declined to call for military support to the MPLA. As a result, in January 1976, at the height of the invasion, the SWP approved a report [by Tony Thomas] that said: "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."³ This stupid prediction, designed to support the policy of not giving military support to the MPLA, was the clear proof of the SWP's decadence.

And as we said in the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency":

"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. . . . 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."

"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 the 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. . . ."⁴

The February 1976 Meeting of the International Executive Committee

In general no one in the International refers to the IEC meeting that took place in February 1976 or gives it the importance it merits. This IEC, however, has a fundamental significance in terms of its form and content. It is the

most important meeting of the International in the entire period between the Tenth and Eleventh World Congresses.

All the contradictions of the period after the Tenth Congress were piled up in this IEC. The tactics of the International for Portugal and Angola were discussed there. In addition, that is where a group of leaders of the International formalized their split with the LTF.

In regard to Angola, Gus Horowitz, a leader of the SWP, is presently trying to defend an indefensible position. We have already provided a quote that shows what the treasonous position of the SWP was, when it said in January 1976 that if any of the nationalist groups were able to impose itself in Angola, the winner would be imperialism. Horowitz does not respond to this quote or to any of the facts that show they never militarily supported the MPLA. Nor does he explain the vote of the SWP delegation in this IEC.

Unfortunately we were never sent the tapes or minutes of this IEC, where the policy on Angola was discussed extensively, using as a base the document that the IMT had written in favor of giving military support to the MPLA against the South Africa-FNLA-UNITA front, without defending the MPLA's politics.

The leaders who broke with the LTF maintained that the IMT's tactic of military support to the MPLA had been wrong *under the Portuguese occupation* but that this tactic was now correct in the new circumstances created by the Portuguese withdrawal, the South African invasion, and the FNLA-UNITA support for that invasion. For that reason it was necessary to vote for the IMT draft, with criticisms, in order to make it clear that we supported the MPLA militarily.

Despite the pressure from the IMT and the ex-leaders of the LTF, the representatives of the SWP, in the name of their party, committed the political crime of *refusing to give military support to the MPLA*, of voting against this IMT resolution on Angola, and of maintaining that the clash between the nationalist groups was a tribal war and that the victory of the MPLA would be a victory for imperialism.

That is how the voting went at the IEC: The IMT and the nucleus of those who would later become the Bolshevik Tendency were for military support to the MPLA. The SWP and the few members of the LTF who followed it were opposed.

This produced such a scandal that at a meeting held in London after this IEC—according to reports contained in letters from members of the British LTF to the Argentine PST—a confrontation took place between Tony Thomas, who recognized that we were correct and that it was necessary to give military support to the MPLA, and Comrade Ernest Harsch, *Intercontinental Press's* specialist on Africa, who opposed this self-criticism by Comrade Tony Thomas and insisted that it was necessary to continue to refuse to give military support to the MPLA as the SWP and LTF had voted in the IEC.

Let's move on to another important thing that happened at that IEC: the split in the LTF as a result of the Portuguese revolution. The leaders who broke with the LTF "are carrying out an obligation to explain to the Fourth International the reasons that led them to vote against the proposal of the LTF on Portugal, to cease being part of the same, and to continue voting against the proposal of the majority on the Portuguese revolution."⁵

In passing it is important to again note this last part

since the fable has been spread in the International that those of us who broke with the LTF adopted the IMT's positions on Portugal, when actually it was exactly the opposite. We voted in favor of the resolution on Angola and against the one on Portugal.

Let's look at the reasons we gave for this. "The fundamental reason for this disagreement [with the LTF] 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.'"⁶

In the same letter to the IEC we said that we would not "challenge" the name of the LTF, despite being a large majority within it, "as homage to such efforts, and in recognition of the leading role of these comrades [leaders of the SWP], which resulted in such benefits for our international . . ."⁷

We said, in conclusion, that "as follows implicitly from this acknowledgment, we continue to maintain the same criticism 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'*."

This means that we continued to maintain that the IMT's position was wrong, was maximalist, and ignored democratic slogans and tasks. But this correct criticism of the IMT by the SWP and the LTF did not justify the exclusively democratic program they were putting forward or their opposition to developing the germs of dual power. We also felt that in every situation where there is a revolutionary upsurge but germs of dual power do not exist, the big task of the Trotskyists is to create them.

At this IEC plenum relations between the LTF and IMT reached such a state of tension that there was the danger of a split in the International, since the LTF demanded the implementation of certain conditions before it would accept the IEC resolutions. This led to a series of nervous negotiations among the three groups parallel to the sessions of the IEC (we already considered ourselves an embryonic tendency).

In the face of our principled attitude, Comrade Germain reported in the IEC that the IMT would enter an agreement with the embryo of the Bolshevik Tendency to save the unity of the International, because he knew our honesty.

We pointed out that we had not yet constituted ourselves into a tendency because we wanted to see how far the agreement with the IMT on Angola would develop, and whether there was a possibility of getting a European document that was not ultraleftist and would adopt the Trotskyist method and analysis. Meanwhile, we would collaborate with the IMT in order to overcome the crisis in the International.

That was the February 1976 IEC, now forgotten by all the leaders of the International except for those of us who are today part of the Bolshevik Faction. The most curious aspect of this IEC is that Comrade Hansen made the comment that the IMT and the PST(A) had initiated an

unprincipled rapprochement that was negative for the International.

The group of comrades who broke with the LTF found that the leaders of the IMT, in a very fraternal attitude, sent the draft of the document on Europe for them to make amendments. Then the IMT adopted the draft.

This draft resolution on Europe accelerated the formation of the Bolshevik Tendency since it repeated all the previous vanguardist and ultraleftist errors. The Bolshevik Tendency was founded in August 1976. Its fundamental axis was a critique of the IMT's new European document, which only repeated the Tenth World Congress resolution. We were seeing the old resolution in new garb.

The IMT's Self-Criticism on Latin America

The IMT's disaster in Latin America reached such proportions that it became impossible to continue hiding it. The disappearance, in practice, of the POR (González) in Bolivia with the Banzer coup in August 1971 was followed by the split of the Argentine section—PRT(C)-ERP—from the International at the end of 1972, and the stagnation and regression—to the point of virtual disappearance—of the various FIRs in Perú, the PO(C) in Brazil, Espartaco in Colombia. These developments forced the IMT to decide at the end of 1976 to make a self-criticism.

However, there can be no doubt that the self-criticism on Latin America does not have the slightest usefulness since:

1. By the time it was produced, seven years after the adoption of the criminal guerrillaist line, there was hardly a single Trotskyist on this continent who defended the majority orientation. Instead of being a self-criticism from which new political orientations could be drawn that would aid in the development of the Fourth International, it said "Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned."

In Latin America the growth of the International since the Ninth World Congress was achieved as a result of the efforts of the minority, which had to overcome the additional obstacle of the guerrillaist line and the International leadership's fierce campaign against the parties that rejected it.

2. The self-criticism tries to dilute the responsibility of the International leadership by placing the blame on the weakness or deviations of the national groups. This is even more serious because, from the Ninth World Congress itself, the minority presented an alternative line to that of the majority, which was the only line that permitted the development of our forces.

3. The great majority of the leaders of the IMT continued to call for, defend, and push forward the ultraleftist and vanguardist line in Europe. This line was, in the final analysis, the European extension of the guerrillaist deviation in Latin America. They say it themselves: "We fundamentally uphold the understanding of the period Europe is going through, we fundamentally uphold the analysis and the understanding of the sociopolitical phenomena that the European countries are today going through, more specifically the European countries that are going through the richest situations politically. This is what we fundamentally uphold. On this aspect I'm not going to hold a discussion. . ."⁸

In regard to the Tenth World Congress line (which, for the LTF, had been the extension of the guerrillaist deviation to Europe), the response to the "Declaration of the

Bolshevik Tendency" that was signed by a group of leaders of the ex-IMT reiterated: "However, the 'Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency' says nothing about all the previous analysis, which was central in the theses adopted by the Tenth World Congress, the validity of which has been completely confirmed by the experience of the Portuguese revolution and of the class struggle in France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, and Great Britain."⁹

In criticizing the Bolshevik Tendency, the same document asserts that the IMT correctly understood the European process in the past five years, stating: "But behind these accusations of 'workerism,' 'minimalism,' 'maximalism'—meaning a lack of understanding of the transitional program, of the precise function of transitional demands, which is specifically to serve as a bridge between the struggles and concerns of the masses and the necessity of the socialist revolution—there is a false appreciation of what has really taken place in Europe in the course of the past five years."¹⁰

4. The IMT, as the majority of the United Secretariat, draws no practical conclusion from the self-criticism. It does not conclude, for example, that it was an incapable leadership, that it should not continue at the head of the Fourth International after having maintained, for seven years, a totally wrong line that led to the deaths of hundreds of members throughout a continent.

Therefore, the only conclusion we can draw from the IMT self-criticism is the one in the LTF program, which calls for "a change in the composition of the leadership of the Fourth International to assure a majority pledged to correct the guerrilla-war orientations and its derivatives . . ."¹¹

The Dissolution of the LTF and IMT and the Formation of a New Leadership

The LTF's policy regarding the Portuguese revolution and its incorrect position concerning the national liberation movements in Africa, whose clearest expression was the policy concerning the Angolan revolution, led almost all of its forces to break with the LTF. The faction was basically reduced to the SWP.

Instead of evaluating the political errors that led it to this situation, the leadership of the SWP, to save its prestige, decided to call for the dissolution of the LTF and extended this call to the IMT itself.

In order to lead the few forces that remained in the LTF down the road of dissolution, the SWP was obliged to disregard the great majority of the programmatic bases of the faction, to revise its history, and to draw up a balance sheet that was full of falsehoods, misrepresentations, half-truths, and complete lies.

In August 1977 Comrade Jack Barnes, representing his party at the leadership committee of the LTF, outlined the new orientation. In his summary to the report "The Accomplishments of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction: A Balance Sheet," he categorically stated that "we were formed to reverse the guerrillaist turn and the strategy of armed struggle. That was what we were after."¹² This totally neglected the faction's struggle against the extension of the ultraleftist turn to Europe in its version of work around "the new mass vanguard" and, more important, the programmatic point of changing the leadership of the International.

This putting aside of fundamental points of the faction's platform is made even more explicit when, in the discus-

sion and in response to Comrades Mélan, Nemo, and Sarah, he asserted: "I agree with Comrades Nemo, Mélan, and Sarah that there are still real differences on current questions—for example, on the 'new mass vanguard' and propaganda around 'dual power is a comin',' as the comrade from Sweden explained, and certainly electoral policy as it relates to the centrist, Social Democratic, and Stalinist parties and popular-front-type coalitions."¹³

The solution that Comrade Barnes provides to these "real differences on current questions" (which are simply the IMT's application of the orientation the LTF was set up to fight) is Solomon-like: "Agreement has not yet been reached on these questions, but why can't we put aside the international tendency forms if this kind of discussion can take place in the sections, country by country? Why can't it be dealt with in international draft resolutions without prior faction discussions?"¹⁴

To bolster his policy Comrade Barnes has to disregard the class struggle, taking his examples of the LTF's activity from the Canadian LSA/LSO, the SWP of Australia, the Mexican LS, the Communist League of India, the League for Socialist Action in New Zealand, etc.

He does not make the axis of his evaluation the big political questions around which the LTF confronted the IMT, nor does he take those that led to the break-up of the LTF. He only once mentions the different positions regarding Angola and passes over the policies for Portugal and Spain.

It is this abandonment of analysis of the class struggle that allows him to say at the end of his report, putting forward a fantasy world, that "most important, we accomplished what we set out to do, which does not always happen in life. . . ." "When we vote to dissolve the faction tomorrow, we will include in our balance sheet that we knew when to form a faction and we knew when to dissolve it at the proper moment."¹⁵

One of the main objectives the LTF took on was to fight against "the extension of the guerrillaist orientation," "both geographic as well as programmatically," an extension that was systematized in the Tenth World Congress European document. The ex-IMT continued to uphold this extension through the policy adopted at the Tenth Congress, and, what is even more serious, many sections of the Fourth International continued to base their orientations on it.

This led the Spanish section to disaster in its 1977 election campaign and prevented the French section from developing a line of unity toward the large masses of the SP and CP in order to struggle for unity in the March 1978 elections.

Today, rereading the objectives that the LTF proposed, we have to ask Comrade Barnes: Were we successful in winning "resumption by the leading bodies of the Fourth International of the method outlined in the Transitional Program to solve the problems we face in bidding for leadership of the proletariat in the class struggle"?

Were we successful in our goal of "reaffirming the basic program, tradition, and practices of the Fourth International as they stood up to the time of the Third World Congress Since Reunification (Ninth World Congress), that is, specifically, of commitment to the Leninist strategy of building a combat party"?¹⁶

Were we able to achieve "a change in the composition of the leadership of the Fourth International"? Has "the general lines of 'The Underlying Differences in Method,'

by Joseph Hansen" already been adopted?

Or, rather, have we abandoned the LTF's program?

A few months before the dissolution of the LTF, after the Self-Criticism on Latin America, the IMT had begun to redefine its political platform. The redefinition showed categorically that the IMT did not feel that the factional struggle had culminated with the self-criticism since they continued to raise the other aspects of the Tenth World Congress policy that the LTF had been organized against.

In this platform the IMT noted, regarding the differences with the LTF: "In face of each successive revolutionary crisis since the Tenth World Congress the LTF has made wrong prognoses and analyses and has proposed a line of action which would have been a political disaster for our movement if it had won a majority in the International."¹⁷

When the IMT comrades heard Comrade Barnes's report they discovered a different road for continuing to hide their crisis and remain in the leadership. Seven years of disasters and of tremendous factional struggle, in which they had lost all influence in one continent and where their influence was beginning to rapidly deteriorate in others, was already too much. The IMT had to present a new vision to the whole rank and file. It had to try to instill new spirit and continue "running the store." They decided to keep the written draft platform in the bag, they decided to put aside the statement that "the IMT stands for the dissolution of all tendencies at the earliest possible moment, even before the Eleventh World Congress, if it appears clearly that agreement exists on the general political line of the main documents for this congress."¹⁸ They chose to declare that the previous political documents were historic, leaving the International stripped bare, without any political orientation.

The leaderships of the IMT and the LTF then consummated a marriage of convenience. The IMT continued to put forward the entire policy of the Tenth World Congress regarding Europe and noted that "the Leninist Trotskyist Faction, which the founders of the Bolshevik Tendency were a part of since its inception, crumbled under the hammer blows of the Portuguese revolution, of the victory of the Vietnamese revolution, of the Angolan revolution, and of the revolutionary process in Spain."¹⁹

But the IMT accepted Barnes's declaration in favor of a simple solution, without the intermediary of any accord, any explanation, or any document. Its only document came later, criticizing the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency." The most widely heard explanation in the International was a curious application of fashionable ecological concepts to the internal life of our International:

"we dissolved in order to create a new climate within the International."

This is how the present leadership of the International arose. An unprincipled bloc, without prior analysis of the immediate past of the factional struggles in our International, without a base and without a common political strategy. The union was achieved through organizational and administrative compromises and one large point they held in common: the fight against the Bolshevik Tendency, which had given correct responses to the problems of the class struggle, in the face of which both the IMT and the LTF, following its breakup, had demonstrated their total incapacity.

Footnotes to Chapter III

1. George Novack, *Democracy and Revolution* (Pathfinder Press, 1971), p. 217.
2. "Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International," in *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution* (Pathfinder Press, 1973), p. 101.
3. "Angola: Behind the Civil War," report by Tony Thomas, approved by the SWP National Committee, January 3, 1976. Printed in the *Militant*, January 23, 1976, p. 17.
4. "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," pp. 27-28.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Report by Riel to the Central Committee meeting of the Colombian PST, December 9, 1977. In *Boletín de Polémica Internacional*, No. 12, Bogotá, 1978, pp. 22-23.
9. "Respuesta a la Declaración de la TB," *op cit.*, p. 3. Emphasis added.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
11. "The Accomplishments of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction: A Balance Sheet," by Jack Barnes. In *IIDB*, Vol. XIV, No. 8, September 1977, p. 33.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
16. "The New Situation in the Fourth International," A Statement by the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction. *IIDB*, Vol. X, No. 15, October 1973. Points 5 and 8, p. 11.
17. "Declaration of the International Majority Tendency," *IIDB*, Vol. XIV, No. 7, September 1977, p. 5.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
19. "Respuesta a la Declaración de la Tendencia Bolsé- vique," *CDI*, Mexican PRT, No. 3, p. 2.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST DOCUMENTS

As a result of the decline of the Portuguese revolution and the channeling of the Spanish revolution, the course of the class struggle in Europe has led to the disappearance of sharp confrontational situations between classes on that continent. As a result of this, Guevarist ultraleftism and vociferous Maoism and other currents of the ultraleft were collapsing as an alternative revolutionary leadership, which led them to the point of decay, sell-out, or unending crisis.

While the ultraleft was collapsing, a new phenomenon arose, Eurocommunism. This is the phenomenon of the strongest Communist parties in Europe taking their distance from the Kremlin in order to develop closer ties with their own imperialism. These two phenomena had an enormous impact on the course followed by the ex-IMT since the Tenth World Congress.

The ex-IMT's reference points continued to be the previously mentioned "concerns of the vanguard." But since

these concerns had made a 180 degree turn since the Tenth Congress, the IMT made a turn, arm in arm, with it.

The fad that was to replace the ultraleft is "democracy." The vanguard has changed heroes: in place of Che Guevara, Sendic, or Marighella, it now admires the dissidents in the Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union (who are deprived of "democracy").

The new vanguard has changed its address and the ex-IMT took off after it in a new and dangerous adaptation. Previously the "new far left" was situated outside the traditional mass organizations, acted "independently" of the Communist and Socialist parties and "to their left." Now, for the ex-IMT, it also encompasses militants "who remain affiliated to the SP and CP (and in some countries this portion of the broad vanguard can be a majority of it)." [See footnotes at end of Chapter IV.]

