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### *Editorial Note*

Toward the end of 1970 in Spain, a centrist group that had been evolving toward the left joined the Fourth International. The organization, called the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League), made considerable headway, establishing itself as the largest formation to the left of the Spanish Communist Party. It developed the strongest influence and base in the working-class movement of any Trotskyist organization in Europe, becoming the largest, numerically, outside of the Communist League of France.

However, important political differences that had been developing among the central leaders flared into an internal crisis in 1972. The LCR held its first congress at the beginning of 1972 but did not adopt any political resolutions, only a set of statutes. Before the second congress was held, the organization split into two groups. Both are functioning under the name of the LCR and both claim to represent the majority.

Although the differences stemmed from their work in Spain, the two tendencies that developed in the course of the debate also took varying positions on international questions. One tendency, En Marcha, considered that the "turn" made at the Ninth World Congress constituted an important step forward. The other tendency, Encrucijada, disagreed with this. It held reservations in particular on the resolution on Latin America.

For the information of the membership of the Socialist Workers Party we have translated two documents, one by each tendency, dealing with the international scope of their differences and how these tie in with the problems they have encountered in Spain.

The first document, entitled "The Latest Discussions and Their International Significance," represents the viewpoint of the Encrucijada (Crossroads) tendency.

The second document, entitled "Building the LCR, Spanish Section of the Fourth International," represents the viewpoint of the En Marcha (Underway) tendency.

## THE LATEST DISCUSSIONS AND THEIR INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

### *I. Following the Debate on Workers' Commissions*

The differences that arose over the character of the Workers Commissions and what our political tasks should be in regard to them were linked to deeper differences outlined in earlier documents. These include different conceptions of the structure of the working-class vanguard, attitude toward centrists and ultralefts, the systematizing of the struggle against Stalinism within the framework of a united front policy. From the beginning, the *issue of the united front* provided a basis for differentiating the positions. But above all, it implied a wide span of new points of disagreement.

Behind the first fundamental discussions—such as those concerning the strategic or purely tactical scope of the united front—clearly stood a full range of differences affecting *the very characterization of the period, its revolutionary tasks, and the key to understanding and solving them by means of building a party*. In spite of the fact that it had put forth its positions on these questions in an explicit way from the start ("La Liga en la Encrucijada"—"The League at the Crossroads," pp. 34-35; draft proposals, pp. 3 and 18), the Encrucijada tendency did not focus the discussion in a way to permit linking up the general statements with a whole series of partial approximations. The publication of "La Liga en Marcha" ("The League Underway"), placing the discussion from the outset on the level of principles so as to "prevent false questions from entering in," confirmed in an overall way what we had already been maintaining up to then in a very one-sided and superficial way solely in the polemic over the united front: *that when the two tendencies talk about*

*the Transitional Program they are talking about different things.*

The arguments advanced both in "La Liga en Marcha" and by its adherents in meetings, simultaneously shifted the focus of the discussions toward themes that made it easier to point up the orthodoxy of the Ninth World Congress and to pin a Lambertist label on us because of our genuine rejection of the "dialectics of sectors of intervention" and the "policy of initiatives in action," our allegedly ignoring and forgetting the far left and the workers movement, and our adoption of a united front strategy, etc. We were enjoined to explain ourselves before the organization ("La Liga en Marcha," p. 12). This was also the time when we made some advances in understanding the international polemics touching on our problematic. As a result of all these processes, among other things, *it became clear to us that the international projection of the debate that we had made in "La Liga en la Encrucijada" was inconsistent and incorrect. It was impossible to make any progress in integrating all the partial advances within an overall alternative without a radical criticism of the concepts of the Ninth World Congress on building revolutionary Marxist organizations and on the roots and implications of these concepts, which the League's course has clearly shown to be bankrupt.*

At the same time, the profound crisis that the LCR is going through cannot be understood without placing it in the more general framework of the crisis of the far left as a whole.

### *II. A New Crisis in the Far Left*

In the twilight of Francoism, the mass movement, spurred on by the sharpening crisis of capitalism, again and again runs up against the policy of the Stalinist and union leaderships, outflanking them and in this way sharpening the conflict between a growing sector of vanguard militants and these leaders. To a greater extent than in other countries, the weak Stalinist control over the workers movement limits its capacity to block workers and popular struggles. The proportions of the confrontations are increasing. The widening breaks with reformism, going beyond the radicalization of peripheral sectors can be carried over to the very center of the workers movement. In our country, we can anticipate the direction that will be taken by a wave of radicalization, which we believe will be more generalized, despite its unequal

rates of movement. The emergence of *centrism in the working class* could be one of the next signs of the deepening crisis that Stalinism is suffering.

The layer of militants breaking from the reformist apparatuses is becoming relatively strong numerically in our country. But the political reach of this layer does not correspond to its strength in numbers. Drawing a political balance sheet of the far left since the Burgos trials, we see that it is clearly incapable of providing effective outlets for the immense potentialities of the struggle of the proletariat, which with increasing frequency is going beyond reformism. Such a balance sheet rules out overestimating the virtues of the centrists and ultraleftists to whom the En Marcha tendency has surrendered. It is an attitude that only looks for the "positive" and "pro-

gressive" features of centrism and ultraleftism, without stopping for even one second to observe what the general trajectory of these currents is under the circumstances created by the actual period in the class struggle, and going so far as to ascribe a fundamental role to them in thwarting a hypothetical military coup through which the bourgeoisie might try to find a way out of the crisis of Francoism. We would not be surprised if, following this line of reasoning, they soon made the bourgeoisie the protagonist in overthrowing the dictatorship, a turn some of their documents and verbal statements seem to point to.

As an example, it is worth considering one of the key points that separates the far left as a whole from reformism—the boycott of the union elections. To begin with, it has become clear that the high level of participation in boycotting the 1971 elections was based on the one hand on the deep-going process of radicalization that has spread to broad sections of workers, who are hardly organized, if at all, and on the other hand, on the creation by the dictatorship itself of a framework favoring a momentary convergence of different organizations extending from the most backward syndicalists to the Falangists of the FSR, which were caught up in the momentum of an initiative inspired by a thousand different and conflicting positions. But above all what the comrades of the En Marcha tendency do not take into account when it comes to distributing credits is that this very same far left as a whole, including the League, has been incapable of carrying forward the effect of the boycott by advancing a correct orientation against the CNS and the contract policies and by deepening the developing break between growing sectors of the proletariat and the dictatorship's bureaucratic channels and affirming the principles of an independent class line and workers democracy. The *vacuum* created by this incapacity of the far left to concretize the road that large sectors of the working class demonstrated they were ready to take during the boycott, *has been filled by the class-collaborationist policy of the PCE [Spanish Communist Party] and the right opportunists.* This de facto abdication by some of the far-left organizations is the reason a broad sector of working-class militants has met with increasing difficulties in continuing to advance a class-struggle line. This explains their *relative weakness* in places like Barcelona in face of key demands such as the resignation of shop stewards and panel members, attitude toward contracts, etc.

At the same time the results of this process have rebounded on the far left, causing changes and transformations that indicate its direction of movement. In the middle of last year a process speeded up among the entire far left of adapting to this "fluctuation of the level of mass consciousness." This took the form of abandoning or softening the fight against contract policies and for the resignation of shop stewards and panel members. Ista, Parafomas, the PCE(i), and AURORA were not the only organizations in which this occurred. The adaptation began to affect our own ranks, being reflected in the positions held by the En Marcha comrades. But this adaptation to the "fluctuating level of consciousness" of the masses, for which the political deficiency of the far left is partially responsible, leads to defining a line that is not in terms of the current relationships between classes

and the objective needs of the masses, which have demonstrated their readiness to struggle on a thousand occasions, but rather in terms of the influence of the policy of the Stalinist and trade-union leaderships on the vanguard.

Finally, as we predicted in early analyses, *the dominant basic tendency evolving in the far left, which emerged in a phase of relative ebb in 1968 and in the framework of a disaster for the Workers Commissions under the leadership of the PCE is a tendency in which the progressive abandonment of ultraleftist positions is brought about by impressionistic adaptations to the ebbs and flows of the mass movement, a tendency that leads to rightist opportunism.*

Taken to its logical conclusion, it ends in liquidation of the movement (Ista). Since the end of the First Congress, the most representative comrades of the present En Marcha tendency have been the vehicle for this "Stalinist spontaneity" of the working class inside the organization. Their *overall* orientation must be characterized objectively as an uneven and contradictory line of prostrating themselves before the predominant Carrilloist influence in the milieu. They have taken important steps forward recently in working out an *entryist* tactic for the Workers Commissions without thereby abandoning the traits of adaptation to petty-bourgeois ultraleftism with reference to other sectors or to street initiatives. Hence, "leftist" elements conceal, in the form of street fighting, their profound concern for not breaking "peaceful coexistence" with the PCE in the Workers Commissions. The emphasis placed on pickets as the element of fundamental demarcation was an attempt to avoid approaching the real tasks of the current period: Struggle against the capitalist policy in contracts, for popularizing the commissions with a compulsory mandate, and for the resignation of shop stewards and panel members, which is linked to the struggle against the repression, included in the preparation of overall plans in which the struggle for the unification of the Workers Commissions and the propagation of general alternatives could be tied together most effectively. Therefore, these tasks not only necessitate a relentless battle against the PCE and its centrist and syndicalist lackeys in the Workers Commissions. Still more—to the degree that we do *not wage* this battle we *will be expelled one by one* by the Workers Commissions dominated by the Stalinists, as soon as they notice that our "independent" propaganda is not backed up by any intention to carry out the struggle for the independence of the working class into the field of action, supported by the struggles the workers are prepared to wage. The comrades in the other tendency do not hold this opinion—a sign of their orientation is the interest displayed by Comrade E. at a meeting in Piri in the need to "soften" our tactics regarding shop stewards and panel members, an interest that raised questions in the minds of some comrades: How is our policy different from that of BR? But the fact that in Vigo, in addition to the street confrontations—an aspect that doesn't escape the attention of *Rouge*, which is always very attentive to this angle of the problem, as was pointed up by their unforgettable series on Price Control—one of the most significant series of resignations by shop stewards and panel members was won, is something that should be weighed when we

determine our orientation.

The far left as a whole is already losing ground in the midst of a profound crisis that embraces all of its components, including the sector that considers itself Trotskyist (LCR and AURORA). Different conceptions and practical projections with regard to united front policy at the plant level and in the Workers Commissions have been at the bottom of both the crisis of the Lambertist group and the one we are going through.

This is not accidental. It goes beyond responding to the intense pressure for unity that the rise of the mass struggle is bringing to bear on an extremely fragmented vanguard. It reflects the contradictions in the search for a political

framework that could provide a basis for handling the gigantic demands facing the vanguard today—demands whose fulfillment is going to depend on which line wins out, the one calling for a united front of the workers, or one or another variant of the popular front. The question is whether the struggle for a united front is identical with the fight to develop the class independence of the proletariat, which is only possible on the basis of class objectives formulated by a communist organization struggling to build a party. The question is whether the Transitional Program provides the basis for building such a party by helping to bring about the unification of the fights waged by the workers on a class-struggle line.

### III. What Is the Significance of the Transitional Program?

Our tendency does not hesitate to call the Transitional Program the Communist Manifesto of our epoch, the age in which the only hope of a solution—a socialist revolution—rests in the hands of the working class and when the blocking of the road to this goal—the objective toward which all the growing struggles of this class point—has permitted the decay of the system to assume monstrous forms and proportions. The Transitional Program is not simply a document that has an inestimable "historical value" but that was applicable only in the immediate context of the World War II period. It also provides a general formulation of the laws of capitalist decay and revolutionary mass mobilization for a whole historical stage, the stage of the death agony of capitalism and Stalinism.

Only an understanding of these laws can arm revolutionists for the decisive struggle, which is to spur on the developing consciousness of the proletariat and its vanguard, preparing them so that they will be able at exactly the right time to take advantage consciously of the tendencies inherent in the system's own decay, which is hurling the entire planet into an abyss, so as to turn the course of development consciously in a new direction. The founding of the Fourth International in 1938 and the document on which it was based, the Transitional Program, corresponded to the same strategic need. They represented the way for overcoming the crisis of leadership in the working class that was taking on the dimensions of a crisis of human civilization as a whole. Trotsky himself said in a discussion on the Transitional Program with the SWP in 1938: "The significance of the program is the significance of the party. . . . Now, what is the party? In what does the cohesion consist? This cohesion is a common understanding of the events, of the tasks, and this common understanding—that is the program of the party." ["Completing the Program and Putting It to Work," *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973, p. 136.] Only through the conscious and organized intervention of the revolutionary vanguard in the course of day-to-day struggles itself, linking up these struggles as

they inevitably come into conflict with the retrograde tendencies of decaying capitalism to a body of transitional demands as well as forms of combat and organization directly challenging the very roots of bourgeois power is it possible to create a movement that can transform spontaneous revolutionary outbursts into revolutionary consciousness, cut off the proletariat from its treacherous leaderships, and advance the building of the party the proletariat needs to raise itself to the position of a ruling class and take power.

All of this makes the Transitional Program *the concentrated, algebraic expression of the central strategic task and the method that opens up the way for accomplishing this task through building the Fourth International, which is the first and last slogan of this document.* It is *this general strategy and method* that our tendency has said a revolutionary Marxist group should adopt fully from its inception, regardless of the specific situation in which it finds itself or its level of development. At the outset a Trotskyist group cannot take the lead in mobilizations of large sectors of the masses. But through participating in class struggles it can and must bring all its strength to bear to help the workers bridge the gap between their present level of consciousness and the objective needs facing their class, in the process winning part of the vanguard that distinguishes itself in the struggles. Progress in applying the Transitional Program to given conditions and their evolution, to changes in the relationship of forces and the new experiences of the masses, formulation of a detailed and precise action program for the Spanish socialist revolution, is closely linked to the Trotskyist group increasing its involvement in the revolutionary process the masses are undergoing and its capacity to become the conscious expression of this process. *This is the only way a small group has of becoming a mass revolutionary party.* There are no shortcuts of either a "technical" or "tactical" type.

This, moreover, does not mean making the Transitional Program into some kind of "holy writ," a catechism or a "Little Red Book" for Trotskyists, that has to be repeated by rote no matter what the conditions of the time

and place. Nor does it mean reducing our policy to an abstract projection of the general tendencies of world development that belong to a whole historical period, of the general strategic perspectives that flow from this development, disregarding the specific turns it may take, and thus failing to recognize the gradations between the general and the particular. As Trotsky said: "The Program is only a first approximation. It is too general in the sense in which it is presented to the international conference in the next period. It expresses the general tendency of development in the whole world. . . . It is clear that the general characteristics of the world situation are common because they are all under the pressure of the imperialist economy, but every country has its peculiar conditions and real live politics must begin with these peculiar conditions in each country and even in each part of the country. This is why a very serious approach to the program is the first duty of every comrade in the United States." ["Completing the Program . . .," *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, p. 138.]

But new events and phenomena, changes occurring in the objective situation and the relationship between classes,

can only be analyzed as *the specific expression of the general laws of capitalist decay and mass mobilization in the present historical stage*. This is essential to keep from magnifying what are in fact conjunctural trends (usually offset or transformed by other such trends) into fundamental tendencies for a whole period. Such an error forms the basis of an impressionistic kind of analysis that can only lead to adapting to the surface reality, losing sight of the underlying tendencies that are inevitably going to assert their dominance, and abandoning the revolutionary strategy founded on them.

"There are two dangers in the elaboration of the program. The first is to remain on general abstract lines and to repeat the general slogan without real connection with the trade unions in the locality. That is the direction of sectarian abstraction. The other is to the contrary, to adapt too much to the local conditions, to lose the general revolutionary line." [*Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.] These two dangers, which were only indicated in 1938, later took on an unexpected scope, leading to profound *degenerations within the international Trotskyist movement*.

#### IV. To Each His Own Program

##### 1. On 'National Limitations'

Before they started calling us "Hegelians" and purveyors of "rarified arguments," attacks we knew were bound to come since they flow from the political character of the other tendency, we stressed the combined and uneven nature of a whole body of political elaboration where our backwardness is abysmal.

In the "Liga en la Encrucijada" (pp. 4, 5, 6) and in our proposed theses for discussion (pp. 1, 2, 3), we judged that it was impossible to undertake this kind of elaboration apart from a process of intervening in class struggles, progressively acquiring a scientific knowledge of the reality, assimilating the revolutionary experience of the world working class as well as that of our country, and learning to apply the basic principles of revolutionary Marxism in the context of work organized on a national and international scale. All that, we said, "would not drop from heaven."

To be more concrete: Our tendency did not claim that the League should have ready-made a compendium of organically interconnected economic and democratic immediate demands; methods of economic and democratic struggle; transitional demands, forms of struggle, and organizational slogans; socialist slogans; critiques of other currents; etc. Some of us even think that part of the platform included in the Political Bureau's 44-page document is highly abstract. To be still more concrete: We have specified the inseparably linked aspects that should be involved in this process of elaboration, which goes

hand in hand with building a centralized organization on a national scale *by participating fully in workers struggles and educating the broad vanguard of these struggles to assure that the working class will play the leading role in the organized struggle against the dictatorship, whose elimination will open the way to a socialist republic. This will also be achieved by giving impetus to radicalizing and broadening the mobilizations of students and other social layers and developing the tactical and organizational couplings needed to incorporate these struggles into the strategic framework set forth above. It is all this that called for an accelerated process of defining the conditions for elaborating platforms such as the one the Political Bureau put together in two weeks' time. (Such prerequisites would, in fact, include in-depth analysis of the social basis and content of the revolution, along with a characterization of its driving forces; and much greater progress than was achieved in analyzing the process of reorganizing the proletariat, etc. And all of this should be the foundation of progressively adjusting projections of the fundamental strategic lines of the revolution, the content and inner dynamic of a transitional program, etc.)* Moreover, all of this should be done within the context of an international discussion where meeting all the needs that a "national group" cannot hope to fulfill "relying on its own strength" are posed as tasks of building the Fourth International. This is true above all when the problem of accomplishing these tasks *takes on a greater acuteness*

because we have reached an advanced stage in the struggle for a Socialist United States of Europe and still suffer from severe subjective limitations.