As we have seen, Eurocommunism made its appearance alongside the turn by the vanguard. Because of these two new phenomena the ex-IMT began its new stage. Before, it had bent to the ultraleftism of a predominantly student radicalized vanguard. Now, it is bending to the pressures of Eurocommunism and a trade-union and middle class vanguard, which are transmission belts for liberal ideology and the public opinion of the imperialist countries. The feelings of this vanguard are being stirred up by the demagoguery regarding "human rights" and "democracy."

This capitulation is what has made the convergence between the ex-IMT and the leaders of the SWP, i.e., the ex-LTF, possible. The leaders of the SWP had preceded the ex-IMT along the road of reflecting the liberal and democratic ideology that impregnates the masses in the imperialist countries. In the U.S. these phenomena were sharpened by decades of passivity of the workers movement and by the weak Marxist tradition.

As we already showed in the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," the leaders of the SWP had already begun to agree with the ex-IMT—although coming from opposite positions—on the role and importance of "civil liberties."

We only bring this up to show how this theoretical-political point of intersection developed. Despite this agreement, they remain an Unprincipled Bloc because they have had differences and they now differ on countless fundamental political questions, and they don't have a common action program. But the moderating of the European revolution has tempered the acrimony, transforming it from political to historical.

The point at which the two tendencies have come together is one that remains very far removed from the scenario of the class struggle. When new revolutionary situations again arise, the Bloc will explode.

This provided a basis on which the unprincipled front, which wants to continue in the leadership, was able to string together some extremely general and propagandistic points of theoretical-political agreement. These points were shaped into three resolutions: "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," "Eurocommunism: A New Stage in the Crisis of Stalinism," and the world political resolution. Therefore this bloc's first document, "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," will go down in history as the birth place of a revisionist bloc, "Eurotrotskyism."

The First Product of the Unprincipled Bloc:

A Revisionist Resolution

The first hybrid spawned by the ex-IMT-SWP bloc has

been "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." It raises the crisis of leadership of our world party to a new level. It is no longer a question of whether or not one or another policy is wrong, or whether some of them are moving toward revisionism. This document is a general theoretical-political revision of the very fundamentals of revolutionary Marxism.

Starting from a new-fangled interpretation of the Leninist-Trotskyist concept of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, it goes on to explicitly or implicitly raise questions about the theory of permanent revolution, the transitional program, and the character and role of our parties and the Fourth International.

With regard to this question of the dictatorship of the proletariat the International finds itself facing one of the most important discussions in the history of Marxism. It has the same kind of transcendental theoretical and political significance as the polemics against the revisionists that took place at the beginning of the century, against the opportunists during World War I, and the polemic that took place later, beginning with the victory of the Russian Revolution, between the Second and Third Internationals regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat and the workers revolution. It is as important as or more important than the Trotskyist polemic against Stalin's theory and program of building socialism in one country, or the polemic that developed with the anti-defensists during World War II.

Because of the transcendental importance of this discussion, and the magnitude of the questions that are raised, the Bolshevik Faction is presenting a special document on this question, the last chapter of which was approved as programmatic.

This document, which is in response to the one approved by the United Secretariat majority, dates from July 1977, when the meeting to set up the Bolshevik Faction was held. It is entitled "The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and was written by Comrade Nahuel Moreno. It must be taken as a whole, not just this final chapter.

Because that document already exists, here we will simply summarize the principal polemical points, while also warning the entire International not to be confused by the literary, futuristic, and surrealistic character of the document adopted by the United Secretariat and not to let its character lead them to underestimate its theoretical and political implications.

While there are innumerable points (practically every line) in the document that would have to be classified as revisionist, and that we would have to propose be rejected, the following are the most relevant.

A. "Dictatorship of the Proletariat." The Eurocommunist parties have expunged the expression "dictatorship of the proletariat" from their programs in order to win the sympathy of the European electorate. Since the Eurotrotskyist majority of the United Secretariat wants to continue to be revolutionary, it rushes to defend the formula.

But at the same time, because it too wants to ingratiate itself with the masses who are imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices, the majority strips the dictatorship of the proletariat of its revolutionary content.

It retains the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat," but uses it to describe a fantastic perversion, a liberal pipe dream, that has no relationship whatever with the immediate needs of the class struggle or with the experience of seventy years of proletarian dictatorships.

The United Secretariat's dictatorship of the proletariat would be governed by the following "programmatic and principled norm—unfettered political freedom"² for all the inhabitants of the country, including the counterrevolutionary parties and individuals. This is a complete revision since the Leninist norm is the opposite: "The scientific term 'dictatorship' means nothing more or less than *authority untrammelled by any laws, absolutely unrestricted by any rules whatever, and based directly on force.*"³

Lenin reiterated this position in his Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a program that Trotsky cited on this point in *The Revolution Betrayed*. In the program Lenin wrote of "limitations on freedom" that would exist until socialism is achieved: ". . . Deprivation of political rights, and all other limitations of freedom whatsoever, are necessary exclusively in the form of temporary measures. . . . In proportion as the objective possibility of the exploitation of man by man disappears, the necessity of these temporary measures will also disappear." (Quoted in *The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 263.)

And in the same work Trotsky categorically reiterates that "the revolutionary dictatorship means by its very essence strict limitations of freedom."⁴

The Bolshevik Faction vigorously defends, as more necessary than ever, the Leninist-Trotskyist definition that the dictatorship of the proletariat means *unlimited power and limitations on freedom* in view of the needs of the revolutionary process and of the defense of the dictatorship itself.

As we can see, these are clearly antagonistic positions.

B. *The Civil War.* The call to grant unlimited political "freedom" to the counterrevolutionaries becomes laughable when the United Secretariat envisions the possibility of a civil war or an armed uprising against the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the event of violent resistance and civil war, which, we might say in passing, the majority of the United Secretariat sees as an exception rather than a rule, the Eurotrotskyist dictatorship of the proletariat would not confront its enemies with hands free to exterminate them, would not call on the initiative of the masses to battle and repress them, but would be handcuffed by the most liberal penal code in history.

According to this legalistic delirium the dictatorship of the proletariat must not punish anyone who rises up in arms against it, because of "the necessity of written law and the avoidance of retroactive delinquency." This means that tomorrow if a workers revolution were to overthrow Somoza, or Pinochet, and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat, we would have to defend the lives of these dictators and their torturers and assassins against the just indignation of the masses, because there is no previous written law punishing their crimes.

Regarding Iran, at the time this platform is being written we know only of a declaration entitled "Down With the Shah," which is a mass of generalities such as "solidarize ourselves with the struggles of the Iranian masses."

Because the declaration is so general, we don't know if the present majority approves of the executions of agents of Savak, if it wants the workers to continue being armed and to develop their own initiatives even though there is no "written law" and they are applying the concept of "retroactive delinquency."

The statements in the document and the omissions in

the declarations are a complete capitulation to the standard petty-bourgeois modes of thought that want to tie up the free initiative and self-determination of the masses in strict and inviolable laws, codes, and norms. This goes against the whole theory of permanent revolution and the experience of the revolutions that have taken place in history.

C. *Abandonment of the Trotskyist program for the USSR.* By calling for "unfettered political freedom" the United Secretariat makes a complete revision of our traditional program of political revolution for the USSR. We believe that there should only be freedom for those parties that the workers, in the majority, vote to certify as Soviet parties.

This means that there will be parties with political freedom and parties without. This position has political and social significance because the principal programmatic point of the political revolution is that it is carried out against a sector of the working class and peasantry—the aristocracy of the working-class and of the Kolkhozes (collective farms).

Therefore, we begin by calling for the expulsion of a sector of the working class and peasantry, their aristocracy, from the new governing bodies, the revolutionary soviets. How can we offer these social sectors "unfettered political freedom" if we are going to persecute and expel them? The resolution says nothing about this.

Instead it implicitly asserts the opposite: everyone, including the bureaucracy and the aristocracy of the working class and kolkhozes, will have the same rights as any inhabitant of the country to form their own parties, and the same for every member of the soviet elected as a delegate, without there being the possibility to keep them out through a majority vote of the workers movement.

Against this revisionist movement the BF continues to defend the traditional Trotskyist program of expelling the aristocracy of the working class and kolkhozes from the revolutionary soviets; legal determination through a majority vote by the workers of which parties will be recognized as Soviet parties, meaning revolutionary parties, meaning sworn enemies of the bureaucracy and the workers aristocracy.

D. *Ignoring imperialism.* In the entire resolution imperialism is never mentioned. To be more precise, it is mentioned in two places: Once in recalling that Stalinism denigrated its adversaries by denouncing them as agents as imperialism, and once to note that Marx died before imperialism arose.

But in the whole resolution it never says that imperialism is the decisive factor in the world counterrevolution and, therefore, is the main enemy of any proletarian dictatorship. This complete silence is one more expression of what the Argentine PST has been fighting against for years.

The IMT comrades, and the SWP itself, habitually ignore the phenomenon of imperialism and are incapable of systematically denouncing it. This capitulation, which we were already warning about at the Tenth World Congress, is now crystallized in this resolution.

E. *Professorial repetition of Marx's predictions.* Because they ignore imperialism, they do not notice an important change that has taken place. As a result of the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established in isolated and backward countries, it will not have just a single stage, as the founders of Marxism believed. Rather

than being simply the stage of construction of socialism, today the dictatorship of the proletariat has two clearly defined stages.

What we are now seeing is the first stage, which is characterized by the confrontation with imperialism, until imperialism has been definitively defeated.

The second stage will be the stage of socialist construction. This does not mean that elements of the two stages are not combined in this first stage, but its basic feature is the political-military confrontation with imperialism.

The second stage will arise when imperialism has been overthrown on a world scale and the new regime has attained a level of development of the productive forces that is higher than that of imperialism. That is when the definitive construction of socialism will take place.

F. *Forgetting the character of democracy in the Western countries.* The resolution contrasts bourgeois democracy with proletarian democracy and also with what exists in the deformed or degenerated workers states. But it never points out that the bourgeois democracy of the Western countries has an imperialist character, is part of a world system, where freedoms for the metropolitan countries are based on totalitarian regimes and brutal exploitation of the colonial and semicolonial masses. It is democracy for a working-class or bourgeois aristocracy, and exploitation, totalitarianism, and lack of democracy for the colonial slaves.

We define this kind of democracy as imperialist because it is rooted in the profits that are extracted from the colonial countries.

Not recognizing these facts leads to proimperialist monstrosities like the assertion that the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions did not broaden proletarian democracy. "It is true that in some semicolonial countries . . . the overthrow of capitalism was accomplished without the flowering of workers' democracy (China and Vietnam being two outstanding examples)."⁵

In another part of the document it says that compared to the workers states there is more democracy in the Western bourgeois societies because the single-party regime " . . . would, in fact, *restrict and not extend* the democratic rights of the proletariat compared to those enjoyed under bourgeois democracy."⁶

The resolution's apology for the regimes of Chiang Kai-shek and the French and U.S. occupation of Vietnam, saying that there was as much or more workers democracy under those regimes as under the dictatorships of the proletariat in those countries, and its excessive praise for bourgeois democracy in the imperialist countries, to the point of saying that there are more rights there than in the workers states, is a total and absolute capitulation to bourgeois public opinion in the Western countries.

The Bolshevik Faction maintains that the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions have collosally extended proletarian democracy in comparison to the regimes of Chiang Kai-shek in China and the French and U.S. occupation in Vietnam. We maintain that in any workers state there are a million times more democratic rights than in the home countries of the imperialist regimes, and we denounce this campaign of denigration against the workers states.

Regardless of how bureaucratic and totalitarian the workers states are, they represent a big advance for proletarian democracy and for the democratic rights of the workers. The United Secretariat confuses formal "democratic rights" (freedom of speech and press) with class

rights: the right to work, to guaranteed wages and vacations, expropriation of the role and property of the bourgeoisie.

G. *Incorrect definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.* The resolution defines the dictatorship of the proletariat on the basis of superstructural factors rather than giving it a class definition. "Thus, the dictatorship of the proletariat is nothing other than a workers democracy."⁷

Using a political form—workers democracy—to define the dictatorship of the proletariat means capitulating to bourgeois methodology. It is necessary to define the dictatorship of the proletariat through class factors, such as the *state superstructure of the workers states, meaning the non-capitalist productive relations*. This means that there can be many political forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It could be, for example, bonapartist, Thermidorian, or revolutionary soviet democracy.

This is one of the great theoretical acquisitions of Trotskyism. It allows us to understand the content of these political forms. So far in this century, there have been two general types of dictatorship of the proletariat: one revolutionary and the others bureaucratic.

The only revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat we have seen was that of Lenin and Trotsky. It was based on the most exploited and concentrated sectors of the proletariat and on their on-going mobilization. Its objective was the world revolution.

All the others we have seen are dictatorships of the bureaucrats and the aristocracy of labor, which are characterized by being based on the privileged sectors of the proletariat and by a policy of building socialism in one country, a nationalist and reformist policy rather than a policy of revolutionary mobilization of the proletariat to overthrow imperialism on a world scale.

H. *Lack of foresight and lack of a line for wars between workers states.* This nonrecognition of the definition of a dictatorship of the proletariat and the existence of the bureaucratic dictatorships has led the United Secretariat to ignore one of the biggest dangers facing the world proletariat: wars between workers states. This is the newest and one of the most important theoretical-political questions to arise since the Second World War. In July 1978 the Bolshevik Faction made this analysis and put forward a program to respond to it. The United Secretariat was not even aware that the problem could exist and therefore has said nothing.

We maintain that we should defend the weaker workers states against any invasion from the stronger ones. At the same time we are against any attack on one workers state by another. Instead we raise the slogan of a united front of the workers states to struggle against imperialism.

As a result of ignoring the question, the United Secretariat leaves the International without a program for this key situation. And the most serious problem of all is that the United Secretariat refuses to raise one of the most important slogans for the present historical period: a federation of the existing workers states as the only historic and revolutionary response to the confrontations between the workers states and imperialism's maneuvers.

I. *The concept of the revolutionary party and the International is abandoned.* The United Secretariat denies the leading role of the revolutionary party in the workers

revolution, as well as its role in the civil war. That role is bestowed upon the soviets and soviet parties of undefined character. Along with this they also abandon the concept of what a revolutionary international should be.

This revision has reached such a degree that the resolution says nothing about the role of the Fourth International in future revolutionary dictatorships. It isn't even mentioned. Totally consistent with its ignorance of what a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat should be, and with its abandonment of the importance of the subjective factor—the party—the United Secretariat does not point out that the character of the dictatorship, whether it will be revolutionary or bureaucratic, will be determined by the political party that takes power.

If the party is revolutionary, it will be a revolutionary dictatorship and will try to extend the revolution on a world scale. If it is bureaucratic, it will fight for "socialism in one country."

Our propositions also form a consistent whole. Therefore we believe that the role of the Fourth International and its national sections will be basic, because this is the only way to achieve revolutionary dictatorships that apply the program of the Permanent Revolution.

J. A populist dictatorship. As a result of all of the above, the United Secretariat no longer struggles for a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, a dictatorship that provides democracy for the revolutionaries and is based on revolutionary soviets. Instead it calls for a populist-type dictatorship, in which the entire population participates, including the counterrevolutionaries, and which gives freedoms to everyone, struggles against no one, but builds socialism and invites everyone to help build it.

More than ever we put forward the Trotskyist program: for the victory of a revolutionary dictatorship that would serve to develop the international socialist revolution and liquidate the counterrevolution.

A False Characterization of Eurocommunism and An Opportunist Policy Regarding It

The United Secretariat Majority's capitulation before imperialist and democratic public opinion was most spectacularly expressed in Comrade Mandel's statement to *Topo Viejo*.

While it is true that the statements were repudiated by the United Secretariat and while the Secretariat claimed it was amazed at the Bolshevik Tendency, saying that Comrade Moreno had acted irresponsibly in taking these declarations as the truth, the fact is that in the BT's archives we have the tapes that show that Mandel's comments were scrupulously reproduced by *Topo Viejo* magazine. But we will have the opportunity to return to this question when we discuss the moral crisis of our International.

The important thing is to note that these declarations, endorsed by the United Secretariat, were preparing our International for capitulation to Eurocommunism, pointing to it as a phenomenon whose future development was not known, and could be transformed into a revolutionary Marxist current. In the face of the Bolshevik Tendency's attack on this interview the United Secretariat, and particularly Comrade Mandel, were obliged to camouflage their positions, issuing a resolution to be presented in the discussions with the OCRFI [Organizing Committee for

the Reconstruction of the Fourth International] which attempts to incorporate some of the concepts of our denunciation in order to better conceal this capitulation.

That is why it says things such as ". . . the Communist parties' increasing integration into the bourgeois state and economic institutions."⁸ "We reject any illusion that, as a result of the Eurocommunist trend, the CPs can be regenerated or can transform themselves into centrist parties"⁹ ". . . some of these [Eurocommunist] parties . . . [explicitly advocate] utilizing bourgeois parliaments for the 'gradual' building of socialism, and explicit adherence to the 'principle' of 'alternance of government' with bourgeois parties, thus leaving the capitalist state intact."¹⁰ ". . . in Italy and Spain . . . the CP leaderships endorse anti-working-class 'austerity policies.'"¹¹

But after these phrases we are returned to the main point, which is the resolution itself. Aside from these garnishes, the resolution says that Eurocommunism is a progressive phenomenon.

A. An eclectic, descriptive analysis. The United Secretariat continues to view Eurocommunism as, in the final analysis, a progressive phenomenon. The correct observations that we have just quoted are completely buried in a defense of Eurocommunism. And that is the important thing.

According to the United Secretariat, "The Fourth International sees in the development of Eurocommunism a big opening for breaking the stranglehold of Stalinism over important sectors of the mass movement, and for deepening the world crisis of Stalinism, thereby contributing to an acceleration of the processes leading up to the political revolution in the USSR and East Europe."¹²

Among the eight points of the world political resolution that refer to the characteristics of the upturn, Eurocommunism is also included: "7. Increasing interaction between the three sectors of the world revolution . . . Another example is the development of a more direct linkage between the rising political opposition in the 'people's democracies' like Poland and Czechoslovakia, the phenomenon of 'Eurocommunism' in Western Europe, and the radicalization of the workers in the imperialist countries."¹³ Such persistence leaves no room for doubt.