But, as was pointed out in the document "Tactics for Building the Organization" that guided the founding of the League, we should not make a fetish out of such drawbacks. To be precise: If these limitations have continued to weigh very heavily, if the processes of intervening, internal discussion, and political elaboration referred to above have been largely frustrated and in some cases set back and distorted, this is because of a failure to understand the legacy of revolutionary Marxism. Adapting and assimilating this heritage are an integral part of forming an organization that, like ours, claims to be Trotskyist. It was the prerequisite for overcoming our "national" weaknesses. We "blind metaphysicians," (*Liga en Marcha*, p. 6) never claimed that the substantial element of the revolutionary Marxist heritage we were talking about, this new "schematism" that had to be "chased after" today, was limited to the policy of the united front. However, because we centered the discussion too much on this point, it took us some time to realize that both in initially rejecting the united front and then in raising the kind of arguments they did to justify its resurrection what the other tendency was actually doing was setting aside the Transitional Program.

Not only did the contortions the authors of "La Liga en Marcha" went through trying to use our "national limitations" as an excuse for a lack of collective assimilation of the fundamentals of revolutionary Marxism and the delay in accomplishing our tasks of political elaboration (pp. 3, 6) result in distorting our views. These contortions also demonstrated that the errors in their own positions cannot be attributed simply to careless language but raise questions of principle.

## 2. Transitional Program and Action Program

The comrades begin by claiming that our initial verbal declaration of adherence to the fundamental program of revolutionary Marxism and the experience of the League so far are sufficient bases for calling our organization Trotskyist.

On the first point, Trotsky held a rather different opinion from the authors of "La Liga en Marcha." As he saw it, program was not "the matter of a formal document; a program holds water only in the event that it is tied up with the revolutionary experience of the party and with the lessons gained from battles which have entered into the flesh and blood of its cadres." ["What Next?" *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1971, pp. 199-200.] As for the other objective criteria for characterizing an organization as Leninist (taking the program to the vanguard and the masses, forging cadres, and systematic political activity to achieve these goals), the comrades of the other tendency will probably admit, if they have assimilated the Transitional Program, as they say they have, that our course has had fundamentally very little to do with these norms.

After saying that the method of the Transitional Program has "definitely a real live relevance to today," "La Liga en Marcha" goes on to take up how it can correctly be assimilated: "Before this objective relevance can

become a subjective need for an organization, before the theoretical statement of this relevance can be fully understood and absorbed, there has to be systematic practical work on a national and international scale. That is the only way the Transitional Program can be assimilated . . ." (p. 5.) That is, in the process itself that led it to establish ties with the Fourth International, an organization like *Comunismo* "opted" automatically for the Transitional Program—found it in cold storage in the legacy of revolutionary Marxism. But it will only be able to absorb and understand this program as it "gains experience" through practical work organized on a national and international scale.

We think, on the other hand, that the very fact that the "objective relevance" of the *Transitional Program* was not the precise basis of the "subjective need" that impelled us to found the League offers the key criterion for characterizing our organization and immediately places the discussions in their essential international context. Beyond statements of principle, formal expositions in political schools, and publishing "red classics," what place does the International's line assign the Transitional Program in building revolutionary Marxist organizations in each country?

The authors of "Liga en Marcha" offer us some indications of what the answer might be.

Dazed by the profundity of their preceding statements, the comrades decided to clear things up for us and for themselves: "A vanguard organization must learn (!) or more precisely employ (!!), a two-sided technique (!!!) for approaching and understanding reality. On the one hand it must assimilate the experience of the international proletariat in its struggles and analyze its own national reality, applying these lessons. On the other, it must simultaneously build an organization capable of propagating the revolutionary Marxist program among the advanced workers and demonstrate the validity of this program in practice in class struggles." (p. 6)

It must be acknowledged that these lines make crystal clear the underlying notion of the Transitional Program held by their authors. Now we can see clearly how the Transitional Program could only be an "objective need" that was present only as a "theoretical statement" at the start of our struggle to build the party. They could only reduce the program to this if they failed to conceive of it as defining the central task of the period in the context of the strategy of permanent revolution. They could only say this if they failed to see the Transitional Program as laying out the method for accomplishing this task, the method that will enable the vanguard to overcome the crisis of leadership in the working class. That is, enable the vanguard to build the party through the struggle of the class, starting off from all the elements that make it a class "in itself" (its "minimum" demands, traditions of struggle, unions, workers parties, etc.), in order to lead the proletariat to the highest form of working-class unity, a system of soviets under communist leadership. The Transitional Program, the synthesis of the greatest wealth of revolutionary experience, integrates all the means for uniting the class, from the most elementary tactical questions on up, into an organic whole, meshing them with the objective needs imposed by the crisis of society. None of the various aspects—propaganda for the dictatorship of the proletariat; struggle against un-

employment or defending the trade unions; preparing the way for workers control through factory committees; the policy of the united front culminating in the transitional demand for a workers government; and the end result of all this, creating soviets and winning the majority of the working class to the party—can be separated out without destroying its content. We have already pointed out, moreover, that in order to become a material force the Transitional Program must be adapted concretely to the conditions of every country and time by elaborating its *algebraic content* into an action program. This can only be accomplished in the course of the communist organization's struggle, based on the Transitional Program, to take the lead of the battles waged by the proletariat.

So, it is clear that the authors of the "*Liga en Marcha*" reduce this problematic to elaborating a more or less complete catalog of demands, separating this from an overall understanding of the period and the method of building the party on the basis of the foundation document of the Fourth International.

By way of example, moreover, we can note that this confusion appears constantly in the documents of the Ligue Communiste that we have seen on the Transitional Program (cf. the foreword to their edition of it).

### 3. As the Great Chairman Said: 'Start From the Masses in Order to Return to the Masses'

After separating out the problematic of the Transitional Program with respect to the elaboration and application of an action program, the comrades of the other tendency say that while it has taken us two years we have finally assimilated the method of this fundamental document. But on another page of "*Liga en Marcha*," they stress a definition hinted at already in the Political Bureau's 44-page document (p. 21): "The basis of a transitional strategy is trying to mobilize the masses in action by systematically analyzing the fluctuations in their level of consciousness." We recommend that the comrades of the other tendency read what Trotsky said on this subject in his discussions with the SWP on the Transitional Program. For our part, we say that the real objective of a revolutionary policy in analyzing the fluctuations in the level of consciousness of the masses from moment to moment is to determine the proper pedagogic means of putting across a strategy based on objective conditions: "Some will say: good, the program is a scientific program; it corresponds to the objective situation—but if the workers won't accept this program, it will be sterile. Possibly. But this signifies only that the workers will be crushed since the crisis can't be solved any other way but by the socialist revolution. . . ."

"But even in the worst case, if the working class doesn't sufficiently mobilize its mind and its strength at present for the socialist revolution—even in the worst case, if this working class falls as a victim to fascism, the best elements will say, 'We were warned by this party; it was a good party.' And a great tradition will remain in the working class." ["The Political Backwardness of the American Workers," *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, p. 126]

"What does this signify? That we are sure the working class, the trade unions, will adhere to the slogan of the

labor party? No, we are not sure that the workers will adhere to the slogan of the labor party. When we begin the fight we cannot be sure of being victorious. We can only say that our slogan corresponds to the objective situation and the best elements will understand and the most backward elements who don't understand will be compromised." ["U.S. and European Labor Movements: A Comparison," *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, p. 134.]

"Naturally if I close my eyes I can write a good rosy program that everybody will accept. But it will not correspond to the situation; and the program must *correspond to the situation* [emphasis added by Enrucijada]. I believe that this elementary argument is of the utmost importance. . . ."

"This program is not a new invention of one man. It is derived from the long experience of the Bolsheviks. I want to emphasize that it is not one man's invention, that it comes from long collective experience of the revolutionaries. It is the application of old principles to this situation. It should not be considered as fixed like iron but flexible to the situation." ["The Political Backwardness . . .," *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, pp. 127, 129. Emphasis added.]

"I say here what I said about the whole program of transitional demands. The problem is not the mood of the masses but the objective situation, and our job is to confront the backward material of the masses with the tasks which are determined by objective factors and not by psychology." ["U.S. and European Labor Movements: A Comparison," *Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, p. 132.]

"For us as a small minority this whole thing is objective including the mood of the workers. But we must analyze and classify those elements of the objective situation which can be changed by our paper and those which cannot be changed. That is why we say that the program is adapted to the fundamental stable elements of the objective situation and the task is to adapt the mentality of the masses to those objective factors. To adapt the mentality is a pedagogical task. We must be patient, etc. The crisis of society is given as the base of our activity. The mentality is the political arena of our activity. We must change it. We must give a scientific explanation of society, and clearly explain it to the masses. *That is the difference between Marxism and reformism.* [Emphasis added.]

"The reformists have a good smell for what the audience wants—as Norman Thomas—he gives them that. But that is not serious revolutionary activity. We must have the courage to be unpopular, to say 'you are fools,' 'you are stupid,' 'they betray you,' and every once in a while with a scandal launch our ideas with passion. . . . But it must be scientific, not bent to the moods of the masses. We are the most realistic people because we reckon with facts which cannot be changed by the eloquence of Norman Thomas. If we win immediate success we swim with the current of the masses and that current is revolution." ["Completing the Program . . .," *Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, p. 145.] The statements of the authors of "*Liga en Marcha*" on this question tend to make us think that despite their efforts they have still



not assimilated the method of the Transitional Program. To the contrary, in their efforts they have taken an important step toward "establishing a strategic basis" (presumably through a systematic analysis of the "fluctuations in the level of the consciousness of the masses") in a long trajectory that extends from the beginnings of adaptation to a spontaneous "radical" trade-unionist solidarity "orientation" on the part of the working-class vanguard, through a history of moving in and out of the Workers Commissions according to the ups and downs of these organizations, or according to the "third or fourth phase," as recommended by the Spanish Commission. The comrades of the other tendency deepen their explanation of the growth of the PCE's influence—ascribing it to the "backwardness" or "immaturity" of the masses that are being roused to struggle primarily by the "new sectors." Finally they have come around to making a turn toward the united front. This is supposed to be all right now because of the "growing strength of the far left and of our own following in the student movement."

We do not doubt that we are seeing a real "transitional strategy." The transition, however, is from one kind of opportunist deviation to another. We do not doubt that the comrades of the En Marcha tendency offer us a method. But it is a method that reveals a wrong conception of the fundamental question of how to build the party. This conception is expressed in a "method" of following "fluctuations" and *at the same time is reinforced* by a constant tendency to adapt to the influence of the reformist apparatuses and radicalized petty-bourgeois currents.

#### 4. 'Initiativism,' the Highest Stage of . . .

Among the basic principles of their Marxism, the comrades of the En Marcha tendency assert: "In the course of a prerevolutionary situation, class consciousness forges ahead rapidly, becoming the most dynamic factor in the situation. The party then has an opportunity to lead the immense majority of the proletariat in an assault on the established power. But this *depends on the party being able to get the workers to see the need for such an offensive through their own experience by using transitional slogans* striking at the very foundations of bourgeois power to touch off struggles that have a revolutionary content." (Our emphasis.)

We think that this conception of the role of transitional demands differs from, and in fact, contradicts, the one found in the documents of the Communist International and in the Transitional Program.

The method of the Transitional Program starts off from the problem of the subjective factor lagging behind the objective conditions created by capitalist decay in order to determine *tasks*: "It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution."

Is this possible?

The Stalinists and centrists talk about "state monopoly capitalism" or "neocapitalist integration." For this reason some modern centrist currents have seized on the theme of workers control. Since "neocapitalism" integrated, or coopted "quantitative demands," something better had to be thought of to raise the consciousness (!) of the class.

The ideal means for this was "qualitative demands" to "touch off struggles that have a revolutionary content." On the other hand, the Trotskyists say that we are in an epoch of imperialist decay: "when, in general, there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses' living standards; when every serious demand of the petty bourgeoisie inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state. . . ."

"The present epoch is distinguished not for the fact that it frees the revolutionary party from day-to-day work but because it permits this work to be carried on indissolubly with the actual tasks of the revolution." (The Transitional Program.)

So, saying that "in the course of a prerevolutionary situation class consciousness forges ahead rapidly, becoming the most dynamic factor in the situation," according to the phrase by Trotsky picked up by the En Marcha comrades, is equivalent to saying: (a) The basis for *the activities of communists* will be the inevitable development of great mass actions touched off by the struggle for minimum objectives under the lash of capitalist contradictions. (b) In relationship to the precarious stability of the system, these actions will tend to assume *objectively revolutionary implications*, unleashing the fiercest kind of combats. (c) When least expected these actions can lead to the most powerful spontaneous revolutionary explosions, in which the highest forms of class consciousness will begin to flower. But these processes will not wait for the development of a prerevolutionary situation to manifest themselves. They are already incipient today in the current broad movements, showing the instinctive tendency of workers to unite as a class and their still latent conflict with the reformist apparatuses. Precisely because we do not, as is characteristic of the other tendency, separate the development of class consciousness from the process of sharpening material contradictions—even with all the unevenness that exists between the two—precisely because we do not think, as the comrades of the other tendency incline to, that the working class turns spontaneously to syndicalism or Stalinism, any more than it does to Trotskyism; precisely for this reason, we say that it is possible to move forward in building the party "in the process of the daily struggle," working to transform these everyday battles into the starting points for revolutionary mass action. This is why we do not believe in ERPs for armed struggle, or in ERPs for fighting for workers control.

As for this separating "struggles with a revolutionary content around transitional slogans," struggles which are supposed to be sparked by communists, from the other struggles waged by the workers, we think that the best answer is to be found in the Transitional Program: "*Insofar as the old, partial, 'minimal' demands of the masses clash with the destructive and degrading tendencies of decadent capitalism—and this occurs at each step—the Fourth International advances a system of 'transitional demands,' the essence of which is contained in the fact that ever more openly and decisively they will be directed against the very bases of the bourgeois regime.*" (Emphasis added.)

The *characteristic* features of the En Marcha comrades'

conception of transitional demands and the *vanguardist* activity they imply bring us back to the question of the relationship between communists and their class. They

lead us to raise an alarm against a notion of building the party through apparatuses outside the class struggle.

*V. But, Is It Just the Comrades  
of the 'En Marcha' Tendency?*

At this point, we can begin to give some general answers about the implications of the international debate.

In the resolution of the Ninth World Congress on Latin America, in the context of the basic perspective laid out of "an armed struggle which may last for long years," and which "in Latin America means fundamentally guerrilla warfare," it was said that "it must not be forgotten, however, that the armed struggle itself cannot succeed, in the last analysis, except on the basis of a correct political line. . . ." And this was to include transitional demands. "The determination of the themes of a transitional program for each given stage is clearly the task of revolutionists in the various countries." All of this leads us to concur with some of the conclusions drawn by J. Hansen in his "Assessment of the Draft Resolution on Latin America":

"Of course, it is the task of revolutionists in the various countries to work out the themes of a transitional program for each stage. [Emphasis in the original.] But it is still more their task to work out the tactics for each stage. Since tactics are dealt with in the draft resolution, are in fact its main preoccupation, the question arises as to why it is silent as to possible transitional themes for the coming period. It would have been completely in the tradition and the spirit of the *Transitional Program* adopted by the Fourth International in 1938 to have considered the question.

"The answer appears to lie in the nature of the concept at the heart of the draft resolution. Once it has been decided that 'the principal axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare, the term having primarily a geographical-military meaning,' the question of transitional steps is narrowed to the extreme, becoming reduced even in the area of armed struggle. Even worse, the central concept of the *Transitional Program* drafted by Trotsky on the utilization of transitional slogans and transitional measures (including the field of armed struggle) to mobilize the masses and construct a combat party is hard to fit in with this 'principal axis' if it can be fitted in at all.

"The reasons for this are not difficult to discern. Trotsky's *Transitional Program* conceives the socialist revolution as carried forward by mass mobilizations, in the process of which a competent revolutionary leadership, organized in a combat party, is forced. The concept of rural guerrilla war as the principal axis for a prolonged period projects a small, heroic elite carrying the battle in the absence of the masses and in areas remote from the

cities. Thus if the concept of rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period is adopted as the principal axis of revolutionary work, then the problem of mobilizing the urban masses becomes somewhat irrelevant, and along with it most of the *Transitional Program*." ["Assessment of the Draft Resolution on Latin America," *Discussion on Latin America*, 1968-71, pp. 24-25.] In the context of this "strategy," what role does the Transitional Program play in building the party? It *complements* the armed struggle. Thus the resolution can affirm the need to: "Advance a program not just of immediate economic and political demands but also transitional demands able to mobilize and raise the political consciousness of the worker, petty-bourgeois, and plebian masses as well as the student masses and thus *create growing tensions threatening the system (this would also make it more difficult for the governments to concentrate their repressive forces exclusively in the zones of armed struggle.)*" [Our emphasis. "Resolution on Latin America," *Intercontinental Press*, July 14, p. 720.] Likewise it can say, presenting the party as *an instrument serving* armed struggle — the guerrillas: "The existence and functioning of a revolutionary party, far from being an outworn schema of outmoded Marxists, corresponds to the concrete and ineluctable needs of the development of the armed struggle itself." [p. 721.]