Although it is true that the United Secretariat also speaks of this phenomenon as a turn in the direction of social-democratization, they nevertheless stress that what is progressive and new in Eurocommunism is the "accent it places . . . on its independence with regard to the Kremlin." Nor is it of much value that they state in the resolution that the Eurocommunists are vying with the Social Democrats in the search for deeper integration into bourgeois society, if they emphasize that the most important thing is their criticisms "of the worst repressive features of the bureaucratic dictatorships,"¹⁴ which they attribute to the result of the antibureaucratic pressure of the European proletariat and its consciousness in favor of workers democracy.

The world political resolution says: "The latest phase in the crisis of world Stalinism, marked by the appearance of so-called Eurocommunism, brings in fresh stimulation from abroad conducive to deepening the political challenge to bureaucratic rule."¹⁵

B. From servility toward the Kremlin to servility to their own bourgeoisies. The characterization that Eurocommunism plays a progressive role because it is "conducive to deepening the political challenge to bureaucratic rule," is

false because it deals with less important aspects of Eurocommunism.

The United Secretariat's entire analysis takes world Stalinism centered in the Kremlin as its point of reference. From this point of view it would be correct. But the reference point is wrong. It is not a question of the relations of the Italian or French or Spanish CPs with Moscow, which are an aspect of the phenomenon of Eurocommunism; it is a question of the relations of the Italian CP with Rome, of the French CP with Paris, of the Spanish CP with Madrid, i.e., the relations of each CP with its own imperialist bourgeoisie.

Seen from this angle, which is the basic one, Eurocommunism shows no progressive facet, unless you want to consider the Moncloa Pact, the Historic Compromise, or the Barre Plan, progressive.

The deep significance, the characteristic and essential feature of Eurocommunism is that the CPs, which were previously subordinated to the Kremlin bureaucracy, are now subordinating themselves to their imperialist bourgeoisies. It flows from this that the only correct definition is that Eurocommunism is the dynamic leading the CPs to convert themselves from servants of the Kremlin into servants of their imperialist bourgeoisie.

There is nothing progressive in this process. It is true that within this dynamic there are aspects, features, contradictions that the Trotskyists can and should pick up on and make use of. But that is true in any development, however negative it might be.

For example, the leftwing of the Second International was able to use and profit from the crisis that developed in the Social Democratic parties when, during the First World War, they supported their imperialist governments and entered into and became part of these governments in the postwar period. But as a phenomenon the betrayal of the Social Democratic parties had nothing progressive about it. It was absolutely negative and reactionary.

And just because the German Social Democrats made very good criticisms of Tsarism and of the Russian Social Democrats who supported it, that didn't make German Social Democracy any less negative, since the reference point has to be the policy regarding your own government and bourgeoisie.

The two big postwar crises of Stalinism—the first being the splits of the Yugoslav and Chinese CPs, and now Eurocommunism—reflect the break up of Stalinism as an international current into national Stalinisms, a process that is engendered by the centrifugal forces generated by the logic of class collaboration.

But the centrifical nationalist tendencies are temporarily slowing the crisis of national Stalinism. They are accelerating the crisis of Stalinism as an international current, but they are consolidating the national parties, permitting them to better adapt themselves to the national mass movements, the better to then betray them.

When the resolution mentions "the political challenge to bureaucratic rule," we assume this refers to Moscow's bureaucratic domination, because Eurocommunism does not question the Italian CP's "bureaucratic rule" over the Italian trade unions and proletariat, nor the French CP's "bureaucratic rule" over the French proletariat. In fact their greater links to the national mass movements are the imperialist governments allow them to hold back the "challenge to bureaucratic rule." The United Secretariat does not take these decisive aspects into account.

C. *An opportunist policy.* The United Secretariat's false analysis, whereby it looks at the Eurocommunist phenomenon essentially as it refers to the world political apparatus dominated by the Kremlin bureaucracy leads the United Secretariat to a totally incorrect political program.

The United Secretariat proposes a program for "the intervention of the revolutionary Marxists." This program "must be centered" on nine points, seven of which deal with propaganda and discussion on general and historical themes.

None of these points speak of "joint activity against the austerity plans," or "denunciations of their being agents of the national imperialist bourgeoisies." Instead they talk of "a clear explanation of the revisionist character," "systematic counterposing of our positions," "a clear explanation of the treacherous, class-collaborationist overall strategy" which "includes taking up and answering the various arguments and rationalizations put forward to justify their line," "reaffirmation" that the denial that the socialist revolution is on the agenda is "intimately related to the theory of 'socialism in one country,'" "a systematic campaign to confront the Eurocommunist bureaucrats. . .," "a critic of the insufficient and largely apologetic character of the Eurocommunists' reappraisal of Stalin."

In the United Secretariat program there is not a single point that helps to unmask the Eurocommunist parties' capitulation to their imperialist governments. The only two points dealing with action have nothing to do with the European capitalist governments' policy of superexploitation and the Eurocommunist support for this policy.

The two points on action say the following: "A campaign to bring about the systematic participation of the Eurocommunist parties, leaders, and cadres in united-front campaigns for the defense of all victims of bureaucratic repression in the USSR and the 'people's democracies.' A campaign to draw the Eurocommunist parties into initiatives that enable open, public relations to exist between the workers movement in the West and socialist oppositionists in the East and that thereby *actively* assist the battle for political rights for oppositionists in Eastern Europe."¹⁶ "A systematic campaign to mobilize Eurocommunists on behalf of full rehabilitation of Trotsky and his followers. . . ."¹⁷

The axis of our policy must be different from what the United Secretariat proposes, which is a front that struggles for political rights in Eastern Europe. This resolution has been responsible for the sad role played by the Spanish LCR. When they were invited by Carrillo to appear before the Ninth Congress of the Spanish CP—in order to enhance the credibility of Carrillo's farcical attempt to portray himself as a "democrat"—the comrades called for the rehabilitation of Trotsky, Nin, and Bukharin but "forgot" to mention the Moncloa Pact, the austerity plan, and did not call on the CP to form a united front to fight against it. It would be difficult to do a bigger favor to Spanish Stalinism.

We are opposed to this lamentable operation, whose origins are in the United Secretariat resolution. We are not opposed to fighting together with the Eurocommunists for the rehabilitation of Trotsky or for the political rights of the members of the opposition in the USSR and other workers states.

But the axis of our policy, nine-tenths of what we say to a Eurocommunist audience, must involve constant and

implacable criticism of the Barre plans, the Moncloa pacts, historic compromises, and other anti-working-class plans of the imperialist bourgeoisies, which count on the endorsement, or at least the benevolent toleration, of the Carrillos, Berlinguers, and Marchaises.

We must call upon the working-class Communists to fight against those plans. When we call for the rehabilitation of Trotsky but do not denounce the Moncloa Pact, we are using the historic figure of our leader to renounce his politics. Our policy has to be implacable struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie of our own country, which is the main enemy of the workers, and against the sell-out leaders who are their lackeys.

This mania for confronting the Eurocommunists with discussions rather than with a united-front policy to fight the austerity plans that they are supporting is a constant. When the ex-IMT leaders published their "Reply to the Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" in mid-1978, they said: "We can use quotes from Elleinstein, Carrillo, Azcárate and other Eurocommunist leaders to hit the CP cadres who are most tied in to Moscow and force them to reflect on the nature of Stalinism. And using all the sermons on 'pluralism' by the Eurocommunist leaders, we can bolster our struggle for workers democracy within the unions controlled by the CPs, which simultaneously serves to develop the class struggle, the political clarification within the organized workers movement, and the differentiation within the CPs themselves."¹⁸

This has led the present leaders of the United Secretariat majority to propose that our sections become distributors of quotes by Carrillo in order to cause the Communist militants to "reflect." This turns us into unpaid clowns in the Eurocommunist circus, which makes a lot of noise about the "Polish and Russian" workers in order to draw attention away from the Spanish and Italian workers.

In our view the only way to fight the Eurocommunists and their Social Democratic pals is to push forward the struggle against the austerity plans and to confront imperialism's democratic counterrevolution. The only way we will be able to introduce differentiations and push forward class-struggle currents within Eurocommunism is by making concrete proposals to workers assemblies concerning the plans of their own imperialism for superexploitation, and concrete proposals concerning democratic and anti-imperialist struggles against their own metropolitan bourgeoisie.

We are talking about providing impetus to struggles and

introducing a sharp dividing line between those who favor the austerity plans, who favor the idea of the working class making sacrifices so that the bourgeoisie can overcome its problems, and those who favor intransigent struggle to deepen the mobilizations against the austerity plans. On another level it means drawing a line between those who are for capitulation to their own bourgeoisie and the stabilization of parliamentary democracy, and those who are for consistent struggle for civil liberties and against their own imperialism and its plans for superexploitation.

If, at the CP convention, the Spanish LCR comrades had proposed campaigns of this type instead of limiting themselves to defending Nin and Trotsky, if they had called for a struggle against the Moncloa Pact, Carrillo surely would not have applauded them. But many of the working-class Communist delegates would have come to reflect about the "united front the working class needs" to confront its own imperialism and its plans for superexploitation.

Footnotes to Chapter IV

1. "Respuesta a la Declaración de la Tendencia Bolshévique," *op. cit.*, p. 8.
2. "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," *Intercontinental Press*, July 25, 1977, p. 871.
3. V.I. Lenin, "A Contribution to the History of the Question of Dictatorship," in *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 353.
4. Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, Pathfinder Press, 1972, p. 276.
5. "Socialist Democracy . . .," p. 868
6. *Ibid.*, p. 867.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 864.
8. "Eurocommunism: A New Stage in the Crisis of Stalinism," Statement of the United Secretariat, p. 9.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
13. "The World Situation and the Tasks of the Fourth International," IIDB, Vol. XV, No. 5, July 1978, p. 3.
14. "Eurocommunism . . .," p. 6.
15. "The World Situation . . .," p. 17.
16. "Eurocommunism . . .," p. 12.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
18. "Respuesta a . . .," p. 9.

CHAPTER V

A TRIUMPHALIST ANALYSIS AND FOURTEEN USELESS SUGGESTIONS

Today in our International there are two clearly differentiated analyses and programs regarding the situation of the class struggle on a world scale: one by the United Secretariat and the other by the Bolshevik Faction. As the Eleventh World Congress draws near, and given the importance of the congress, all the militants should study the analyses and programs and compare them with reality. For Marxists this is the only criterion of truth, and

the future of our International depends upon it.

Any inhabitant of this planet who is even mildly up-to-date on world events knows that in 1979—the year the Eleventh World Congress will take place—the two most spectacular events have been the great Iranian revolution, and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. These two events, and others less spectacular, are a wonderful test to see which analysis and program has been correct.

Any Marxist analysis helps if it predicts events. The rank-and-file comrades in our International should carefully read the United Secretariat and Bolshevik Faction documents to determine which of them theoretically predicted the possibility that a great revolution would take place outside Europe and that there could be a war between workers states, such as the invasion of Vietnam by China, and which of the two resolutions has put forward a correct program to respond to these phenomena.

Of the documents written by the United Secretariat, we will primarily examine the World Political Resolution, since that is where the programmatic points should be. But to be fair, our analysis will also consider "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," and the document dealing with Eurocommunism, since some points that are not in the political resolution are dealt with in these others. These three together give a more complete idea of the positions.

1. A Eurocentric, Onesided, and Triumphalist Analysis

In all of the documents, the United Secretariat's analysis focuses on Europe. It maintains that the axis of the revolution is continuing to shift from the colonial and semicolonial countries toward that continent. This process of return from the periphery toward the center of the capitalist world (especially Europe) is accompanied by a presentation of the world situation as a sum of catastrophic crises for the bourgeois and bureaucratic systems and an ascending trajectory for the revolution.

In their brief introduction to the World Political Resolution they summarize the "most important developments in the world political situation since the 1974 World Congress of the Fourth International."¹ [See footnotes at end of Chapter V.] All the developments described are positive or in the process of becoming so.

In line with this triumphalist panoramic view, the next four sections deal with four crises that are closely related to each other: "The Crisis of Capitalism and the Prospects for Socialist Revolution"; "The Crisis of the International Imperialist System and the Prospects of the Colonial Revolution"; "The Crisis of the Bureaucratic Castes and the Prospects of Political Revolution"; "The Crisis of the Class-Collaborationist Labor Bureaucracies."²

Conclusion: the enemies of the world proletariat—imperialism and the bureaucracy—are going from bad to worse economically and politically as a result of the rise of the workers movement and its resistance to the plans for exploitation, the generalization of the anti-bureaucratic consciousness against class-conciliationism, and the continuing repercussions of the victory of Vietnam.

The United Secretariat's analysis points to obvious facts; the crises it deals with are real. But in spite of this its analysis is radically false. Why is that? It is false because they have left out all the negative crises, including the most important one, the crisis of the revolutionary leadership of the proletariat.

We think that the present world situation is the fullest expression of the contradiction between the objective possibilities of the revolution and the subjective conditions. The crisis of leadership of the proletariat is sharper than any of the positive crises pointed to. And it becomes even sharper in view of the deepening of the revolutionary situation, which progresses at a geometric rate while we grow and become stronger at an arithmetic rate, assum-

ing we have not gone into a crisis or relative stagnation as is the case in Portugal, Spain, or France.

Only Trotskyism can resolve this crisis of leadership, but because of its weakness it too is far from being able to achieve this. Therefore we face a gap between the objective opportunities engendered by the upsurge and the subjective conditions of leadership, which at present prevent these opportunities from being resolved through victorious proletarian revolution.

This is an old phenomenon. It has been the case for decades. But it is now taking on a new dimension: the world crisis of proletarian leadership is now sharpening more than ever.

This explains why there have been great revolutionary upsurges and crises but also enormous room for the imperialist counterrevolution to act. This maneuvering room explains why the counterrevolution has not as yet had to be expressed through bonapartist or fascist forms. Instead it is using bourgeois democracy, avoiding this kind of frontal clash with the masses.

This has been especially easy to do in Europe and in the other imperialist countries in general, where imperialism can count on the aid of the big bureaucratic apparatuses that can control the workers movement.

Today bourgeois democracy is the best political alternative for the exploiters and imperialism due to a combination of two factors. The first factor is that the enormous wealth accumulated by the imperialist countries has allowed them to confront the economic crisis that began in 1974 without brutally increasing the rate of exploitation of the backward countries. The second factor is the fear that a bonapartist or fascist coup could provoke a reaction by the mass movement, which could bring about a revolutionary situation such as in Portugal.

The second negative crisis is that in a whole series of countries the workers are accepting imperialism's plans for "austerity" and superexploitation. These plans are being imposed "democratically," with the direct or covert support of the workers bureaucracy. The progress imperialism has been able to make in this regard can be seen in the fact that it was able to dismantle the Portuguese revolution and moderate the upsurge in Spain, thanks to the collaboration of the Socialists and Communists.

In Portugal the measures imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the paring away of the gains of the revolution were imposed with the support of the Social Democrats. In Spain the Socialists and Communists justified the Moncloa Pact as a defensive measure of "Spanish democracy." By raising the profit rate, the Moncloa pact has made possible a relative amelioration of the crisis. The CP in Italy has used similar pretexts to justify its bloc with the Christian Democrats.

The formula of combining formal democracy with economic measures to increase the rate of exploitation has been applied not just in the imperialist countries. This happens in Latin America, although with more problems and less success. It has already been concretized in the "democratization" in the Dominican Republic; in the elections in Peru at a time when that country is going through the most ferocious starvation austerity plan in its history; in the elections in Ecuador; in the future elections in Bolivia; in the legalization of the left in Mexico, also combined with a severe austerity plan; and finally in the pressures on the dictatorships in the Southern Cone to get

them to carry out preventive institutionalization.

The demagogy regarding "democracy" and "human rights" as a response to the upsurge also allows imperialism to compare itself advantageously to the ruling bureaucracies in the workers states, using the bourgeois-democratic prejudices of the Western workers and middle class.

A colossal campaign in the press, radio and television, as well as from the parliamentary, trade-union, and political rostrums is bearing down on the consciousness of millions of workers twenty-four hours a day to confuse them politically, to make them believe in the advantages of bourgeois democracy over the totalitarianism that reigns in the USSR and the other workers states, despite the growing measures to increase the level of exploitation. Eurocommunism is a part of this whole process.

The rise of Eurocommunism is very closely connected with the ever increasing chauvinist policies of each workers state, which provokes growing clashes between them and opens the possibility that the *de facto* anti-imperialist front that has always existed among the "governing bureaucracies" will break down. We see this as the third negative crisis. Imperialism has made use of this opening and is trying to hasten this break. This explains the imperialist overture toward China, in hopes of counterposing it to the USSR and Vietnam, as well as confrontations and attacks by one workers state against another.

This last phenomenon is not simply something new; it is a truly spectacular development. It signifies a catastrophic crisis in the relations between the workers states and a colossal defeat for the world proletariat. Just as the October Revolution opened the world historical epoch of the transition to socialism, war between workers states can open a terribly dangerous epoch of imperialism regaining ground.

The United Secretariat resolution is invalidated by the fact that it ignores these three negative crises: the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the working class, the crisis in the standard of living of the workers around the world, and the wars between workers states.

2. A Eurocentric Analysis: The Revolution Is Increasingly Shifting to Europe

We have already said that in addition to its being triumphalist, the United Secretariat's analysis is centered on Europe. The resolution asserts that the axis of the revolution continues to shift from the colonial and semicolonial countries toward that continent: "... the preponderant weight and impact of the class struggle in the imperialist countries upon the world revolution continues to increase—a process which began in 1968. . . . the revolutionary upheaval in Portugal in 1974-75 constituting the most striking recent example."³

The United Secretariat astonishes us. Its watch is slow. As far as the United Secretariat is concerned the year 1975 hasn't even taken place. The Portuguese revolution was, indeed, the most notable example of the upsurge of the revolution and its shift toward Europe.