In the IEC resolution of December 1969 on building mass revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe, which was drawn up to explain the reasons and consequences of the turn by the European sections of the International in abandoning entryism, it was said: "The strategy of transitional demands continues to be the basis for propaganda, and, on occasion, agitation and active intervention in the struggle of the working class." ["On Tactics in Europe," *Intercontinental Press*, March 23, 1970, p. 261.] But when all is said and done, doesn't this strategy come down to a more or less propagandistic complement of something else? Because the "content of the new orientation in working toward the construction of revolutionary parties which has been adopted by the European sections of the Fourth International" can be defined as follows:

"(a) Giving priority to winning political and organizational preponderance within the new vanguard with the aim of considerably strengthening our own organizations, and, if possible, qualitatively changing the relationship of forces vis-à-vis the bureaucracies in the working class.

"(b) For this purpose, following a policy of taking the initiative in actions which will convince the new vanguard of the necessity of revolutionary Marxist organizations,

not only on the theoretical and historical level but practically in the living struggle.

"(c) Engaging in more extensive work among the rank-and-file workers in the factories and in the unions.

"(d) Striving to build solid bases of support among the young workers from which confrontations with the bureaucracy can be mounted without risking elimination of the opposition nuclei from the unions and plants." [P. 260.]

Unlike the resolution of the Ninth Congress on Latin America, the IEC resolution on building revolutionary Marxist parties in capitalist Europe makes a clear statement of ends: "The central strategic task of revolutionary Marxists remains that of building mass revolutionary parties." The "policy of initiatives in action" is thus presented as a *tactic* subordinated to the strategic end of building a party of the Leninist type that would be capable of operating not just on a purely propagandistic or agitational plane but also of engaging in practical activity to organize the masses and lead mass struggles around transitional demands. Like any tactic, it has its risks. In this case the danger is falling into ultraleftism, as many documents tell us. But over and above the inevitable risks and distortions, we must ask ourselves whether resorting to such a tactic to convince the new vanguard of the necessity and existence of revolutionary Marxist organizations through "initiatives in action" does not con-

flict with the "strategy of transitional demands."

We think frankly that it does and that this is reflected in the debates and constantly shifting conflicts in the LCR over what organizational forms should be developed in the student movement (these are not determined so much by any analysis of the student movement as by a general line on building the party and by the strength of our position at the given moment inside in the movement). We think that this contradiction is also reflected in the criticisms that have arisen of abrupt changes in course on the "united front policy" and of subordinating mass work to a line of the organization engaging in publicity-catching initiatives, actions whose primary impact has been on the radicalized petty bourgeoisie. We think that there is a clear contradiction between a *tactic* where, according to a bulletin of the LCR, "everything depends on the extreme left," and a *strategy* in which, according to the Transitional Program: "*Each of the transitional demands should, therefore lead to one and the same political conclusion: the workers need to break with all traditional parties of the bourgeoisie in order, jointly with the farmers, to establish their own power.*" [Emphasis added] In France also, the question of the united front is the focal point around which all the conflicts have crystallized that have taken an extremely acute form in our country.

#### VI. What Did Adopting a Policy of Initiatives in Action Mean for the LCR?

The LCR was founded at a time when the deepening crisis of capitalism and the dictatorship, as well as the rise of mass struggle and the sharpening contradictions of reformism highlighted the lack of the slightest embryonic form of workers leadership. At the same time, these conditions ruled out progress in systematically building the party except in the framework of a clear strategy that could guide us in setting a *firm course toward the masses*. They made it necessary to offer perspectives to a broad vanguard through such a course, establishing a bridge between the immediate struggles and a phase of rapid growing over toward a decisive clash with the dictatorship and tasks of dismantling the bourgeois state that the overthrow of the dictatorship would pose as a vital necessity for the working masses. These conditions also made it possible to move ahead in advancing the basic elements of a program of action in the process of the day-to-day struggles. In a nutshell, the central set of problems we had to face were not different from those raised in the Transitional Program, as applied to the ripening of a prerevolutionary situation under the Spanish state. It cannot be denied that we were completely aware that this was the central task. All our elaborations began with this statement. Nonetheless, this would become a mere formal declaration insofar as it did not involve assimilating the method that could arm us to move ahead

in solving this set of problems.

In fact, the basic reasons why we maintained an *ultra-left orientation* for a whole phase did not rest, as the comrades of the En Marcha tendency claim, in a carry-over of some "sectarian attitudes to the organized workers movement." From this standpoint, the process of "rectification" was supposed to be guided by successive "tactics" that marked a progressive "move away from sectarianism" culminating in "entry into the Workers Commissions." To the contrary, the basic conceptions that made it possible for our organization to retain an ultra-left character were notions that we carried with us from the inception of the *Comunismo* group and did not abandon in founding the LCR. These had to do with a failure to understand the workers movement as it was, the dynamic of the relationship between the working class and its organizations, between the members of the workers parties and their leaderships. They had to do with a lack of understanding of the fundamental laws of the mass movement and of building the party in the process of the workers struggle against the bourgeoisie, by intervening in all its phases as the *conscious element* of the class, defending the interests of the class as a whole, fighting to unify the various struggles of the workers with those of other oppressed sectors and preparing the way for their linking up with the revolutionary perspective

of overthrowing the bourgeois state and the workers winning power. The conception of the party as something *outside* the class and not *essentially part of the working class*, representing its historic interests, was at the root of the apparatus-worshipping principles of "building the organization" that presided over the founding of the League. The "new orientation" for building sections of the Fourth International *did not require the LCR to break with this bureaucratic and formalist conception of constructing the party. To the contrary, the old ultraleftist hangovers were allowed to persist and given a high degree of systematization thanks to the framework provided by the "policy of initiatives in action."*

It is not hard to show that *setting up two different phases in building the party and the conception of the united front as just another "tactic"* introduce a separation between the struggle to construct the revolutionary organization and the struggle of thousands of workers against capitalist exploitation and the dictatorship. The first phase is supposed to be "winning the vanguard" outside of the workers movement as a whole. The aim of this operation is to solve the problem of "building the organization." To accomplish this, we have a series of "tactics." There is no doubt where the line of reasoning followed by Bulletin No. 15 leads when this document says: "The hour has not yet struck for the revolutionary Marxists in Spain to effectively raise the slogan of '*To the Masses!*' In reality what is on the agenda today is *first winning political and organizational hegemony in the worker and student vanguard emerging in the present struggles in order then to go to the masses.* And this is *first and foremost a matter of revolutionary Marxist politics and organization.*" Now, when Comrade Germain defined the "new vanguard" in his report to the Ninth World Congress on the "new rise of world revolution" as a vanguard "with mass character," which could therefore be won only through action, he also defined a tactic for accomplishing this: "In the stage that has now opened, our ability to build our organizations depends on our capacity *to act, to take the initiative, and to lead actions that in practice draw in the healthiest sectors of the vanguard.*" ["Report on New Rise of World Revolution," *Intercontinental Press*, July 14, 1969, p. 699. Emphasis added.]

*In a second phase*, the organization could have a "program" and set a firm course toward the masses by carrying out a united front policy. The result of this line has been that when workers and popular struggles reached a high tide after 1970, coming into conflict with the dictatorship's whole apparatus of bureaucratic control and repression and thereby posing ever more acutely the need for a general political alternative, we devoted ourselves, as we said in "La Encrucijada," to raising a "stronger pole of attraction" than the other groups. We tried, on the basis of piecemeal actions related to the themes of the

moment, to establish case by case a ringing, exemplary line of demarcation between reformism and class struggle.

As our activity ran up against the course of the class struggle, one by one our initial ultraleftist assumptions were demolished. Nonetheless, the process of rectification undertaken by the League leadership has not challenged any of the foundations on which these premises were based. Instead it has demonstrated an opportunist line of adapting its navigation to the meandering course set by the "fluctuations in the level of consciousness of the masses." This process is reflected in its successive impressionistic and sociological characterizations of the vanguard to which it adjusts its "tactics" for "building the organization."

Finally, last May the leadership of the League proposed a "strategy," put forward a "preprogram," even proposed a united front policy. Had we built an organization? In any case—they told us—"the relationship of forces between us and the reformists has changed."