But it seems that the "diplomatic" consensus does not permit the comrades of the United Secretariat majority to make an analysis of the democratic counterrevolution through which imperialism was able to turn back and control the process in Portugal. Imperialism was able to do

this thanks to the decisive weight of the Socialist and Communist bureaucracies, to our weakness and, to a lesser extent, to the policy of the ultraleft—meaning, in the final analysis, the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

In the few places where Portugal is mentioned, not a word is said about this counterrevolution. In the section dealing with the role that Schmidt, Wilson, and Callaghan played, Soares is called "the main Judas goat in 'restoring law and order' in Portugal and a stable apparatus to enforce it . . ."⁴

In another part of the draft, "the results of the November 1975 events in Portugal" are mentioned, but only to minimize their importance. It is given as an example that in the present stage the imperialist bourgeoisie has not been able to inflict a "single decisive or even large-scale defeat" on the working class.⁵

Unfortunately things are not as the United Secretariat says they are. While European imperialism and the imperialist bourgeoisie have not inflicted a historic, definitive defeat on the Portuguese working class, it is also true that imperialism won an important victory in turning the process back, since Portugal is no longer in a revolutionary situation, but is rather in an ebb.

The ebb of the Portuguese working class has moderated the entire European revolutionary upswing, and the result of this has been that the axis of the revolution has once again swung back to the colonial and semicolonial countries. That is why we see that now the highest point of the world mass upsurge can be found in Iran, and there are two other important centers in Peru and Nicaragua. Africa also remains a revolutionary center.

The United Secretariat cannot say that it is giving the necessary emphasis to Peru in the draft, which mentions "a rebirth of the mass movement, especially in Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru . . ."⁶ Iran is dealt with in fourteen lines where it says that the struggle "is creating favorable conditions for an upheaval which, if it succeeds in overthrowing the hated shah, will accelerate the spread of revolutionary upheavals throughout the Middle East."⁷ Nicaragua is not even mentioned.

In contrast to this analysis, the November 1976 "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" said: ". . . the upsurge in the colonial and dependent countries is continuing and deepening, the axis being Africa, and, to a lesser extent, the Middle East."⁸ "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."⁹

In the criticism of the World Political Resolution made by the July 1978 conference of the Bolshevik Tendency, and adopted by that conference, it said that "the process [referring to the analysis made by the World Political Resolution] is linear. Reality is not. The phenomenon is changeable, very changeable.

"Europe three years ago may have been the epicenter of revolutionary activity. It was in the midst of the Portuguese revolution and its influence was spreading to Spain. When the revolution is broken by the unfolding counterrevolutionary course, a leadership that looks at the course of the class struggle and not at intellectual schemas has to revise this orientation."

This resolution also said: "It is the same thing with the

Americas. The United Secretariat was meeting when the electoral results became known in Peru. Even if this had not been the case, it already knew of the three general strikes, the hunger strike in Bolivia, and the struggles the Nicaraguan masses were carrying out.

"Aren't these facts relevant enough to oblige the United Secretariat to take them into account in looking at the situation that is beginning to bubble up in the Americas? Of course they are. But the United Secretariat continues to hold onto the schema they have had since before 1974. The class struggle does not make an impact on them.

"Since December of last year we have been warning the leadership of the Fourth International that we should take into account what was happening in America, and pointed to the fact that in Europe the revolutionary process was being moderated by the sinister role of the bureaucracies of the workers parties. Today we can go further and stress what we said earlier. The process is not linear, but rather is full of contradictions, flows and ebbs, and that 'we must prepare ourselves for these situations.'"

Some might object that the upsurge was greater in Iran than in any Latin American country. But this objection is not valid since the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" dates from the end of 1976 while the Iranian upsurge began at the end of 1977. What is important is the analysis as a whole: while the United Secretariat resolution maintained that Europe was the center of the world revolution and felt that the dynamic was that this would be increasingly the case, the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" and the resolution adopted in July 1978 pointed out that the upsurge of the colonial and semicolonial world was tending to catch up with and surpass the European revolution in the following order of importance—Africa, Middle East, Latin America.

3. Fourteen Useless Suggestions

Those who have carefully read the first four sections of the United Secretariat majority's World Political Resolution, in which we find the socialist revolution around every corner, especially as regards Europe, cannot help but be astonished when they get to the fifth section—"Immediate Tasks of the Fourth International."

They might expect a serious political program, with well-defined tasks designed to make it possible for our world party to place itself at the head of present and future struggles, and that allow for rapidly building our sections in order to lead this European upsurge to power. What a surprise they are in for?

Instead they find fourteen ultrageneral recommendations or suggestions that in many cases have nothing to do with the analysis contained in earlier chapters. There is, however, an internal consistency. The consistency is that neither the analysis in the chapters nor the tasks are worth anything. They completely disarm Trotskyists who want to play an important role in the class struggle.

The fourteen suggestions are a collection of activities with no indication of priorities, empty of political content and focus. The resolution does not deal with "intervening" in the class struggle, organizing working-class actions, "achieving unity in action or a united front to confront the bourgeoisie. Instead it is made up of phrases like the following: "enhance sensitivity to the moods of the workers," "demonstrate the ability of the Trotskyists," "combining a consistent criticism . . . and presenting our

program and criticisms in a systematic way," "encouraging the formation," "serious consideration should now be given," "supporting the women's liberation movement" where there are "growing possibilities for some . . . activities," "backing oppressed nations." When it does speak of "participating," as in the case of the peasant struggles, it refers to the past.

After this one exception, the resolution goes on: "supporting the antinuclear protest movement," since "the Trotskyists everywhere have met with a friendly reception in the antinuclear movement." The antipollution and ecology movements are important because they are "gaining in public receptivity." "Other tasks of first-rate importance likewise involve areas . . . of special appeal to certain sectors"; campaigns in defense of the revolutionary struggles of the people of South Africa, defense of the Cuban revolution and defense of Vietnam against U.S. reprisals will "engage the attention of the Fourth International"

Regarding strikes, they don't have to be won against the bourgeoisie. Instead through strikes we should defend "union rights," and the resolution advises that strikes "offer unusual opportunities for national and international solidarity campaigns." But why go on?

4. Our Criticisms

The Bolshevik Faction rejects this summary list of unconnected and abstract "tasks" that the United Secretariat claims is a program for the International. The main points of our objections and our counterproposals are as follows:

a. The United Secretariat refuses to put forward slogans and propose a plan of action against the attack being waged on the standard of living and jobs of the workers of the entire world, including—although in an indirect form—the workers in the workers states. It has persisted in this policy for four years. In the World Political Resolution this attack on living standard is only mentioned with regard to the imperialist centers and in an analysis, without providing a programmatic response.

The Bolshevik Faction believes that the International's struggle against world hunger and poverty should be the principal task. It proposes the following slogans to advance the mobilization of the working masses to defeat this attack by world capitalism: Against the decline in wages and growth in unemployment! Down with the Moncloa Pact and all the other austerity plans that stick it to the workers!

b. The United Secretariat succumbs to the pressure of Eurocommunism and does not, in general, denounce the betrayals of reformism. In a progressive step, it has dropped yesteryear's obsession with the centrist or far-left grouplets.

Instead it proposes "paying increased attention to fraction work inside mass Social Democratic and Stalinist parties, their youth groups, and mass organizations dominated by them."¹⁰ But here again a correct orientation is frustrated and becomes transformed into something else unless it is concretized in a correct policy. The present leadership gives primary emphasis to "a consistent criticism of their theoretical and political insufficiencies and presenting our program and criticisms in a systematic way in the *debates* going on in these parties. . ." and only secondary emphasis to "a policy of unity of action around

key issues of the current class struggle."¹¹

In practice this policy becomes pure propagandism, stratospheric discussions on theoretical questions, general programs, and historical questions.

The Bolshevik Faction maintains that the task of Trotskyists is not to convert themselves into critical advisers of the reformists, but rather to carry out implacable denunciations of the betrayals of the reformist leaders, which is now concretized in the application of the austerity plans.

The dividing line we want to draw inside these mass organizations must be clear, categorical, and understandable to the most backward reformist worker. On one side stand those who support the social pacts and other compromises signed by Carrillo, Felipe González, Callaghan, Mitterrand, Willy Brandt, Berlinguer, and Company! On the other side of the line are the Socialist and Communist workers who want to strike out against the austerity plans!

And this dividing line can only be drawn if we raise the slogan for a "united front of the workers to put a halt to this offensive by the exploiters," which is what we have been saying for five years now.

c. The United Secretariat has been categorically, theoretically, and politically contradicted by the Iranian revolution, which has been the most spectacular example of an upsurge to be seen in recent years. The Iranian revolution contradicted the European-centered World Political Resolution, and it also totally negated the theoretical and political focus of "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

The masses overthrew the thousand-year monarchy in a revolutionary process that was much more intense than the 1974-75 Portuguese revolution. They destroyed Savak, one of the most savage police forces in the world. They shattered the elite Imperial Guards corps, and an important segment of the masses armed themselves.

Contrary to everything the present leadership said and predicted, the greatest upsurge has taken place in a backward country and, against all the advice of the United Secretariat, the Iranians shot all the assassins and torturers from the previous regime who fell into their hands, without "previous trial," without defense lawyers, and without a penal code, applying the "concept of retroactive delinquency."

The Iranian revolution, together with Peru and Nicaragua, completely confirm the analysis of the Bolshevik Tendency. And in particular the actions of the Iranian masses confirmed the resolution we adopted in July 1978 regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Despite the meager perspectives that the United Secretariat held out for the Iranian revolution six months before its triumph ("if it succeeds in overthrowing the hated shah"), the Iranian revolution continued its march, overthrowing not only the shah but his successor as well and, with them, one of the most bloody regimes in the Middle East.

In spite of its errors, the Fourth International must now be first in coming to the defense of the Iranian masses, listening to the masses and forgetting the lamentable documents. It must support the revolutionary and democratic justice applied by the masses against the most hated agents of the old regime and must push for the continuation of the armed mobilization of the masses until the Iranian army is destroyed, without heeding the Ayatollah

Khomeiny's call to turn in the arms, through which he intends to institutionalize the steps taken to stop the deepening of the revolution.

The International must raise the following slogans which are now being put forward by the Bolshevik Faction: For the deepening of the Iranian revolution! For bringing the counterrevolutionaries to trial! For destruction of the bourgeois army! Long live the development of the armed militias!

d. The United Secretariat has maintained a criminal silence about the popular insurrection in Nicaragua, a silence broken only in November 1977.* (*It was only partially broken. We refer to an article by Fausto Amador that appeared in *Intercontinental Press*. The article not only criticized the FSLN's policy, which would be correct, but also its struggle, which is a monstrosity.)

The Bolshevik Faction, on the other hand, has been upholding the struggle of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional for two years. We feel the present leadership of the International must abandon its myopic and sectarian policy regarding Nicaragua, a policy that has endangered the possibilities that opened up for our movement in Central America.

The next world congress must support the Bolshevik Faction's policy, putting forward these slogans: Total support—except for political support—to the struggle of the FSLN and to its heroic fighters who are confronting one of the most savage dictatorships in Latin America arms in hand!

Because U.S. imperialism is oppressing Nicaragua through its puppet Somoza, the Socialist Workers Party—as well as all the Latin American sections—must carry out an on-going campaign to call on the workers and on all leftist or democratic trade-union and political organizations to contribute money, arms, and, if necessary, volunteers to the struggle to overthrow the dictatorship!

For a government of the FSLN and the workers, peasants and people's organizations that applies a program of breaking with imperialism and capitalism, expropriating the Somoza family and all the large national and foreign companies, and bringing them to justice; that carries out an agrarian reform, dissolves the national guard and replaces it with people's militias, abrogates the political, military, and economic pacts with imperialism, and calls free elections for a Constituent Assembly!

e. The United Secretariat does not take note of the continuation and sharpening of the struggles in Ethiopia and Rhodesia during the last months. These struggles fully confirm one of the most important programmatic points the Bolshevik Tendency has been putting forward since 1976: the necessity that our International give special attention to the development of the Black Revolution.

In response to the Black Revolution, the United Secretariat's World Political Resolution comes out with a series of generalities. It declines to accept the Bolshevik Tendency's program: For an internationalist policy that sees the Black Revolution as a universal Afro-American process! For workers and peasants governments to replace the present ones in Angola, Guinea Bissau, and Mozambique! For a "Federation of Black Socialist Republics" that would accept the tribal "right to self-determination" within this federation!

f. The United Secretariat ignores the possibility of wars between the workers states and therefore has no policy

regarding them. Among the seven points in the introduction to the World Political Resolution, which summarize "the most important developments in the world political situation since the 1974 World Congress of the Fourth International," there is no mention of this subject.

The only comment this question merits from the United Secretariat comrades is: "The military conflict between Cambodia and Vietnam, and the growing conflict between Vietnam and China, have also dealt a heavy blow to the attractiveness of the Vietnamese revolution among the working people in the area."¹² [Emphasis added.] Not another word.

"Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," a document written for the coming decades, doesn't say a word about this question.

In July 1978 the Bolshevik Faction approved a document called "Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat," in which there is a special subsection devoted to the question of conflicts between workers states. We pointed out that it is "... one of the most spectacular events of the past decades. . ." "We believe . . . that . . . very . . . possibly there may be more wars between proletarian dictatorships, between workers states. . . nor is it excluded that, motivated by nationalist economic interests, wars similar to the one that has begun to take place today between Vietnam and Cambodia may break out." ". . . moreover, the campaign that China has been mounting for some years against 'Russian social-imperialism' is the ideological preparation for a possible war between these two bureaucratized workers superstates." ". . . this grave problem . . . is of paramount importance. . ."¹³

The Eleventh World Congress of the Fourth International has to reach a decision about the analysis and program of the Bolshevik Faction. But it also has to decide who was right, meaning which position was confirmed by reality.

But the main thing is that one of the basic slogans in our International's program for political revolution must be the slogan for a "federation of all the existing workers states," as the only revolutionary response to the confrontation between workers states.

And our next world congress must discuss and approve a transitional policy regarding the distinct cases of war between the bureaucratized workers states and the possibility of wars by the bureaucratic dictatorships against future revolutionary dictatorships of the proletariat, which the Bolshevik Faction discusses in "Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

In place of this Bolshevik Faction policy, the United Secretariat document raises the slogans "United Socialist States of Europe" and "international federation of socialist democracies" for the workers states.¹⁴ Both are abstract. Trotsky dismissed the "international federation," pointing out that it belonged to a "second epoch, or to a subsequent great chapter of the imperialist epoch."

g. We also do not believe that an "international federation of socialist republics as part of the Socialist United States of the World" is sufficient for Europe. It is not sufficient because it ignores the present European reality. On the one hand there already are various workers states in the eastern part of the continent, and these must be unified in an immediate Federation. On the other hand, we must now raise the Bolshevik Tendency's slogan for a "Federation of Iberian Socialist Republics" as the only immediate transitional slogan that unifies the now moderate revolutions of the Spanish and Portuguese proletariats, with the right of national self-determination for the Basques, Galicians, and Catalans.

The United Secretariat's refusal to accept this slogan for factional reasons has led the Spanish section into a serious capitulation. This is concretized in the fact that the Spanish section is putting forward the bourgeois slogan of a "Federal Republic" instead of what we propose.

Footnotes to Chapter V

1. "The World Political Situation and the Tasks of the Fourth International," IIDB, Vol. XV, No. 5, July 1978, p. 3.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 9, 15, 21.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
4. p. 23.
5. p. 5.
6. p. 12.
7. p. 14.
8. "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," IIDB, Vol. XIV, No. 1, January 1977, p. 3.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
10. "The World Political Situation. . .," p. 26.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
12. p. 14.
13. *La dictadura revolucionaria del proletariado*, Chapter VIII, Subsection 7, "What Should Our Position Be in the Face of Possible Wars Between Workers States?" (Not yet in print in Spanish.)
14. "The World Political Situation. . .," p. 16.

Chapter VI

AGAINST A CENTRIST INTERNATIONAL WITH POUMIST PARTIES FOR A TROTSKYIST INTERNATIONAL OF BOLSHEVIK PARTIES

The United Secretariat has begun a campaign around its differences with the Bolshevik Faction regarding the method of building and methods of functioning of our parties and of the International. It is not a discussion, but a campaign against us centered on concrete points. Many of these points are false, others are misrepresented, and still others are not explained fully or are taken out of context. These are woven into a horror story regarding the

Bolshevik Faction, the aim of which is to terrify those members of the International who do not know us firsthand.

A False Picture of the Bolshevik Faction

It is true that we have a different conception. And it is very interesting to look at the United Secretariat's points of attack. They are, in general terms, as follows.

They say that we are not for real democratic centralism, but rather for bureaucratic centralism. This bureaucratic centralism is characterized by not accepting the right of members to constitute tendencies or factions when they want to and not calling congresses any time a tendency desires one, at the date the tendency chooses.

They say we intervene in the life of the national parties with economic aid and members; that we have a mania for finding the class origin of every political difference; that we require members coming from the student movement to proletarianize themselves; that the leaders of the Bolshevik Faction, as Hugo Blanco says, never write anything, that Moreno is the only who writes, that Moreno is a caudillo who controls everything.

On this last point, which is the least important, we will simply say that the documents published by the Bolshevik Tendency and the Argentine and Colombian PSTs are at the disposal of the whole International and show that in recent years Moreno has written only 10 percent of them.

The other points are indeed important because—although they falsify the truth—they refer to the central questions concerning building the International and its parties.

The United Secretariat, of course, presents itself as doing just the opposite. It is superdemocratic with minorities; it permits constant discussion; it doesn't interfere in the sections; it doesn't expel any opponents; it doesn't demand that anyone make a self-criticism; it doesn't make class characterizations, and doesn't force anyone to proletarianize.

Leaving aside what the United Secretariat's defense of its method reveals about itself, we find a notable similarity between the campaign it is carrying out against us and the campaigns that the Mensheviks carried out against Lenin in their time, the later campaigns that Urbahns and the centrists of all shades who had ties with the Left Opposition carried out against Trotsky, and even the campaigns that the various petty-bourgeois currents within the American SWP carried out in denouncing the "Cannon regime."