In the face of this "cheerful" view, our tendency said from the start that the League's trajectory was not bringing us steadily closer to revolutionary Marxism through a series of turns dictated by the class struggle and the organization's capacity for intervening in a revolutionary way. Even the other tendency recognized that these turns were always made belatedly and in an incorrect manner.

*The League's trajectory reflected the operation of an insuperable contradiction between the political bases on which it was founded and the conditions of the class struggle, which since we have existed as an organization have been favorable to growing involvement in the actions of the workers through struggle based on a Marxist program.* From this standpoint, the turns that we had carried out were a mounting succession of readjustments and palliatives required by our failures in intervening. We did not line ourselves up so much with a revolutionary Marxist course as adjust to the real or claimed course of a sector of the vanguard of the new sectors and the "myriads of democratic illusions" represented by them. The strategic outlines advanced—having to do fundamentally with the dynamics of the crisis of the dictatorship and the process of permanent revolution opened up in our country—did make us more resistant to the crises and splits into which the far left had been precipitated. But they were inadequate to block centrist veerings to the left and later to the right as we sought a way out of the bankruptcy of our initial ultraleftism. On the one hand, these outlines were not sufficiently assimilated and implemented by the organization, serving rather as a handy means for explaining every one of our tactical changes of course. On the other hand, the very pragmatic line in which they were inserted kept them remote from day-to-day practice, without relation to it, like propagandistic excrescences.

VII. 'Get Them to Learn the Need for a Revolutionary Marxist Organization Through Their Own Experience'

So there are *two conceptions* of using the Transitional Program. According to our conception, the League has had in this program the only method by which Trotskyists could carry forward the struggle to build and strengthen a communist organization. It was the method of achieving a primitive accumulation of cadres in the very process of the student and workers struggles that have not ceased and from which we have often been absent, struggles which have hundreds of times highlighted the acute weakness and contradictions of the reformists and centrists. Such a focus has been necessary and possible since our very inception as an organization, without any "preliminary phases." It would have enabled us, and still can enable us, to rise above a purely propagandistic stage and exert a significant weight in organizing actions of sections of the working class at certain points and in certain areas. It could have, and still can, promote a "demarcation" of the revolutionary Marxists and the "establishment of a pole of attraction" more effectively than all the "initiatives" and opportunist maneuvers put together. It is the only way to "assure a substantial strengthening of our own organization and a possibly qualitative change in the relationship of forces between us and the bureaucratic apparatuses in the working class." The other conception, represented by the positions of the comrades of the En Marcha tendency might, for example, include elaborating transitional themes in "the orientation and method of the strategy of guerrilla warfare." In this context, it might fulfill important functions such as "to help certain revolutionary organizations to overcome the difficulties arising from the fact that while having been formed for revolutionary combat and armed struggle, these organizations have been unable for conjunctural reasons to put their ideas into practice." ["Resolution on Latin America," *Intercontinental Press*, July 14, 1969, p. 721.] That is, it may serve to enlighten foquista groups that have nothing to do at the moment.

In capitalist Europe, and therefore in our country, adopting transitional objectives has been "integrated" into the "policy of initiatives." It is this policy that in the past led us to follow a rabidly sectarian and ultraleftist course toward the rising struggles and which then ran aground on various opportunistic rectifications that tried to patch it up without examining its anti-Marxist foundations. This policy sought to bring about a "substantial strengthening of our own organization" that would enable us to "show people through experience" and "not only on the theoretical and historical level" the validity of Trotskyism. But it set out to "win hegemony" within the ultraleftist and centrist currents of the radicalized petty-bourgeois "periphery" by adapting to the fundamental features of ultraleftism and centrism. This meant "exemplary" activism, an all-out vanguardism, as well as sectarianism giving way to "unity in action" (unity among revolutionists). But the ultimate logic of this policy is to tail-end the apparatuses.

The consequences of this orientation, which is alien to the Transitional Program (even though it "integrates" the "strategy of transitional demands") have been referred

to in various documents of our tendency. In many cases where we have projected slogans and objectives based on a correct analysis of the period and the living experience in the factories, these have been taken up by a part of the vanguard. But their political reach has been limited. They have been locked into an artificial propagandism, divorced from a resolute mass orientation, which this period makes a precondition for really winning a section of the vanguard, including its centrist and ultraleftist component. In this way, we have taken on the job of systematically miseducating the vanguard that was breaking with Stalinism and syndicalism. By behaving in a sectarian way on the organizational level, but at the same time trying to compete *politically* with this layer in the field of "left" opportunism, we have been unable to prevent it from degenerating or even returning to the reformist fold. This failure has been exceeded only by our inability to offer an alternative to the workers under the influence of Stalinism. Leaving aside the leaflets we put out that in fact equated these workers with their leadership, our failure to understand the Workers Commissions for a whole period made us play a notable role as objective accomplices of this leadership.

The result of all this has been an incapacity to develop links with the working class, despite the great opportunities offered to revolutionists by the new rise of workers struggles. In the meantime, our superficial agitational activism, always tail-ending events, had the effect of burning out the organization. Nor should we forget those cases where a series of very small, isolated street initiatives led to some sectors being destroyed under the blows of repression (Euzkadi).

The issue of the united front sums up perfectly the opportunist dimension of the "policy of initiatives in action." We should have developed a strongly centralized organization with rigorous norms grounded on theoretical and political clarity (which only the Marxist program could provide) as the basis of an orientation toward building a working-class united front. Instead, we have combined the most extreme confusionism on the political level with the most helter-skelter type of organization, and all this in acute isolation from the working class. While refusing to develop a united front of the working class, we have made our own organization into what amounts to a united front. In an attempt to narrow the gap between ourselves and the working class, moreover, we have accelerated a process of empirical and impressionistic readjustments which by increasing the political morass inside the group has aggravated our organizational dislocation.

The "dialectic of sectors of intervention" and our policy in the student movement has had two effects: (a) It served as an alibi for not taking on the necessary and achievable tasks of winning mass influence and polarizing an important part of the workers vanguard. (b) Moreover, it isolated our intervention in the student milieu from the class struggle as a whole by failing to establish any connections between mobilizing students and workers struggles

except "using this mobilization to put meat on the bones of revolutionary policy," to give a "mass base" to our organizational initiatives (almost exclusively lightning demonstrations and pickets).

Even today, the Political Bureau's 44-page document claims that "this orientation enables the revolutionary Marxist vanguard to appear as a political force capable of challenging the state in the short run. . . ." (p. 43.)

### VIII. Our 'Propagandism' Versus Their 'Correlation of Forces'

A. But it turns out that according to the comrades of the En Marcha tendency the historical moment represented by the months of mid-1972 saw a fortunate convergence of two processes. On the one hand, we were achieving a correlation of forces vis-à-vis the reformists that enabled us to effectively carry out the tactic of a working-class united front, fundamentally as a result of our hegemony over the bulk of a strong far left and our influence in the student movement. At the same time, we were succeeding in assimilating the method of the Transitional Program, which has "a real live relevance to today," overcoming the contradictions imposed by the "national limitations" of our party.

*It turns out, then, that we haven't lost much by our ignorance of the method of the Transitional Program and in particular the policy of the united front. As "Liga en Marcha" explains: "Adopting any tactic in fact cannot be done without taking into consideration the correlation of forces that the revolutionary Marxists have achieved vis-à-vis the reformists, the number of their activists and their base. On the other hand, an organization can have a political orientation without taking this into account, basing itself only on the needs of the movement. But actually carrying out such an orientation does depend on this. So, after becoming aware of the need for a united front tactic in the Spanish state, we could have adopted such an orientation. It would have made it possible to better educate the organization as a whole, develop a better conception of the overall relationships between the working class and its leaderships and of the role these leaderships play, as well as to establish unsectarian (or less sectarian) relations with the organized workers movement. But this would by no means have enabled us to execute such a tactic on any level but in propaganda."* (P. 9. Emphasis added.)

This is the line of reasoning used to tie up criticism of our so-called Hegelian metaphysics with a critique of our alleged propagandism.

We are accused of disregarding the state of the organization and the relationship of forces. But permit us to ask again: *What policy is to serve as the basis for building the communist organization and bringing about changes in the relationship of forces with the reformists in the working class?*

All of the Political Bureau's arguments come down to defending the line that you can have "correct general orientations" which, however, are "not very practical" and require a certain relationship of forces before they can

be applied. On the other hand, "tactics" must be employed to win such a relationship of forces, tactics that fall outside (when they do not flatly contradict) these "correct orientations." This means that the Transitional Program can serve as a general theoretical and political framework. An organization can be built on "recognizing it." But as soon as you have "recognized it," you can consign it to the bookshelves of the venerable "red classics" until you have an organization capable of "applying it" in the context of a "favorable relationship of forces." We know what this can mean—pamphlets on the Transitional Program (or not even that) for sympathizers and in the meantime an ultraleftist policy, with the inevitable opportunistic rectifications, to "build the organization," always following the "fluctuations in the level of the consciousness of the masses."

On the one hand, propaganda for soviets, for a workers government, and for a united front in general; on the other, an objectively divisive attitude toward day-to-day struggles—this, in reality, is the logic of the relationship between the "policy of initiatives in action" and the united front. It is the logic that flows from Comrade Weber's writings on this question, and he in turn is largely following in the footsteps of the sectarian Healy. And this line, after some "hasty" statements about the about-face toward the proletarian united front having a strategic character, is fully endorsed today by the comrades of the En Marcha tendency. (To follow the gamut of the Political Bureau's positions on this, see "La Liga en la Encrucijada," pp. 24-25.) These views reveal a curious dogmatism. We are supposed to build an organization that one day, when it is a party, will be able to apply the content of the theses on the united front formulated by the Third and Fourth Congresses of the Communist International. But until then we are supposed to go through all the ultraleft deformations suffered by the CPs in the worst days of the period marked by the First and Second Congresses.

Despite the fact that the Transitional Program written in 1938 should rule out any such propositions, the comrades of the other tendency go to considerable lengths to justify the whole opportunist past. Opposing what they call our making a fetish out of strategy and our "abstract propagandism," they proudly uphold their meritorious "tactical" approaches, which imply that the subjective factor is an essential condition for adopting any policy in practice . . . [Possibly because of an error in printing, some lines are missing from the text] . . . *not thus, we*



repeat, for educating and preparing the organization and through it a part of the vanguard." ("La Liga en Marcha," p. 10. Emphasis added.)

We agree with the comrades of the other tendency that "the subjective factor is an essential one for adopting any policy in practice." *The difference is that we think that the subjective factor includes the fighting spirit of the proletariat, mobilizing in actions that cannot fail to develop against the dictatorship and capitalism. And we think that part of the subjective factor, also, is the struggle of the Trotskyist organization, based on the Transitional Program, to build a revolutionary party in the process of these mobilizations.*

Hence, the political clarity of revolutionary Marxism, "educating and preparing the organization and through it a part of the vanguard" in using the method of the Transitional Program, are essential so that revolutionists can increase their capacity for intervening in these struggles, so that they can draw new energy from them, so that they can "put meat on the bones" of revolutionary policy, making it "something more than propaganda." In this the Transitional Method is the means for determining tactics whose focus—propagandistic, or agitational and appealing directly to the masses—must be adjusted to each moment in the development of the situation, depending on the rebounds in the crisis of Francoism, the ebbs and flows of the mass movement, on the relationship between the revolutionary Marxist group and the mass organizations, on the contradictions of the mass organizations, and *naturally on the organizational strength and capacity for action of the revolutionary group itself.*

But once again, the organizational strength and capacity for action of the Marxist group are not unrelated to "educating and preparing the organization and through it a part of the vanguard" to understand certain things. One of these is that advances in building the communist organization are inseparably linked to the extension and radicalization of workers struggles and depend on the experience the workers gain in these struggles (in which one of the factors, in turn, is the intervention of the vanguard). Another is that growing sectors of the class are going to be thrown by the general social crisis that is accelerating the bankruptcy of Francoism into profound conflicts with property and the bourgeois state, as well as into sharpening conflicts with their reformist leaderships. In this process, by steadily sharpening their analysis of the rise of mass struggles and fighting for the right to lead them, striving systematically to extend them, and lead them to confronting capital and the state at higher and higher levels, the Trotskyists will shatter one after another the reformist locks on parts of the vanguard and shift the relationship of forces in favor of the communist organization, *the conscious and active element of the subjective factor.*

*On the other hand, it seems very clear to us that the comrades of the other tendency make the possibility for "putting meat on the bones" of revolutionary policy, transforming it into "something more than propaganda," depend on "changes in the relationship of forces." In this, they begin by setting aside the Marxist program, progressively exclude the working class from the sphere of*

*the subjective factor, and end by reducing this factor to a pure apparatus suspended in the void.*

B. In fact, we have talked in our documents about an *apparatus conception of building the party*. This precisely is what lies at the root of the pragmatic attitudes we see toward theory and the empirical kind of relationship that is maintained with the heritage of revolutionary Marxism. This concept underlies the dissociation of "tactics" based on empiricism from the strategic generalities of [word missing]; the severing of "practical work," concocted out of stringing together a succession of impressionistic approaches, from "principles," which are dusted off whenever attempts to base theoretical generalizations on empiricism and impressionism threaten to go too far. These attitudes are only the *reflection* of, and at the same time a *changing camouflage* for, looking at the fight to build the party in isolation from the needs of the class, a lack of confidence in the party being able to draw its strength from the struggles that are unfolding before our eyes.

It is no accident that the comrades of the En Marcha tendency express the opinion: *"There is no contradiction in the workers spontaneously turning to syndicalism or reformism or Stalinist trade unionism, but there would be, on the other hand, in their turning toward communism.* [It is not noted whether the emphasis is in the original or has been added.] Revolutionary ideas must be brought in from outside the proletariat in a struggle against the ideology spontaneously adopted by the workers. In the case of the Spanish state, this means against syndicalism and Stalinism, the principal forms of bourgeois ideological dominance in the working class, concepts that can only be ousted through building a revolutionary organization." ("La Liga en Marcha," p. 14.) This view coincides with statements like "the French working class spontaneously turns toward Stalinism," which appeared in a document of the majority tendency at the First Congress of the Ligue Communiste. The comrades claim to draw from these statements "Leninist" arguments defending the need for a party. But in reality all these arguments point to is the *impossibility of building a party.*

The comrades say that only "by building a revolutionary organization" can the agencies of bourgeois hegemony over the workers, the reformist leaderships, be dislodged. But how can we build this organization when the whole line of reasoning developed by the comrades is the same as *saying that the working class has the kind of leaderships it deserves?* How can we impel the class into supporting a program that contradicts its natural tendencies? How can we "get" this class "to go through the experience" of a transitional dynamic? How can we build a revolutionary organization when we are at such a terrible disadvantage vis-à-vis the leaderships that are the "natural" representatives of the class?

Purely and simply, they claim, *"by building a revolutionary organization."* Once the class is equated with its apparatuses, the only way out left is to build *another apparatus* as external to the class as its program. The objective of this apparatus is to seek "the necessary relationship of forces" to "get" the class to "go through the experiences" that will make it revolutionary. To counter the reformist actions carried out by the class, we need to

"touch off struggles of a revolutionary content." This is what transitional demands are for.

This apparatus conception of building the organization is not confined to the comrades of the En Marcha tendency. The crisis of revolutionary leadership is felt all the more acutely as the crisis of capitalist society and Stalinism stretches out and deepens, driving the masses toward action. This can promote the idea in the ranks of the Trotskyists that "there is not the historic time" to

build a party according to the "classical schemas." Overcoming the gap between the crying objective need for the revolutionary Marxist program and the capacity of the Trotskyist movement as an organized force is a formidable task. The temptation can easily arise to seek "shortcuts" that by by-passing the need for building the party in the heat of the mass struggle, open the way for "tactics" to strengthen the organization and bring about changes in the relationship of forces with the other apparatuses.

### IX. *The Place of the Ninth Congress in the History of the Fourth International*

In his day, M. Pablo, seeking the shortest way out of the isolation of the Trotskyist movement, developed a tactic known as "deep entryism." It was based on the perspective of the Stalinist bureaucracy "moving to the left" under an imminent threat of imperialist aggression. In response to this danger, he thought, the Stalinists would promote mass mobilization. This tactic, later extended to currents like the Bolivian MNR, meant a trajectory of capitulating to Stalinist and even petty-bourgeois leaderships and caused splits and degeneration in the sections of various countries.

This did not, as Comrade Weber claimed in his pamphlet on the AJS, involve a simple "error in analysis" concerning the prospects for a third world war. The basic reasons behind adopting this tactic lay in the isolation of the Fourth International after the second world war; they reflected the pressure of the dominant political tendencies. And these pressures were transmitted into the movement through a process of rectifications that Pablo undertook, based on an *impressionistic analysis* of the features that marked the phase opening at the end of the 1940s. Extrapolating these superficial features and basing a theory on this was to lead to a revision of the fundamental laws of permanent revolution. The new components of the situation such as the ebb in proletarian mobilizations in Europe in the wake of the betrayal of the Stalinist and Social-Democratic leaderships; the defeat of capitalism in the East European countries by bureaucratic and military means; the triumph of the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions, giving a powerful impetus to struggles for national and social liberation in the colonial countries; the economic advances of the USSR; and finally the belief—which at that time was very widespread—in an imminent catastrophic crisis of the capitalist system were interpreted by Pablo as expressing a shift in the primary contradiction. The main contradiction was no longer supposed to be between the proletariat and the international bourgeoisie but *between imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy*. At least this is the impression we get when he says: "For our movement objective social reality is represented essentially by the capitalist system and the Stalinist world.