We will find a good summary of the attacks on the Bolshevik Faction in the synopsis Cannon himself made of the accusations that the petty-bourgeois opposition in the SWP leveled against the National Committee:

"If we sift out the great mass of material in the documents of the opposition devoted to the regime [in the party], attempt to classify the various complaints and grievances and criticisms and put each in its appropriate pile, we eventually break down the indictment of the party regime into the following main divisions.

"1) The regime (the leadership) is conservative in its politics.

"2) It is bureaucratic in its methods.

"3) The present leading group (the majority of the National Committee) is in reality dominated by a 'clique' which stands above the Committee and rules the party in an irregular and unconstitutional manner.

"4) The 'clique,' however, has a 'leader cult' and is itself dominated by a single person, the others being merely 'hand raisers.'

"5) The single person who stands above the 'clique' and above the Committee, and who exercises a 'one-man leadership' in the party, is Cannon."¹ [See footnotes at end of Chapter VI.]

It is true that there are deep, antagonistic differences between the United Secretariat and us regarding our

conception of the party. But we think that the points of difference are not the ones the United Secretariat points to.

Some of our positions are misrepresented, as we shall see. Other positions are not explained in full. For example, they neglect to add that as regards their first point of criticism, the Bolshevik Faction is in favor of having annual congresses or, at most, congresses every two years, in all sections. The BF believes that it must be the strict norm that three months before the congress, if held annually, or six months before if held every two years, a period opens up in which there is an absolute right to form tendencies or factions automatically at the fixed date. This right is not open to question, and the leaders and members of a tendency or faction cannot transfer from their regular place of activity until the congress is over.

With regard to the second differentiation, we must stress that all the groups pay dues to the Bolshevik Faction and that broad aid is given only to those groups that are immersed in a big upsurge such as Peru, or as Iran might be today.

These differences are very basic and concern principles. But their significance is so important and so forgotten by the United Secretariat that it justifies our using an extensive chapter to deal with this question, which concerns the organization of our International and our parties.

This may be one of the most important discussions to take place before the Eleventh World Congress and after. As we will see in what follows, we believe that a directly Menshevik, centrist, and social democratic conception of the International and of our parties has been surreptitiously introduced into our ranks. This conception is tearing down the nearly century-long struggle of the Bolsheviks and their direct disciples, the Trotskyists.

From the IMT to the Bloc with the SWP

When the IMT led the International, it acted with exaggerated centralism and factionalism. The IMT was not stingy with pronouncements and declarations about the fundamental events in the class struggle; it worked out tactics and strategies so that the International would act on the basis of them. For example, when the IMT adopted the tactic of guerrilla warfare for Latin America, it put it into practice. The same was true regarding Europe when it adopted its line of working around the ultraleft.

When led by the IMT, the International wrote exhaustive political documents on the fundamental points of the class struggle, which it tried to carry out. That is what it did with Portugal, Spain, and Angola. A short time later comrades Krivine and Frank codified and explained this IMT position in a document on the organizational question ("Again, and Always, the Question of the International," 1971).

We could summarize this conception in the following way:

1. The Fourth International is a centralized and disciplined party; as such it has an iron discipline and everyone must act in accordance with the line adopted.

2. You make analyses and act in the places that are central to the class struggle, especially if there are Trotskyist parties there.

3. The world party intervenes in each country, the way a national party intervenes in its regions, imposing its line, maneuvering if necessary against the national leaderships that do not agree with its line and refuse to apply it,

carrying out factional and even disloyal work in order to impose on them the line adopted by the International.

Within the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction there were two conceptions of the relationship between the world party and the national parties. One was put forward by the SWP, the other by the Argentine PST.

The SWP felt that the International was a united front for abstract and general propaganda campaigns on which there was agreement among the different national sections. For the SWP, international discipline is not the same as the discipline of a national party since the revolution is made within one country and against one state, which is not the situation with the world party. The world party cannot lead any revolution; this role is reserved for the national parties, which have specific characteristics of such a type that the world party cannot substitute for them, and they are qualitatively different from the world party.

This, in fact, means the world party is not a party, but rather a federated united front, or one with federative features, with very loose discipline. The SWP completely disagreed with the article by comrades Krivine and Frank. In passing we can summarize the SWP's conception, and particularly Hansen's conception, in the words of Jack Barnes, the main leader of the SWP, who said at a memorial meeting for Joe Hansen:

"The Joe Hansen I knew was above all an internationalist. . . .

"The first misunderstanding Joe eliminated was that an internationalist is someone who is interested in foreign causes. Many people are interested in foreign causes, Joe said, and for progressive reasons. But that does not qualify one as an internationalist.

"There is a second misunderstanding: that an internationalist is someone who is an expert on another country, or on many countries. Joe called this the 'quantitative theory of internationalism.' He didn't think that had anything to do with internationalism either.

"It's *what you do* that is key, not what you're interested in, Joe said. The very first duty of an internationalist is to master the affairs of your own country, to be part of a team in your party, a proletarian party rooted in the class struggle of your country.

"You have another duty, too. To squelch any presumptions by anyone who claims to be an internationalist that they're going to write programs or prescribe medicines for revolutionists in other countries.

"Joe lived up to these standards pretty well, as you've heard testimony to in the speeches and messages here. He never tried to dictate programs or tactics for other countries. Regardless of his wide knowledge and insight about countries in Latin America and elsewhere he was not and never considered himself a specialist in the affairs of any country except one—the United States."²

As we can see, for Joe Hansen and Jack Barnes an internationalist is someone who doesn't try "to dictate programs or tactics for revolutionists in other countries," is someone who will "squelch any presumptions by anyone who claims to be an internationalist that they're going to write programs or prescribe medicines for revolutionists in other countries."

An internationalist, according to Hansen-Barnes, is someone who is an "expert" on only one country, his own. For them, internationalism, as well as an international leadership, is the sum of national experts. Flowing from

this, no one can provide a line or policy for a country except for the "experts" inside that country.

The SWP leadership, without saying so, is completely revising Trotsky on this question, as on so many others. For our master, a member of our world party who was a consistent internationalist was one who was an "expert" in . . . the international situation and, within that, in the situation of those countries going through revolutionary situations.

This meant that a Trotskyist could not be a national expert, even regarding his own country, if he did not first become expert on international questions. It is the international situation that can explain the national situations, which they are part of. And we will never be able to understand the international situation by beginning from the national situation.

This does not mean that the national situation is just a copy of the international situation. On the contrary, it is a concrete, specific reality with its special laws. But these laws are no more than a dialectical reflection of the international situation.

We should recall some examples from Trotsky. When Spain was going through a revolutionary situation in 1931, Trotsky made the following proposals to the International Secretariat:

"1. All the sections must place the problems of the Spanish revolution on the agenda.

"2. The leaders of our sections must form special commissions, which should have as their tasks to gather material to go deeply into the questions. . . .

"3. All the important documents of Spanish communism (of all its tendencies) must be communicated regularly, at least in the form of extracts, for the information of all our national sections."³

And what was the specific objective of these proposals? Exactly the opposite of what Hansen-Barnes says:

"5. Following a certain preparatory work in the national sections, as well as in the International Secretariat, it will be indispensable to work out a *Manifesto of the International Left Opposition* on the Spanish revolution, which should be done in the most concrete manner possible and in intimate collaboration with the Spanish section."⁴

When, in 1932, the Spanish section held its conference, Trotsky reproached them in the following words for their neglecting to work things out in conjunction with the whole International: "I deeply regret that circumstances have kept you from publishing in convenient time the draft resolutions, and thus from giving foreign comrades an opportunity to take part in these deliberations before the conference."⁵

And, to leave no doubts, in a letter to the conference dated the same day, Trotsky wrote: "We cannot develop true revolutionists without giving the young communists the chance to follow the day-to-day elaboration of the Bolshevik policies not only in the Spanish section but in the other sections of the International Opposition as well. Only in this manner can we gain experience, build and strengthen the revolutionary consciousness. This is precisely the most important part of the democratic party regime that we strive to establish."⁶

The Argentine PST maintained that Trotsky's position, and to a certain point Krivine's and Frank's as well, was correct: that the International is a centralized, disciplined world party. The difference with the practices and theories of the IMT had to do with the relationship of this

international party to the national sections and their leaderships.

In other words, in contrast to the SWP, the PST (A) felt that the IMT was correct on an essential point: that our International is a party, with all the characteristics of a Bolshevik party, with iron centralization and discipline. But this Bolshevik party cannot have precisely the same relationship to the national parties as a national party has with its regions. If it does, you have an exaggerated centralism since the world party of the socialist revolution, our international, is not identical to a national party.

In this sense the comrades in the leadership of the SWP are right when they said that it is the national parties that take power, and this is a qualitative difference with respect to the world party.

This means that it is the party led by Cannon and Farrell Dobbs and not Mandel, Pierre Frank, or Maitan that takes power in the United States. This means that the International should be a Bolshevik party formed by parties, and not by regions.

This question is not semantic. It has a deep significance: the leaderships of the national parties are not the same as the leaderships of the regions in a national party. And therefore the relations of the world party with the national parties cannot be the same as the relations of the national party with its regions.

A national party can change all the regional leaderships it wants to, it can transfer members from one region to another, it can stop functioning in one region or begin to function in a new one.

The regional leaderships are totally subordinate to the national leadership, just as the local or cell leaderships are subordinate to the national party.

In contrast, a world party cannot liquidate a section or transfer it to another country. It cannot send all the members of another section to replace the leadership of any section. This means that the national parties are not only a richer reality, but are also qualitatively different from the region, local, or cell of a national party. Therefore its ties with the world party have a different character from those that exist between a region, a local, or a cell and the national party.

This is concretized in the fact that the international leadership cannot under any circumstances change national leaderships, intervene in the parties, adopt resolutions over the heads of the national leadership.

Between the world leadership and the national leaderships there must be a relationship of relative subordination and of collaboration. In other words, each national party with its leadership must be sacrosanct as far as the international party is concerned.

When the IMT maneuvered behind the backs of the national leaderships, carried out factional work, or wanted to impose its discipline on the national leaderships, it committed a grave error. A national leadership, no matter how wrong it is, has won its leadership position through a whole series of factors that become a political factor with its own weight. But, aside from this difference, the International must continue to be a centralized and disciplined party. And the IMT is right on this point.

These are the three concepts that were held. But an explicit organizational discussion did not take place because the LTF did not enter the battle. The SWP considered the question fundamental. But when it saw that deep

differences existed with the PST(A), the SWP decided to postpone the discussion.

Together with this discussion, another discussion—regarding branches and cells—took place between the SWP and the PST(A). It was not expressed in documents but was aired in big oral debates in various areas and parties.

The PST(A) was not against branches as such. It viewed them as another, perfectly Bolshevik, organizational form. What the PST always maintained was that branches could not be used as a screen to hide a non-Bolshevik type of membership, as the SWP does. Through the organizational form of branches the SWP hides one fact: the only thing demanded of members is that they pay dues to the party on time, and aside from that they can do absolutely whatever they wish. The PST made the criticism that under the cover of the branch structure members of the SWP and parties influenced by it did not carry out day-to-day activity.

The PST(A) feels that the organizational form is secondary. The fundamental content of the discussion revolved around the fact that parties must be made up of activists. It must be clearly understood that activists are members who work every day for the party, circulating its press, winning over workers, attending classes, fulfilling the obligation of punctual attendance at the weekly meeting, where they must give an account of their activities.

If they don't do this they can be separated from (put out of) the party. This was the second big difference between the SWP and the PST(A).

The PST did not accept the discipline of the majority leadership of the International for a political reason: the PST held the position—around which it organized a fight that the IMT leadership of the International was revising the party's program and structure, and imposed an exaggerated discipline in order to apply this revisionist line. The PST(A) was opposed to applying a line that meant political suicide, but not because its concept was not similar to the IMT's regarding discipline, centralism, intervention in the class struggle, and aid to the sections.

In order to dissolve the LTF and reach an agreement with the IMT, the SWP demanded that the IMT change its whole organizational conception and come over bag and baggage to the SWP's concept of a federated international, which functions through consensus, through diplomatic agreements between the existing leaders and tendencies on a world scale.

These diplomatic agreements and consensuses deal with carrying out superpropagandistic campaigns around which there is agreement by all sectors of the International. The SWP has given examples of what it thinks the International should be. For example, if we are all in agreement about fighting for the freedom of Hugo Blanco, all the International's activity, as the International, must revolve around this propagandistic campaign. Or, today, around abortion or International Women's Day.

The IMT, under the pressure of and spurred by the catastrophe of its line for Latin America and Europe, was obliged to modify its entire conception of the International and change from its previous exaggerated centralism to the SWP's federative and united-front concept. This is how the present unprincipled bloc arose.

In saying this, we do not mean that there is no theoretic-

cal or political agreement between them. In any unprincipled bloc there are always theoretical and political agreements of a general nature. If this were not the case they could not do a single thing. For example, the present unprincipled bloc agrees on "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," on its analysis of Eurocommunism, on the world political resolution, etc. But the agreement on these documents is artificial since it is based on the points on which they do agree, eliminating all those points where differences exist.

It is not an agreement on a line carried out to its logical conclusion, but rather an abstract agreement with the differences eliminated. And it was possible to concretize the agreement because the European revolution is marking time. A sudden change in the class struggle will call the unprincipled bloc into question.

A Centrist or Trotskyist International?

Nothing shows what we have been saying better than the character of the documents the unprincipled bloc has come out with. The International leadership used to put out lengthy documents making its views known on all the burning questions of the class struggle, in which clear and categorical policies were outlined—although they were, unfortunately, revisionist policies. But today the predominant method—the method of the SWP—is to tend to make only general pronouncements on those points where there is agreement. This precludes our defining ourselves categorically on the burning questions of the class struggle.

There is not a single document from the United Secretariat that analyzes and provides a line for the places where a line is most needed, for example Peru, Nicaragua, or Iran. The United Secretariat has declined to provide a line for Peru because it knows that there are differences within the unprincipled bloc itself. Nor did it make an in-depth analysis of Iran or provide a program for it. The same is true for Nicaragua.

This is a pragmatic method, but not pragmatism aimed at the key points of the class struggle on a world scale. Rather it is concerned with the repercussions within the unprincipled bloc: if we could agree and can remain united, we make a statement. If a statement would cause fissures, we keep silent.

This method leads to a federation of parties, in which there is no discipline because the International has no line that it is trying to carry out either on a world scale or on the scale of the countries where there is a dramatic situation in the class struggle. This method and its practitioner, the unprincipled bloc, have caused and progressively deepened the crisis in all the "model" sections of the International.

Trotsky's conception, the one the Bolshevik Faction defends, is diametrically opposed to this. Let us recall only a few significant events and quotes.

The last, and most developed, characterization Trotsky made of the way our International should operate was made in May 1940 in "Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution." In a section entitled "Our program founded on Bolshevism," he makes a very good summary of his conception regarding centralism:

"The Fourth International stands completely and wholeheartedly on the foundation of the revolutionary tradition of Bolshevism and its organizational methods. Let the petty-bourgeois radicals whine against centralism. A worker who has participated even once in a strike knows

that no struggle is possible without discipline and a firm leadership. . . . Under these conditions the elementary guarantee of success is the counterposing of revolutionary centralism to the centralism of reaction. It is indispensable to have an organization of the proletarian vanguard welded together by iron discipline. . . ."⁷

And in this entire section on the internal organization of the Fourth International there is not a single reference to democracy, which is not coincidental since democracy is the medium, the foundation for the strictest centralism.

Regarding aid to Trotskyist parties immersed in the sharpest situations of the class struggle and sending comrades from the International to these parties, we should recall two unambiguous examples. In the middle of 1931, on several occasions Trotsky maintained that all efforts had to be centered on Spain. "Nine-tenths of the work of the International Left Opposition today should be concentrated on Spain. All other expenses must be cut down in favor of the possibility of putting out a Spanish weekly with regular publications in Catalan. . . . We must consider limiting all other expenses without exception in order to send the greatest possible help to the Spanish Opposition.

"The International Secretariat, in my opinion, should devote nine-tenths of its forces to the questions of the Spanish revolution. . . . The Spanish revolution is on the agenda. . . . It is equally necessary to take a series of organizational measures. For that, human and material resources are necessary. Both must be found.

"There is and there can be no greater crime than to waste time."⁸

Toward the end of 1931, while the situation in Spain had entered a period of ebb, Germany was put in first place:

"If it is true that Germany is at the present time the key to the international situation, the conclusion follows that the main link of the ILO now is the German section. It lacks financial and technical means. . . . All the sections must set themselves the task: to help the German section issue a weekly organ."⁹ This appeal that Trotsky issued in a letter to the national sections was then concretized in a resolution of the February 1933 preconference, which said:

"The German situation is becoming the axis of international attention to the International Left Opposition, and it is the task of every member of the International Left Opposition to contribute to the struggle of the German Opposition. Therefore the Left Opposition has set a contribution to be paid once, by every member irrespective of what section he belongs to, in the amount of one day's pay, which is to be collected before March 15 [1933] and sent to the International Secretariat, which will forward the amounts to the German section. Every section must begin a campaign of support for the German Left Opposition."¹⁰

The same centralist conception governed the development of the national programs by the International. Let's return once again to Spain: "In Spain the situation is revolutionary, in Spain we have completely qualified representatives of the Left Opposition. Through letters, articles, etc. we have worked out something like a draft platform of the Left Opposition."¹¹

And we could say the same thing regarding specific aid, both in personnel and finances. We are deliberately changing the country and the situation, although we could go on with Spanish examples.

At the end of 1938 Trotsky wrote to Cannon, the main

leader of the recently founded SWP in the U.S.: "It is not necessary to say that your presence now in France would be of the greatest importance. France is today the immediate battlefield, and not the United States. This should be considered also from a financial point of view. If you go to France (and I am totally in favor of such a decision) you should have a modest treasury for the needs of the French party in the next period."¹²

The Bolshevik Faction maintains, as Trotsky did, that our world party has to have iron discipline, loyalty and honestly aiding the parties that are in the midst of big upsurges. But giving aid means intervening fully in the processes of the class struggle; politically intervening with members, with money, and organizationally, financing weeklies, as Trotsky proposed. In summary, it means aiding the sections politically and materially in a decisive way. It means being a true world party.

POUMist Party or Bolshevik Parties

Many national leaderships, through the influence of the SWP, bring the united front method right into their parties. The result is that parties remain paralyzed, without a specific and clear line, in face of the events of the class struggle. It is called "watering down" the positions, as the Spanish comrades graphically note; they water it down to reach a consensus. This way of operating allows any minority to dominate a party by inducing its paralysis, as is happening in Mexico. Such parties finally end up as groups that only carry out abstract propaganda on general questions.

To try to remedy this to some extent, they emphasize organizational solutions. In the last period the axis of this tactic can be summed up in the slogan "Unity, never mind what kind of unity."

Along these lines they raised the need to follow the United Secretariat's example and dissolve the tendencies and factions in all the sections. In some cases this call partially reflected a desire of the ranks, who were demoralized by parties that were long being undermined by interminable debates. The clearest example can be seen in the LCR.

For the same reasons the International's leadership proposed immediate unification of independent organizations in places where splits had taken place or where, for various reasons, different groups or organizations belonging to the International were functioning. In these cases the reasoning was that immediate unification had to be carried out on the basis of agreement with the program of the Fourth International, and with the agreement that later there would be internal discussions to deal with the questions of political intervention and party building.

The internal regime that flows from this policy of unity at all costs is amorphous. In reality there is no regime—everyone does what they choose. Party life becomes academic, because discussion and clarification of the theoretical questions comes before everything else.

If any questions remain unresolved, that serves as a pretext for not applying the majority policy. The liberalism and democratism that are brought into the party to make it attractive through the richness of its discussions, have liquidated democratic centralism and with it the possibility of day-to-day intervention in the class struggle. As a result the life of the party tends to become sectarian.

Members who are in the unions are then obliged to set

up a dichotomy between their activities in the mass movement and a party life that does not respond to the concrete everyday problems. In their work and in their activities the members face problems that the party meetings have not discussed or thought out. And in the party they hold discussions about heaven and earth, about things that do not relate to their area of work.

This means that the federated International, built on the basis of an unprincipled bloc, transforms parties that follow this orientation into POUMist parties. Parties that follow this line are quickly turned into organizations that would repel any worker—who would view them as strange groups—and that in contrast attract free-swinging cafe discussion artists.

In opposition to this concept and practice, the Bolshevik Faction proposed *building Bolshevik parties*, centralized parties that have iron discipline, action parties. The central problem is to provide them with a policy that aims to spur the mass movement into action.

The emphasis placed on centralization is due to the need to turn the whole weight of a party, as though it were a single person, toward applying the policies that have been adopted democratically. To aim toward the mass movement means to accompany the movement and orient it in its experiences, not to follow it or replace it.

This is the only way to win influence and to win the best activists in the struggles, the vanguard workers, to the party. In this process real leadership teams, made up of the cadres most tested in the struggle, can be formed.

But our insistence on discipline has been the basis for one of the United Secretariat's main attacks. Like many other attacks, this one has some truth to it. Compared to the POUMist parties, the parties of the Bolshevik Faction have iron discipline. They practice democratic centralism as well as using the Leninist-Trotskyist method of party building. Thanks to this, discussion never prevents us from participating in a fundamental activity. This is not the case with the Mexican PRT, which, because of internal discussions, cannot pay attention to the election campaign.

No member of any party oriented by us can use differences in order not to carry out the tasks demanded of them by the majority of the party. The specific example of Hugo Blanco, who attacked us for this, is shameful.

The Peruvian PST, in line with the norms of the Third International under Lenin, believes that every member of a public organization must carry out party discipline to its logical conclusion. We feel that the party member who does not comply with this should be immediately expelled. Nevertheless, Hugo Blanco did not follow discipline but was not expelled.

Also in line with our view of democracy, it is said that we expel those who disagree. The two best-known cases cited are those of Hugo Blanco and Bernal. We have a copy of Bernal's letter of resignation, as does the United Secretariat, which we have distributed to the whole International. Nevertheless, his spokespersons continue to spread the tale that he was expelled.

We have already explained the case of Hugo Blanco.

It is also said that this discipline forces every member to make a self-criticism for an error. No one can give a concrete example. What they *do* see in our party is a belief that no error should be allowed to pass without finding out who is responsible. The tasks are discussed to such an

extent that it would be impossible that this not take place when a balance sheet is drawn up. Our members do not think it right that a mistake should not be attributed to someone, especially if the person who committed it is a member of the leadership.

It is also said that we do not permit factional discussions. What we do not permit is what happened in the Colombian PST, where a minority can pick whatever date it feels like for a special congress. In this case, despite the fact that the group asking for the special congress did not comply with the statutory requirements for calling one (one-third of the membership), we told them we would hold one, but only when the election campaign was over. Thanks to this we did not suffer the fate of the Mexican PRT, which we already explained. We *were* able to participate in the electoral activity.

We do not feel that the basic objective of Trotskyist parties should be democracy. Rather we feel that democracy within Trotskyist parties is a vital necessity as a function of the centralization and discipline that permit intervention in the mass movement.

This is not something we have just invented. This is what Cannon, with the support of Trotsky, said about the SWP:

"I think that the party in the eyes of the leading militants should be considered as a military organization. The party forms should be much more considerably formalized in a deliberate form of hierarchical organization. A strict record of grades of authority in the party. All these things must be deliberately inculcated to build a party able to struggle for power in this epoch. If this is correct we have an opportunity to build it now. One, because there is a real impulse for it from the rank and file. They feel that there is not enough discipline, not enough firmness.

"In the leadership now there is no serious conflict on this conception, a far more serious advance for joint collaboration. Formerly this was bad, especially in New York. That was the damnable role of Abern and Shachtman, to pacify the weaklings. Now there is no possibility for that, not in the next period."¹³

Thus the United Secretariat's criticisms of the Bolshevik Faction contain some truth: we rigorously practice democratic centralism and follow the Bolshevik and Trotskyist tradition. What the United Secretariat does not do is draw the conclusion that can be seen in reality: POUMist democracy is paralyzing its parties while the Bolshevik Faction's centralism allows its parties to intervene in the developments of the class struggle and to make progress.

A Party of Militants or a Party of Dilettantes?

The discussion on the character of our party and its internal discipline leads us to another discussion, one that dates from the beginning of the century. That is the discussion between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks regarding the character of membership in revolutionary parties. The Mensheviks thought that anyone who agreed with the party's positions should be considered a member. The Bolsheviks felt that membership could only be attained by those who do day-to-day work for the party.

Although at this point there is not a specific discussion on this question going on in our International, we would say that this is a latent discussion, since we see two types of parties clearly defined. Those of the Bolshevik Faction correspond to the characteristics pointed to by the Bolsheviks, and those of the United Secretariat, in fact, act

like the Mensheviks. They are parties of "dilettantes," where, as has already been seen, "the leadership of the party's work among industrial workers does not exist as an activist force" and in which there is "a growing disappearance of membership discipline, which has led to a serious ebb . . .," as they themselves say.

Among the parties that we could call Menshevik, there are two types. Type One are those that are completely guided by the orientation of the United Secretariat, which we define as clubs. In these parties nothing is obligatory. You don't have to be active on a day-to-day basis, you don't have to apply the line exactly when you are active, you don't have to attend meetings punctually, or sell the press, or pay dues. All those who say they agree with the politics are considered members.

The Mexican comrades, in total honesty, have described the sad picture of the Mexican PRT as a result of this type of "membership" by a section of the party.

Type Two are the social democratic parties like the SWP, where those who want to be members have only one obligation: to pay dues on time. Absolutely nothing is demanded of the membership. The "branch" meetings are voluntary, and at them no reports are given on obligatory activities.

This second type of party has healthy finances and a strong apparatus, which is fed by the sales of the newspaper and the dues that are required of the membership. At SWP meetings, for example, an average of 60 to 70 percent of the recognized members are not present. We have very extensive information in this regard.

The members of the "Trotskyist clubs" (typical examples of which are the Colombian PSR and the Mexican PRT) can pay up their dues when a congress is coming. By doing this, those who do nothing all year can participate under equal conditions with those who are active, sell the press, pay dues regularly, and so on.

This criterion of paying up in order to participate in the "show" is not the criterion of a revolutionary party. The party is also being built at its congress, because that is where a program is discussed and a leadership is elected. How can you give voice and vote to those who not only haven't done anything, but don't even know what is going on? That is why we call them clubs, because, just as in clubs, the prerequisite for participating is "to be paid up."

Between the Menshevik and Bolshevik parties in our International at this time, there is also an intermediate type that is not Bolshevik due to the United Secretariat's orientation. For example, the French and Spanish LCRs are neither social democratic nor clubs, but are parties that were built in the upturn with members who were active day to day, who sold their press, and constantly tried to forge links with the mass movement. But today they are torn by multiple contradictions due to the politically suicidal positions adopted by a majority, and are moving, thanks to the International leadership, toward a Menshevik structure.

In order for these parties to become Bolshevik parties, which is what their self-sacrificing members are hoping for, there has to be a change in leadership that will orient them in the direction we are pointing.

Trotsky tirelessly spoke about this. He said: "A few times I proposed, because of the specific conditions in France, to introduce into the League's statutes the following propositions as for example: every member of the League who has not, within the period of a month, fulfilled

the current work from day to day, such as the conducting of classes for young workers, street sales of papers, collecting of money, attendance at meetings, establishment of contact, etc., be expelled from the League. The League needs no ballast! It has been proven by the whole experience of the labor movement, and by the experience of the League in particular, that precisely those intellectuals and semi-intellectuals who are unproductive and reluctant to roll up their sleeves like to engage in maneuvers and intrigues, poisoning the life of the organization and preventing the entry of workers into it."¹⁴

The Moral Crisis

This conception of membership activity, of a party based on agreements on propaganda, leads not only to a relaxation of discipline but also to a relaxation of proletarian and revolutionary morality. Among those who are active, self-sacrificing, working every day for the party, common activity creates a strong revolutionary morality. Revolutionary morality is a prerequisite for and foundation of democratic centralism because there has to be absolute confidence between the members, confidence engendered by common activity.

Lenin pointed out that the most important organizational principle of a revolutionary party is "something even more important than 'democracy,'" which was "the complete, comradely, mutual confidence among revolutionaries."¹⁵ Without this "complete, comradely mutual confidence among revolutionaries," we cannot forge parties with the strength needed to face the ever harsher tests the class struggle imposes upon us. And how much "complete, comradely mutual confidence" can there be in the International when, according to all evidence, membership figures of the sections are shamelessly falsified both upward and downward, as it suits them, with a view toward representational fraud at the next world congress? And how much "complete, comradely, confidence" can there be when we can see that the moral decadence is not limited to organizing the fraud?

The Unprincipled Bloc that leads the International has totally loosened the morality of the Fourth International. There are various disgraceful events that illustrate this aspect, and we will enumerate them briefly because we don't want to get detained too long in this disgusting point.

First and foremost, the United Secretariat, in combination with Comrade Mandel, *lied to the whole International*, and carried out a false polemic saying that the Bolshevik Tendency did not have relevant documentation, and denounced Comrade Moreno and the Bolshevik Tendency for supposedly falsifying Comrade Mandel's statements.

We said that Mandel's statements to the magazine *Topo Viejo* were revisionist since they presented optimistic perspectives regarding the Eurocommunist phenomenon. We denounced this position. Mandel and the United Secretariat replied that Moreno was just echoing the misrepresentations that *Topo Viejo* had made of Mandel's statements.

This was a conscious and deliberate lie by the United Secretariat, not knowing that we had the tape of the interview. The tape showed that not one sentence or word of Mandel's statements had been misrepresented. We offered conclusive proof—the tape of the interview, where it can be seen that not even a comma has been left out or

added. But Mandel and the United Secretariat declined to have us review them or to denounce *Topo Viejo* if they were right.

Because they could not answer the political alternatives of the Bolshevik Tendency in a common discussion, the campaign took on the form of a debate through tales and slanders, and its mentors have gone beyond any consideration of principles in carrying the campaign forward.

They have resorted to slander against the leaders of the Argentine PST and the BT. They have encouraged chauvinism when it serves their purposes. They have acted to jeopardize the security of Trotskyist militants, facilitating police persecution. They have encouraged internal contradictions in parties led by the Bolshevik Tendency without regard for any consideration except to stop our development among the masses.

They have even based themselves on lumpen and bourgeois elements, outside the ranks of the International, to try to destroy us. At the same time they avoid debating the central political questions in order to maintain that the Bolshevik Tendency, and now the Bolshevik Faction, is not a Trotskyist current, but is rather a foul coterie led by a caudillo.

We have documented all these things for the United Secretariat: some of them were presented at the April 1978 meeting in the memorandum on the contradictions in the Colombian PST. We have also denounced the factional irresponsibility of the United Secretariat's representative in Peru, which undoubtedly facilitated the kidnapping of one of our comrades, placing his life in danger.

There have also been serious precedents in the immediate past. In Mexico the SWP leaders established the precedent that it is not a very serious thing that a leader of a Trotskyist party accuses another leader of being a cop, without any proof and, further, informs against him to the police.

The SWP established the precedent that an activity—in this case nothing less than informing—may be carried out by a leader, on an individual basis, behind the backs of the leadership. It established the precedent that the word of the police can be considered as an argument to judge a comrade; and it defended a woman comrade who did such foul things, and, moreover, hid the fact that leaders of the SWP incited her to do it.

In Central America the SWP leaders set the precedent that a person who collaborated with a dictatorship like Somoza's, can, by joining the Fourth International, assume leadership posts without any explanation and without going through any period of testing.

Even worse, they want to make it possible to use blackmail in the political debate. This is what Jack Barnes did in his balance-sheet report on the dissolution of the LTF, when he called Fausto Amador "one of the leaders of the LTF," warning that "a leader of the LTF cannot be placed outside the Fourth International without blowing up the entire process of dissolution of factions and reestablishment of comradely attitudes."¹⁶ And we should remember that this "leader of the LTF" had been a self-confessed collaborator of the dictator Somoza.

Trotsky had the same opinion we do about these moral questions. For example, speaking of Molinier, who never did anything like what Fausto Amador did, he said: "His organization is permeated by hatred of our organization. . . . Molinier should remain outside but the others, his members, can be admitted if they apply individually

and if he remains outside."¹⁷ We should remember that Molinier "was expelled by the International Conference of 1936 for conduct completely incompatible with membership in a proletarian revolutionary organization, namely, for attempting to use money obtained by dubious means to impose his personal control over the organization."¹⁸ In other words what he did was much less serious than collaborating with a dictatorship.

Regarding polemics, we have not invented anything either. Instead we are following Trotsky's advice, which experience has shown is the only way not to paralyze the party's activity: "Above all, the principled political questions must be separated in a decisive fashion once and for all from personal collisions and frictions. A revolutionary organization that wants to live must not let itself be poisoned by quarrels. There is a normal organizational way to solve personal questions, through a Control Commission. Whoever avoids that way, whoever replaces the solving of personal accusations through organizational channels with the launching of poisonous rumors, condemns himself. A progressive current does not need such methods. The entire history of the revolutionary movement in all countries shows that groups that resort to bitter personal quarrels in ideological struggles are groups that have become an obstacle in the organization and hold it back instead of advancing it.

"It is difficult to give advice from afar on the organizational question. But perhaps you will find it useful to elect alongside the Executive Committee a Control Commission composed of a few levelheaded and objective comrades, and give it the responsibility from now on of pursuing with the severest methods, including expulsion from the League, anyone who tries to replace political struggle with personal quarrels."¹⁹

The Influence of the Petty Bourgeois

There is a consistency in all the points raised by the Unprincipled Bloc and a connecting thread in all the problems confronting the sections led by the United Secretariat majority. Their conceptions result in parties that are comfortable for students and professors and uninhabitable for workers. In addition to the common origin of these problems, there are many common results, such as the new morality and the methodology through which they are run. The explanation of the International's present crisis lies in: the *influence of the petty bourgeoisie*, principally the students, which is where the majority of its members and leaders have come from; and the lack of roots in the working class.

Because we say these things, the Bolshevik Faction has been caricatured, as we explained earlier, as seeing a class origin in all the differences.

It is not true that when a comrade makes a criticism or has a difference we immediately accuse him of being petty bourgeois or lumpen. All our meetings have on-going discussions. By contrast, our comrade who was present at a branch meeting of the SWP and at the YSA convention in Cleveland, where the YSA had to come to grips with nothing less than the fact that "it no longer had Vietnam," came away disagreeably surprised by the lack of discussion.

The opposite happened to Peter Camejo when he attended the congress of the PRT (La Verdad) in 1970. Peter did not really understand what was happening. Nearly all

the members were heatedly discussing among themselves the content of the resolutions. No one was expelled, and there was agreement to apply the line adopted from that day on. Peter, who was not used to strong but frank discussions, thought that the party was coming apart. All of this is the opposite of the legends being spun about us.

Of course it is true that many times we do point to the problems that have a class origin, when that is the case. But in this we are simply following Hansen and Trotsky. Hansen's position was summarized in the criticism he made of the IMT when he said that "the key lies in the lack of roots in the working class and the labor movement. They lack the steadying influence of immersion in the proletariat."²⁰ "The line of the International Executive Committee Majority Tendency represents a bending to the radicalized petty-bourgeois milieu. . . ."²¹

And Trotsky, referring to the factional struggle within the SWP, said: "Any serious factional fight in a party is always in the final analysis a reflection of the class struggle. The Majority faction established from the beginning the ideological dependence of the opposition upon petty-bourgeois democracy. The opposition, on the contrary, precisely because of its petty-bourgeois character, does not even attempt to look for the social roots of the hostile camp."²²

Trotsky never made a self-criticism of these positions; we don't know if Comrade Hansen ever did. But they seem to us to be correct, and in this we have always been their disciples.

We apply the Marxist method to characterize any more or less permanent confrontation or discussion. The fact that a discussion is prolonged and serious can only be the result of social and class pressures. That is different from conjunctural, short-term discussions or theoretical polemics. These do not bear such a close relationship to class pressures. Therefore the ultraleft—and Stalinism in one of its typical bureaucratic maneuvers—commit an error when they say "uncover" class differences in any polemic. But this grave error does not justify the opposite error, which is no less grave: to refuse to utilize the Marxist class analysis to judge internal struggles that go on for years.

Since the Tenth World Congress the IMT line has brought us further and further from the working class and has led to an extraordinary development of sensitivity to the pressures of the petty-bourgeois milieu. In other words, the policy approved by the Tenth World Congress and followed since then has increased the influence of the petty bourgeoisie on the leaders of the IMT.

In the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" we explained the democratic deviations of the SWP leadership and the crises in the LTF:

"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."²³

The young leaders of the SWP simply have an intellectual understanding of revolutionary Marxism, because due

to the tremendous backwardness of the United States workers movement, this leadership could not be forged in the creative practice of strikes, of class and revolutionary mobilizations, but instead simply in pro-human rights, democratic solidarity, and protest actions, and in the experience of the antiwar movement during the Vietnam War.

The building of the IMT-SWP bloc, rather than making it possible to overcome these mutual limitations, has made the new leadership of the United Secretariat more susceptible to the pressures of the petty bourgeoisie, the students, and even the bourgeois-democratic prejudices of the working-class masses of Europe and the United States.

Therefore, the social character of the crisis makes the Fourth International's current problems very serious. And it is this social character that explains the phenomenon of the convergence of theoretical, political, organizational, and moral deviations and revisions that we are suffering in the Fourth International, led by the present unprincipled bloc.

Proletarianization

At this time the International requires a complete revolution and the initiation of a new stage, a stage of real proletarianization. The dangers that threaten the International's ability to fulfill its historic role are somewhat analogous to those that Trotsky pointed out for the SWP at the end of 1930s.

"The class composition of the party must correspond to its class program," Trotsky said in January 1940. And he added that "the American section of the Fourth International will either become proletarian or it will cease to exist."²⁴ Our International is at a similar crossroad. The Fourth International will either proletarianize itself and make itself really Bolshevik, or the Fourth International led by the United Secretariat will go into a period of decay and degeneration.

Comrades in various countries, many of whom have followed the orientations of the IMT or the Unprincipled Bloc, such as the leaderships of the French and Spanish LCRs and the Mexican PRT, have adopted self-critical positions. This development indicates that it is possible to set out on the road to overcoming the crisis and to stop the continuing slide down into it.

The fact that we are beginning to see people inside the International insistently raising the need to proletarianize is also a symptom of the fact that our world party is endowed with internal defenses that open up big possibilities to turn around the present course.

Unfortunately the present leadership is trying to channel all these worries by opportunistically raising the call to "continue the proletarian orientation" in order to smuggle in a continuation of the policy of consensus and of concessions to petty-bourgeois pressures.

The proletarianization of the International must start by laying out a policy that is oriented toward the present problems of the working class and that focuses activity on pushing forward the workers struggles against the austerity plans and imperialist policies. In the immediate period proletarianization means that great importance is given to integrating the national sections into trade-union life and into the organizations for struggle that the masses adopt.

If we were to make a summary formulation of the most general tactic of the Trotskyists, bearing in mind that the way the tactics are combined and the relative weight of

each depends on concrete and tremendously unequal conditions, we could summarize it in three fundamental lines: fostering unity and the struggle against the austerity plans; fostering the democratic and anti-imperialist struggles and unity in action; and fostering class independence.

But at the same time proletarianization means a transformation of internal life and of how membership is viewed. As Trotsky said, we must avoid the danger that "intellectuals and professionals suppress the working-class minority, condemn it to silence and transform the party into a very intelligent discussion group, but one that is absolutely uninhabitable for workers." This is also the present situation of the great majority of the sections of the Fourth International.

The criteria of membership in the sections of the International are frequently completely distorted, and it comes to be felt that the greater a person's erudition and ability to discuss, the better member he is. In line with this, the regional and national leaderships of the organizations are primarily constituted on the basis of academic criteria.

In a specific period of initial accumulation of cadres, when an organization is first being established, it is difficult to counteract this situation. But once a certain level of development has been reached, which is the case with the majority of the sections of the Fourth International, it is absolutely indispensable and possible to rigorously impose the criterion that membership is judged in accordance with organized activity and initiatives among the masses. Along with this criterion it is indispensable to facilitate to the maximum the participation of workers in party life and in leadership bodies.

The proletarianization of the International must begin with its leadership and with the leadership of its sections, removing the academics and dilettantes and opening the road to the cadres who are most experienced in strikes, in mass mobilizations, or in the unions.

The United Secretariat majority's criterion of establishing leadership teams made up of "comrades of different viewpoints and experiences in the party,"²⁵ which is being proposed for the next world congress and is what is now being applied, seeks to set up leadership bodies with an eye toward the needs of discussion rather than ability to carry out activity. Behind this formula is the search for ways to perpetuate consensus as the method of leadership.

Footnotes to Chapter VI

1. James P. Cannon, *Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, Pathfinder Press, 1972, p. 51.
2. *The Militant*, February 9, 1979, p. 18.
3. "The Character of the Revolution" (June 18, 1931), in Leon Trotsky, *The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)*, Pathfinder Press, 1973, p. 141.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.
5. "Message to the Conference of the Spanish Left Opposition" (March 7, 1932), in *ibid.*, p. 171-172.
6. "The International Relations of the Spanish Section" (March 7, 1932), in *ibid.*, p. 176.
7. *Documents of the Fourth International (1933-1940)*, pp. 342-343.
8. "Spanish Communism and the Catalan Federation" (July 8, 1931) in *The Spanish Revolution*, . . . , p. 154.
9. "A Letter to the National Sections" (December 22, 1931) in *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1930-31)*, Pathfinder

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11. Leon Trotsky: "Carta a Nin" (March 20, 1931) in *La revolución española*, Ed. Fontanela 1977, Vol. 1, p. 104.

12. "Letter to James P. Cannon" (December 5, 1938), *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938-39)*, p. 310.

13. "Discussions with Trotsky" (June 12-15, 1940), *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-40)*, p. 286.

14. "A Letter to the National Sections," *op. cit.*, p. 370.

15. V.I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, (Progress Publishers, 1973), p. 480.

16. "The Accomplishments of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction: A Balance Sheet," by Jack Barnes, IIBD, Vol. XIV, No. 8, September 1977, p. 26.

17. "Discussions with Trotsky: I" (March 20, 1938), *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)*, p. 292.

18. "On the Molinier Group," *Documents of the . . .*, p. 262.

19. "A Letter to the Conference of the French Communist League" (September 25, 1931), *Writings . . . (1930-31)*, p. 326.

20. "Preliminary Report to New York Caucus of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction on Fourth World Congress Since Reunification (Tenth World Congress)," by Joseph Hansen, SWP IIB, April 1974, p. 9.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

22. Leon Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism*, p. 60.

23. "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency," *op. cit.*, p. 28.

24. *In Defense of Marxism*, p. 94.

25. "The World Political Situation and the Tasks of the Fourth International," p. 26.

CHAPTER VII

THE BOLSHEVIK FACTION

1. Our 'Model' Parties

Just as we have analyzed the situation of the "models" of the United Secretariat majority, we must now do the same with the parties and groups oriented by the Bolshevik Faction.

When the Bolshevik Tendency was founded in August 1976 it had 3,944 members, of whom the ratio of Argentines to non-Argentines was 3.25 to 1. When the Faction was formed in July 1978 we had already grown to 5,746 members and, at the beginning of 1979, when this declaration was finished, we have 7,815, with the relationship of Argentines to non-Argentines now approximately 1.5 to 1.

The Bolshevik Faction distributes 70,000 copies of the Trotskyist press around the world each month. It has a center with more than 10 full-timers, a building better than the United Secretariat's, where its activities are concentrated, and a budget of 10,000 dollars a month.

In the campaign to free the prisoners in Brazil at the end of 1978, in which we received the support of the entire International, the Bolshevik Faction carried out 80 percent of this work in 15 days, which led Amnesty International to recognize that this was the most important campaign that had been carried out in this period for political prisoners. In all the countries where our faction had influence they were able to act in the same manner, causing a real political impact.

The figures we will cite can mean a lot or a little. They would mean little if they were members of the United Secretariat or SWP type, but our members are active at all times, and they all act on the basis of common agreement. Our number of members has a relationship to the number of papers that are sold and the amount of money that is raised in the financial campaigns. This is how we must analyze these figures, as we did with the United Secretariat's "model" parties.

The Brazilian PST has the best press in the International, publishes a printed, legal 44-page magazine, with a press run of 30,000 copies. Of these, 6,000 are distributed by hand and 24,000 at newsstands. It also puts out a fortnightly printed newspaper of 4 pages and 10,000

copies. Of the total 30,000 copies, 20,000 are paid for.

The Argentine PST, completely underground, has at present 5,000 members, continues to publish a printed newspaper and has another publication. The two together have a press run of 10,000 copies. In addition they publish two issues of *Revista de América* there, with a run of 3,000 each, which were sold out.

The Colombian PST sells a well-printed, two color weekly paper, which they print 6,000 copies of (and 4,000 are paid for). The PST of Panama publishes a fortnightly with sales of 1,500 copies. In El Salvador, despite the conditions of repression, a small group of comrades, a majority of whom are workers, edit a clandestine monthly and sell 400 mimeographed copies. The comrades in Costa Rica sell 1,800 copies per month of their paper. In Venezuela 2,500 copies of a two-color fortnightly are sold.

In Bolivia a historic event has taken place: our little group of comrades has been able to put out the first printed, regular periodical in the history of Trotskyism in that country, and they sell 3,000 copies every two weeks. The same thing is taking place in Peru. The first regular, printed publication that a Trotskyist group affiliated to the Fourth International has been able to put out in the International's entire thirty-year history in that country, is the one published by the Bolshevik Faction's organization. Several thousand copies are sold by hand.

In Ecuador they are able to publish a regular mimeographed monthly. Another success is Spain, where a regular monthly publication is published, of which 4,500 copies are sold by hand and absolutely every one is paid for.

We won't dwell on Italy, where for the first time they have been able to put out fortnightly publications surpassing anything that the section had done in its entire history.

All of them are publications of high quality. They appear regularly, provide a line for activity and reflect the work the party is carrying out, with healthy finances. We should compare this with *Combate* and *Rouge*. The Bolshevik Faction has no publication that is on a tightrope or

is being asphyxiated, or calls on its readers for aid. On the contrary, the Faction is at the factory gates every week, or every fifteen days, with a publication that is constantly improving and increasing its run.

These figures that show a press on the rise, making constant progress, would of themselves be enough to indicate the situation of our parties and groups. But the campaign of slanders and silence by the members of the majority of the United Secretariat has been so large that it is worthwhile adding other figures, all provable, that can be compared with the data we gave regarding the majority's model parties. And, finally, it is necessary that justice be done, recognizing the truth and ending the campaign of silence and falsehoods.

2. We must reject the campaign of silence and slanders against the Argentine PST! We must reject the infamous campaign of slanders against the leaders of the Argentine PST in exile!

The work carried out by the Argentine PST is of much greater scope than the work of French Trotskyism in the 1940-44 resistance, and is only comparable to the clandestine work of Trotskyism in Stalinist Russia. Despite the persecution—the PST was outlawed by the dictatorship's decree, with dozens of prisoners, dead, disappeared, tortured, exiled—it has more than 5,000 militants and 18,000 members counting militants and sympathizers.

Under the Videla dictatorship it is not only in 800 factories doing trade-union work, but it has been able to carry out a financial campaign that surpassed 300,000 dollars (according to the reports before the campaign ended).

As a first step in abandoning its policy of slanders and subjective analysis, the International must compare this campaign to what has been achieved in the United States or in France, taking into account the Argentine minimum wage (60 dollars) and the minimum wage in those two countries. The Argentine PST's campaign would be like the SWP or LCR having carried out a campaign to raise around a million and a half dollars.

The PST(A) has to be compared to the Spanish LCR, the United Secretariat's model of models. While the PST(A) got 200,000 votes in the elections, the LCR got 40,000 in a country with a larger population. It should be compared to the Mexican PRT which was barely able to collect 5,000 signatures for its legal recognition, while the Argentine PST, which needed 50,000, got 50,000. In making the comparison we should note that the PRT(M) took in 13,000 dollars in its financial campaign, compared to the amount for the PST(A).

Of the delegation of 12 Argentine comrades who were at the Tenth World Congress, one was assassinated by the Triple A, and another has been a prisoner for three years. César Robles, leader of important party activity in the working class such as the port strike of 1966-67 and the formation of the class-struggle trade union tendency that headed the Sitrac-Sitram, and José Francisco Páez, metalworker, leader of Sitrac-Sitram and of the two Cordobazos, must head up the honorary presiding committee of the Eleventh World Congress.

For those who were saying, prior to the 1976 coup, that the PST was a reformist party that was only suitable for legality and would disappear with clandestinity, for those who went around the world saying that the PST had disappeared, we have a proposal, the only one that can

demonstrate that they are honest and recognize errors. The Eleventh World Congress should pass the following motion:

"The Eleventh World Congress sends its heartfelt and fraternal salute to the heroic comrades of the Argentine PST, Argentine section of the Fourth International, the largest Trotskyist party in the world and a magnificent example of how to build a revolutionary party in the underground, of how to confront a repressive dictatorship and how to proletarianize the leadership and the ranks of the party."

But more important than that, the Eleventh World Congress should put an end to the campaign of silence and slanders. It should bestow on the Argentine PST the most fraternal solidarity, holding it up as an example to the whole world Trotskyist movement, holding conferences, exhibiting the publications that are being put out in the underground.

3. We must acknowledge that the Brazilian PST is the fastest growing party! We must put an end to the lies about which are the models of the International!

The Brazilian party began its work inside the country in 1974, with less than a dozen members. In 1976, when the Bolshevik Tendency was founded, it had reached 100 members, and today it is over 800.

Two years ago they put out a mimeographed periodical, with 500 copies of each issue, which came out irregularly. Its present press, therefore, is the culmination of spectacular development.

The party does work in six states, has more than twenty full-timers and seven headquarters.

The last financial campaign, in which about 40,000 dollars was collected for the end of the year, was completed according to plan while the leadership was in jail. Neither this work nor any other work was dropped. Likewise, although no one is obliged to go into a factory, there is a growing policy of proletarianization within the party.

In the elections the comrades supported working-class and socialist candidates. These candidates obtained 150,000 votes. Some of them were exclusively supported by Convergencia: for example Marzilio, the only working-class candidate elected to Brazil's Congress, has declared that his election was the result of the support of the metalworkers union of Santo André and of Convergencia Socialista.

The election campaign, like the campaigns around finances, and freedom for the political prisoners, was carried out while the whole Executive Committee and part of the Central Committee were in prison, and at a time when Convergencia Socialista was under strong persecution by the police.

In addition, in the past year the party voted to proletarianize its cadres. This has reached the point where it has allowed us to participate in all the strike movements that have taken place since, and to have the majority opposition slate in the Bank workers union in Rio de Janeiro. A member of the São Paulo government publicly acknowledged that the strike of 200,000 workers now taking place in São Paulo "is infiltrated by Convergencia Socialista," according to a March 19, 1979 dispatch by Agence France-Presse.

The numbers say it, the government itself says it, and therefore it persecutes us. What will it take for the whole International to recognize it?

4. *The truth about Colombia and the Colombian PST*

It is time now to do justice to the Colombian PST, as a solid party that is undergoing slow, steady growth as well as systematic proletarianization. The PST has known how to make use of the unionization that the Colombian proletariat is today experiencing, organizing dozens of unions and having won 80 trade-union leaders in recent months.

Compare its paper, with 4,000 copies a week, distributed throughout the country, with the PSR's "annual fortnightly."

The PST has 25 political full-timers, workers in 15 cities, and has 20 headquarters throughout the country. At all political meetings it brings five to ten times the crowd of the PSR. Its headquarters are open all day, full of comrades and new people, as can be proved at any time. The PSR headquarters, by contrast, is always closed.

The financial campaign, which like all those of the Bolshevik Faction collect fixed sums, this year brought in 40,000 dollars. Compare all this with the Colombian PSR or the Mexican PRT. The PSR has one full-timer and four headquarters. The PRT(M) collected 13,000 dollars in its financial campaign and has nine full-timers. It is practically impossible to compare both papers.

5. *The truth about the other parties of the Bolshevik Faction*

The PST of Panama has won an extraordinary victory for Latin American and world Trotskyism by getting a member and five sympathizers elected as representatives to the National Assembly. Our Costa Rican comrades continue working with the PAL (Partido Auténtico Limónés) with the aim of winning them definitively to Trotskyism after the PAL publicly broke with the OST.

The rumor is circulating that the PST of Venezuela has been dissolved. We don't know what this is based on since they are editing a fortnightly and are the first Trotskyists to have achieved the leadership of the two most important class-struggle unions in the country: the Unión de Trabajadores de la Industria Textil de Caracas and the Sindicato Unico Textil de Maracay, and they have been at the head of solidarity work with Nicaragua in the universities in Caracas. Paraphrasing the authors of the "Reply to the Bolshevik Tendency," we say: "Long live a dozen 'dissolutions' like this!"

The strongest party affiliated to the Fourth International in Peru is the one that emerged from the unification of the PST with the FIR-POC. It has opened 17 headquarters throughout the country in less than a year, and is the only one that has regularly published a newspaper.

In Mexico the Bolshevik Faction comrades are the only ones who, despite complete disagreement with the methods and concepts of the majority leadership, have done everything possible to see that the majority leadership can maintain itself as such in order to insure the party's participation in the election campaign. And they are the only ones who, once the TOI provoked paralysis of the party, continued putting forward the policy of a Workers and Socialist Pole, which was the policy the Central Committee had adopted. In the Naucalpan zone, where the BF is in the majority, the campaign is being carried out.

Despite the terrible conditions of repression that exist on both banks of the Río de la Plata, the heroic Uruguayan PST, a majority of which supports the Bolshevik Faction, is maintaining an organized group of militants in exile in

Argentina and works within Uruguay itself through an underground periodical, at the same time that it insures that attention is paid to its prisoners and families.

The LSR in Italy has overcome the chronic crisis of Italian Trotskyism, developing an organization that is much stronger and more dynamic than the official section, despite its youth.

To summarize, we demand an end to the campaign of slanders, silence and lack of solidarity with all the groups oriented by the BF, and that they be recognized as a source of pride for our International.

6. *No to Fraud!*

The maneuvers that the Unprincipled Bloc leading the International has been carrying out also confront the Fourth International with the grave danger that there will be an attempt at a new fraud at the Eleventh World Congress, equal to or greater than those carried out in the past.

At the Ninth World Congress the Argentine PST, then called the PRT (Verdad), had its recognition taken away in order to give representation to the PRT (Combatiente), which was later to found the ERP. This happened despite the categorical proof that was presented showing that the PRT (La Verdad) was the majority (a tape in which the leadership of the PRT(C) acknowledged that the PRT (La Verdad) had had a majority at the congress).

At the Tenth Congress the most scandalous fraud was the exaggeration regarding the number of members who followed the IMT in Bolivia, which a distinguished leader of the IMT, Comrade Alfonso of the Mexican PRT, acknowledged with total honesty to the secretariat of the Colombian PST.

In the present period we have seen how the leaders of the Unprincipled Bloc present exaggerated figures regarding the membership in various countries such as Spain, Mexico, and Colombia. Members of the United Secretariat went so far as to certify that the Proletarian Democracy Tendency in the Colombian PST had the majority of the organization in January 1978, and the United Secretariat accepted a list of supposed members that, up to the present, they have refused to make known to the International and the leadership of the Colombian PST.

When this list is turned over, if it ever is, the whole Fourth International will be able to verify the scandalous fraud that the Unprincipled Bloc carried out against the leadership of the Colombian PST and against the Bolshevik Tendency. All members of the International must raise the slogan "No to fraud at the Eleventh World Congress!"

Finally, we want to emphasize that we have confidence in the ranks of our International. We know of the self-sacrifice and the heroism of the comrades who are really activist members of the sections, upon whom falls not only the weight of all the organization's work, but also the dead weight of the dilettantes, of those who are not active and yet still continue as "members."

We urgently call on these comrades, authentic Bolshevik members, to overturn the crisis in our International and to transform it into a centralized party with a clear program for action. In order to do this we need to work out a set of rules that will prevent the frauds of the previous congresses, that will guarantee representation that reflects the reality of the different tendencies or factions that exist. As soon as the set of rules is worked out and put into practice

the Bolshevik Faction will discuss its dissolution and, when the Eleventh World Congress has taken place, it will dissolve into a tendency for six months, and then dissolve itself definitively.

We want to take full part in the life of the International and not be segregated by the infamous slander campaign the United Secretariat is carrying out against us and by the fraudulent criteria that were in effect up to now.

We are ready to bring all our finances, and membership and leadership capabilities to the permanent bodies of our International, without any sectarian or factionalist anxiety. The only thing we demand is that there be a similar criterion for the organization of the World Congress, with respect to the conception of membership and representation, because without that there can not be democracy or centralism.

PROGRAM OF THE BOLSHEVIK FACTION

The ever sharper crisis of our International, provoked by the leadership of the present Unprincipled Bloc, imposes upon us the task of redoubling our efforts to overturn its present policy. The only final solution to overcoming this crisis is to take the leadership into our own hands, which we will fight unstintingly to do.

By constituting ourselves as a faction, we are taking as our program the central points of the Bolshevik Tendency, but adjusted to the new situation in our International since the rise of the new leadership formed by the bloc of the ex-IMT and the SWP.

To clarify things for all the comrades we are presenting in summary form the points of our program for the Eleventh World Congress. This summarizes the questions under discussion, our positions, and our critique of the United Secretariat's positions. It should be understood that this is not a general program and that therefore some points are not explicitly discussed.

A. We Demand A Balance Sheet for the Period From the Tenth to the Eleventh World Congress

a. Sufficiently in advance of the World Congress, the leadership must send all the sections a detailed organizational and political evaluation of what has transpired from the Tenth World Congress to the present. This must basically deal with the resolutions passed by that congress, which were the theoretical and programmatic basis for the activity of our world party. We demand that the discussion of this balance sheet be the first and foremost point at the Congress.

b. That the Congress condemn the Tenth World Congress lines on Europe and Latin America as vanguardist and ultraleft.

c. That the IMT's self-criticism on Latin America, and the way it was accepted by the ex-LTF and the SWP, be rejected. We must resolve that the only worthwhile self-criticism must be concretized by rejecting the ex-leadership of the IMT as a valid leadership for the Fourth International.

d. For the explicit approval of the LTF's criticisms of the IMT's leadership of our International; for explicit approval of the LTF's program, especially the points that focus on the struggle against the extension of the guerrillaist deviation to other continents, the need to approve *The Underlying Differences in Method* by Joseph Hansen, and

the change in leadership of the International.

e. That in this first point on the agenda there be a study of the present crisis of the International and its most important parties, among which are included some that the leadership itself considered to be in crisis: i.e., the Spanish LCR, the French LCR, and the Mexican PRT.

The World Congress must reject the United Secretariat's maneuver of placing the blame for these crises on the leaderships of these parties, and must point out that the guilty parties are, first, the IMT leadership, and today the present Unprincipled Bloc.

B. We Must Reject "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" as Revisionist!

a. Against the "programmatic and unprincipled norm" of granting "unfettered political freedom" to the counterrevolutionaries under the dictatorship of the proletariat!

b. Against "no recourse to retroactive delinquency" during the civil war!

c. Against the norms that oppose executions without previous written judgments and preexisting laws in the struggle against the shah's torturers, without taking into account the marvelous experience of the Iranian revolution, which did the opposite!

d. Against the lack of foresight regarding confrontations between workers states, which left us disarmed in face of China's invasion of Vietnam!

e. Against portraying the bourgeois democracies as bestowing more democratic rights and more proletarian democracy than the existing workers states!

f. Against the assertion that the Chinese and Vietnamese workers states did not expand proletarian democracy over what existed under the Chiang Kai-shek regime and the Yankee occupation!

g. Against abandoning the Trotskyist program of political revolution in the USSR and the other deformed workers states by calling for legality for all political parties as a programmatic norm of the Fourth International!

h. Against the criminal silence regarding world imperialism and its counterrevolutionary policy!

i. Against ignoring the fundamental role of our international and national parties in the development of the workers revolution!

C. For Approval of the Bolshevik Faction's Resolution "Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat"!

a. For the granting of political freedoms that is *limited* in view of the needs of defense of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the development of the socialist revolution!

b. For the application of the concept of "retroactive delinquency" to the Shah of Iran, Pinochet, Somoza, and their executioners!

c. For warm support to the Iranian people who lynched a few of the assassins in the pay of the shah, without written law or previous trial, and who, because of this, are still revolutionaries!

d. For support to the foresight of the Bolshevik Faction's resolution on the confrontations between workers states! For condemnation of any aggression by any workers state against another and for the recognition that we must make an analysis and develop a program regarding this

new phenomenon of the postwar period!

e. For recognition that the bourgeois democracies of the metropolitan countries are imperialist democracies, resting upon the totalitarian regimes of the backward countries, and on the exploitation of the working masses of those countries! For recognition that in any workers state there is much more proletarian democracy than in the imperialist regimes!

f. For the categorical defense of the definition that there has been an expansion of proletarian democracy in the Chinese and Vietnamese workers states in comparison to the previous regimes!

g. For the reaffirmation of the Trotskyist program of political revolution in the USSR and the other deformed workers states! The bureaucracy, the workers' and kolkhoz aristocracy, and the parties that represent them, must be thrown out of the revolutionary soviets! For legality only for those soviet parties that the masses, through their majority vote, decide are soviet parties!

h. For the systematic denunciation of world imperialism and its counterrevolutionary policy as the greatest danger to the proletarian dictatorships!

i. For recognition that the Fourth International and the Trotskyist and semi-Trotskyist parties are the fundamental factor for the achievement of the revolutionary dictatorships of the proletariat and the development of the international socialist revolution!

D. We Must Explicitly Reject the Analyses of the World Political Resolution and the Characterization of Eurocommunism!

a. We must reject the onesided, triumphalist, and Eurocentric analysis of the United Secretariat because it ignores the negative crises of the world workers movement and because it asserts that the world revolution is increasingly shifting toward Europe, thereby ignoring the deep significance of the Iranian revolution, the armed struggle in Nicaragua, the multitudinous upsurge in Peru, and the march of the African revolution!

b. We must criticize the fact that the resolutions totally ignore the crisis of leadership of the world workers movement as the most serious problem facing the workers!

c. We must repudiate the lack of recognition that the offensive against the standard of living and jobs of the world proletariat is one of the most important crises, a constantly growing crisis that is even spreading to the workers states!

d. We must reject the United Secretariat's blind insistence in its documents for the Eleventh World Congress on ignoring the danger of invasions of one workers state by another!

e. Against the capitulation first formulated in the "World Political Resolution" and confirmed in "Eurocommunism, A New Crisis of Stalinism," which looks at the essence of Eurocommunism from the vantage point of the ties of the Communist parties to Moscow, leading them to picture Eurocommunism as progressive!

E. For Approving the "Declaration of the Bolshevik Faction" As It Relates to the World Situation and Eurocommunism!

a. We must approve the Bolshevik Faction's analysis that maintains that the colossal revolutionary upsurge we

are now witnessing is contradictory and involves not just Europe but other parts of the world. For recognition that the Iranian revolution once again shifts the epicenter of the world revolution to the colonial world, which does not mean to deny the possibility that Europe will once again become the axis of the upsurge!

b. For recognition that the crisis of leadership of the world workers movement has sharpened as a result of the upsurge and is the Achilles heel of the socialist revolution!

c. For the denunciation of the offensive against the standard of living and jobs of the workers of the world in the present period, which constitutes one of the fundamental points of our analysis and program!

d. We must reaffirm the Bolshevik Faction's line of denouncing the danger of invasions of one workers state by another!

e. For the BF's characterization that Eurocommunism involves CPs taking their distance from Moscow in order to pass into the service of the imperialist bourgeoisies, which makes it a reactionary phenomenon, since the parties that uphold it continue to be Stalinist, but are now national Stalinists!

F. We Must Reject the Fourteen Suggestions of the United Secretariat and Approve the Programmatic Lines of the Bolshevik Faction!

a. We must vote for a revolutionary program for Europe and the world, the backbone of which should be to give impetus to the united front of the workers movement and the workers against the exploiters' present generalized plans of hunger and unemployment! For defense of the standard of living of the workers of the workers states, as an immediate slogan of our program of political revolution!

b. We must be the champions in denouncing our own country's imperialism, systematically condemning the aggression and exploitation of the colonial and semicolonial peoples and defending the national movements!

Against the present United Secretariat's theoretical and political abandonment of defense of the workers states in the face of the propaganda and ideological attacks of imperialism! For recognition that this defense is one of the primary tasks of the Fourth International and of the world proletariat! For a systematic campaign to achieve a united front of the workers states against imperialism!

For the dismantling of NATO!

c. For implacable struggle against so-called 'Eurocommunism' and its counterrevolutionary role!

The Trotskyist program must clearly say: "Down with the traitors Carrillo, Berlinguer and Marchais and their collaboration with the imperialist governments to impose hunger and unemployment, and to perpetuate the capitalist system!"

d. For special attention by the Fourth International to the Black revolution in southern Africa! Against viewing this revolution as a tribal phenomenon or through abstract and propagandistic lines! For workers and peasants governments to replace the reformist governments of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau! For Black republics of Zimbabwe and South Africa! But, fundamentally, for the Federation of Black Socialist Republics of Africa. For the united mobilization of the world Black struggle against racism.

e. For the abandonment of the ridiculous and abstract

slogan of a Federation of Socialist Republics of the World, which Trotsky already attacked as typical of Stalinism! For concretizing the correct policy of a Federation of European Socialist Republics in the slogan for a Federation of Iberian Socialist Republics! This slogan must encompass the slogan of the right of self-determination of the Basque, Catalan, and Gallician peoples. For repudiation of the slogan raised by the followers of the United Secretariat of a Federal Republic for Spain.

f. The Iranian revolution has shown that the revolution is not the result of the confrontation between bourgeois democracy and workers democracy to see which of them provides more working-class freedoms, but rather is the result of the armed confrontation between the revolution and the counterrevolution, an armed confrontation in which all methods are utilized for victory. Therefore we say:

Against the United Secretariat's bourgeois conception and for the deepening of the Iranian revolution through the application of the concept of retroactive delinquency, the systematic persecution of the entire counterrevolutionary network that assassinated and tortured the Iranian people!

g. For the establishment of a program for the revolution in Nicaragua and in Peru! This program must be the one the BF developed, particularly for Nicaragua, by raising the necessity for a workers and peasants government based on the FSLN! This must not mean any political support to the FSLN!

G. For a Trotskyist International Made Up of Bolshevik Parties

a. We must reverse the policy of the Unprincipled Bloc that is leading the Fourth International, we must defeat its propagandistic and federative conception and build a Trotskyist International. The objective of this struggle is to achieve a democratically centralized International that politically orients the sections and that turns all its efforts and support to the political and organizational-financial development of the sections that are immersed in the most dramatic situations of the class struggle. The International must be attentive to the opportunities in the class struggle, so that it can determine where, through the revolutionary upsurge and the advance of Trotskyism, it might be possible to make advances in building parties and providing revolutionary leadership of the masses toward power.

b. Against the conception that the national parties should be united fronts of debaters and tendencies whose line is determined through diplomatic consensus!

c. For centralized and disciplined Bolshevik parties that intervene in the class struggle as a single person, through raising the same slogan everywhere, with the orientation of promoting the mobilizations of the workers! For democratic centralism in our parties that provides full freedom of discussion of the political line, and once the line is adopted, for its immediate application!

We must defeat the present orientation of the United Secretariat, which converts the parties into apparatuses for general propaganda around some abstract theme!

Enough of the superdemocratic mania that permits minorities to decide the dates of special congresses, paralyzing the national parties!

For everything being decided by the majority, including

the date of the congresses!

d. In order to achieve all of the above we must vote:

Against the United Secretariat's conception of membership, which bestows this category on the dilettantes who follow it!

For the defense of the self-sacrificing members who carry the weight of the activities of the parties oriented by the majority of the United Secretariat!

For a change in the leadership of the Spanish and French LCRs and the Mexican PRT, which have with total honesty pointed out the crisis in their organizations and the lack of active participation by many of those who claim to be members.

For incorporation into the statutes of all the sections and of the Fourth International a provision that says: "Every member who does not pay dues on time, does not attend weekly meetings, does not distribute the press, and does not carry out the weekly activities voted upon, will be separated from the organization and considered a sympathizer because they only support the party's positions!"

For repudiation of the majority of the Political Bureau of the PRT(M), which has decided that members who are behind in their dues, even more than a year behind, who don't attend meetings, and who carry out no activity can vote for and be elected as delegates to the congress simply by paying up their dues!

We must rid our International of this system that allows the equating of a dilettante, through the payment of back dues, with the best militants!

H. For the Proletarianization of the Fourth International, its Proceedings and its Morality!

a. For construction of Trotskyist parties with mass influence, which orient their work primarily toward the workers' movement and its mobilizations with proposals for action! For the intervention by our parties in the workers' organizations, especially in the unions and the class-struggle currents. This must be the decisive and fundamental orientation of the Fourth International, an orientation that cannot be supplanted by an eclectic orientation towards the women's, ecology, or peasant movements. This means that, while continuing to pay attention to those movements, the center of our activity and orientation is the workers movement.

b. For an authentic proletarianization of our International! This means providing the International with a policy for activity directed primarily at the working-class masses and their organizations. For a policy that will enable us to win the best activists in the class struggle to Trotskyism and will make it possible to carry out an organizational revolution in procedures and morality within our ranks. This organizational revolution must begin with the proletarianization of members coming to us from the petty bourgeoisie.

The time has come to apply to the whole International the recommendations that Trotsky made to the SWP to counteract the intellectual and student petty-bourgeois pressures. The Fourth International will either proletarianize or die!

c. The proletarianization of the Fourth International must begin with its leadership. Therefore we propose:

Remove from the leadership the academics and student leaders who only know the workers movement through photographs. The new leadership must be made up of the

best Trotskyist leaders tested in workers strikes and in the mass mobilizations!

Down with the line of proletarianization that claims to be a "continuation" of the proletarianization of the Tenth World Congress, which was a mixture of guerrillaism and ultraleftism, which is the negation of proletarianization!

We must reject any line that, in the name of proletarianization, is limited to proposing administrative measures or giving advice, as the policy proposed by the United Secretariat majority does.

d. Representation at the Eleventh World Congress must give a majority to the real militants who are working in the workers movement. We must turn back the fraud that the present majority is mounting through inflation of the membership figures of the parties that follow it. The French LCR, the Spanish LCR, and the Mexican PRT must be consistent with the balance sheets they have drawn up of the situation in their parties and must declare the real number of members they have, and not lend themselves to the United Secretariat's game as is now happening!

The United Secretariat must authorize a Bipartite Commission to investigate the financial ledgers of all the Fourth International's sections and sympathizing organizations, which is a basic step in rigorously determining the true number of members.

Any sections that work under conditions of legality and have not regularly put out a weekly paper during the nine month prior to the World Congress should not be recognized under any circumstances as having more than 200

members.

Any section functioning under conditions of legality should have a maximum of 40 members recognized for each full-timer dedicated to political tasks with leadership functions, without including staff members or people working in the apparatus.

With these and other procedures, we will establish an objective mechanism for determining, without room for doubt, then number of real members of each party for the Eleventh World Congress.

These norms must be applied before the World Congress, and must be incorporated into the statutes at the congress!

e. The next world congress must include a provision in its statutes that the following things are incompatible with leadership in the Fourth International: having maintained any type of relationship with the police behind the back of the leadership; having objectively collaborated with a bourgeois regime against workers and peoples struggles; being a representative or high functionary of a bourgeois government; facilitating police persecution against revolutionary militants.

Anyone who is shown to have been involved in this kind of activities must go through a long testing period before having full membership rights or the opportunity to be elected to leadership posts!

Without revolutionary morality we cannot build a revolutionary party!

Without fraternal and comradely relations there is no possibility of democratic centralism!