For everybody else, like it or not, these two elements are simply the objective reality, since the overwhelming majority of the forces opposed to capitalism are at present led or under the influence of the Soviet bureaucracy." ("Where Are We Going?") Thus, with a stroke of the pen, he eliminated the ceaseless conflict between the proletariat and its bureaucratic leaderships, a conflict that is demonstrated in a more or less embryonic form in every one of the most elementary struggles of the class. The proletariat is equated with the apparatuses. The world working class is reduced to being a mere appendage of the CPs and the Soviet bureaucracy. This is absolutely clear when he says: "The revolutionary impetus of the masses that have risen up against imperialism serves to *complement* the material and technical forces committed to the struggle against imperialism." (Ibid.) "The bureaucracy has ceased to be organically counterrevolutionary, coming to occupy a progressive role in the process of transforming capitalist society into a socialist one," a role, moreover, that according to Pablo would last "several centuries."

These conceptions of Stalinism and the relationship between the working class and its leaderships were to be grounds for assuming that, in face of an imminent threat of the imperialists launching a counterrevolutionary world war against the USSR, the Soviet bureaucracy and the CPs would take a "leftist" course. To defend their caste interests against imperialist attack, the bureaucracy, lacking a social base of its own, would have to rely on the masses and impel mass mobilizations, thereby producing a major influx of workers into the CPs. These analyses called for formulating a new tactic of entry "sui generis" into "the movement and formations under the *influence of Stalinism*" (these formations under "Stalinist influence" meant the CPs). Although theoretically the axis of "independent work" was maintained, the choice of an entryist orientation by a section demanded that it concentrate all its efforts on this and reduce to a minimum, if not in fact abandon, independent revolutionary Marxist activity. In the previous period of isolation the elements of a formalistic conception of the party had crystallized. Underlying this notion was a *separation* between the advance of the



struggles through which the proletariat constitutes itself as a class and the process of building a revolutionary leadership. All these elements were reinforced by the new turn. This separation was maintained by *extreme objectivism* — the belief that Stalinist and petty-bourgeois leaderships would evolve toward revolutionary positions under the pressure of the objective situation. Pablo set aside the struggle for building the party, the conscious and organized activity of communists in the mass movement, and substituted a succession of "natural" products of the objective process. At one time a "natural evolution" toward revolutionary Marxism was seen in Tito. Later it was identified in petty-bourgeois movements like the Algerian FLN. In practice a tendency became rooted of reducing the Trotskyist nuclei engaged in entryism to the role of pressure groups in the CPs. The expression of these conceptions that had the gravest implications was the attitude taken by the International Secretariat toward the workers and popular insurrection of September 1953 in East Berlin. A letter was published that called for "democratizing the CPs" at the very moment when the popular uprising was being repressed by the Kremlin's occupation troops. This was a decisive element in forming the political lines that led the International to an open crisis, which was revealed by the expulsion of the majority of the French section a year later.

In the Reunification Congress in 1963, Pablo's analyses justifying the entryist tactic adopted at the Third World Congress in 1951 were dropped. But this did not lead to the dropping of the tactic itself but to a remodeling of it. The premise underlying this was that in conditions where the traditional Stalinist and Social-Democratic organizations continued to hold the confidence of the great majority of workers, the first stage of a working-class upsurge in the imperialist countries, which could not fail to be reflected in the traditional organizations, would give rise to a flowering of left centrist currents. Entryist activity was supposed to enable the Trotskyists to intervene in the mass movement, to advance their transitional demands within it, thereby promoting the creation of left-centrist currents linked to important sectors of the masses and winning the best of these tendencies to revolutionary Marxist positions. This required maintaining an independent sector carrying on propaganda for the whole program.

The principles that determined the entryist tactic were

not in themselves incorrect. Revolutionists cannot stand aside from the processes of radicalization going on in the class. Understanding these processes rules out a body of criticisms based on an abstract and dogmatic conception of the relationship between the class and its organizations and their leaderships. In 1934, facing the prospect of a general upsurge, Trotsky advocated entry into certain Socialist parties for a certain period of time. According to him, it was absolutely necessary for the revolutionary Marxists to accompany the first contingents of radicalized workers leading a march of the class as a whole, who necessarily were orienting toward the ranks of the traditional organizations. This process was reflected in the appearance of differentiations and the formation of left currents within the SPs themselves. In such conditions, entryism in the SPs would help to create a pole of revolutionary regroupment in opposition to the reformist leaderships, with the perspective of breaking this left wing away from

these leaderships and winning forces capable of serving as the basis for forming an independent revolutionary party.

On the other hand, a *prolonged* application of the entryist tactic, based on an incorrect analysis of the situation, could only become an obstacle to progress in building mass revolutionary parties. It was Comrade Frank who wrote in the September 1969 internal bulletin of the United Secretariat "Our Tactics in Europe": ". . . beginning in 1963-64, entryist work in the parties proved *inoperative*." [Emphasis added.] But, following this, he writes: "Our organizations [*not the leadership of the International!*] . . . did not raise the question of abandoning this tactic since in practice no other general tactic was indicated to replace it." (!!!) [The source of these quotes is an IEC draft resolution published in the same bulletin as Comrade Frank's report. For an English translation of the two documents see *International Information Bulletin* No. 7, May 1969, and No. 10, July 1969.]

We wonder: How could a tactic for building sections of the Fourth International that key forces were assigned to carrying out for long years be simply termed "inoperative" without any more explanation than that? Doesn't this mean that precious revolutionary energies were wasted that were badly needed for building revolutionary parties? Were the deformations unimportant that led to such a prolonged application of a tactic in itself so dangerous, a tactic that above all proved unsuited to the developments of the class struggle? *What conception of building the party underlay maintaining a tactic that did not correspond to the process of mass radicalization but was not changed because there was no other?*

The overall failure of the predictions on which the entryist tactic was based was highlighted throughout the decade of the sixties by the emergence of a broad layer of activists *outside* the traditional organizations who reproduced a whole gamut of centrist and ultraleft positions, as well as by the radicalization of the student movement outside the control of the apparatuses. On the other hand, the differentiations that appeared in the CPs were resolved after the middle of the sixties by important splits in the party youth organizations. In these conditions, a tactic directed fundamentally at impelling the formation of left-centrist currents inside the CPs and SPs could hardly be the most suited to extending the influence of Trotskyists among the layer of activists breaking with Stalinism. It was hardly a tactic that could prevent the degeneration of the centrist currents or their being reabsorbed by the left wing of the apparatuses. It could only favor such a reabsorption or have a braking effect on splits. It is symptomatic that the best results of the entryist tactic (the JCR) most urgently posed the necessity of abandoning it. However, this was going to produce a *180-degree political turn* toward adopting a *tactic* of "initiatives in action" to build sections in capitalist Europe and a *strategy* of guerrilla war to build sections in Latin America.

The Ninth Congress came on the threshold of a vast working-class upsurge, certainly the greatest that history has ever known. The direction in which the class struggle was developing internationally through the decade of the sixties indicated that the world revolution was advancing at the expense of imperialism and the bureaucracy. At the end of this decade, the eruption of a mass movement

in the imperialist centers themselves and in the degenerated workers states reflected a complete breakdown of the relationship of forces established after the second world war. This gave a stimulus to the struggles in the underdeveloped world. It was on these countries that the imperialists, with the complicity of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies, later rained their heaviest blows. But the perspective opened up remains one of growing battles against exploitation and oppression, goaded on by the capitalist system. These will pave the way for *generalized forms* of struggle into which fresh battalions of workers will launch themselves in a series of hardfought engagements, carrying with them all their demands and organizations. This perspective has been taking form in Europe since the beginning of the 1960s, with the Belgian general strike, the Asturias strikes in 1962, the upsurge in Greece in 1965. . . . The May 1968 experience in France, the 1969 workers struggles in Italy, the new rise in struggles against the Francoist dictatorship starting in 1970, the battles fought by the Argentinian and Bolivian proletariat, the strikes of the English workers . . . confirm this general statement. The climate of "normalization" prevailing in the bureaucratic dictatorships of the East European countries after the Czech spring and the Polish December cannot long contain the ferment that continues under the surface, threatening the very heartland of the Soviet bureaucracy.

This perspective is also outlined by the radicalization of the youth, which has proceeded a few steps ahead of the mobilizations and ripening of the workers vanguard. Although in other places the relationship has not been as direct as it has generally been in the Spanish state, it is the change in the relationship of forces between the classes on a world scale and in each country that has created the conditions for the student mobilizations. But these objective conditions cannot by themselves explain how such processes of radicalization have been able to occur. These developments would have been impossible without the intermediary role of political concepts and programs coming from the working class, although obviously distorted through the prisms of politically petty-bourgeois radicalizing layers.

In the context of the crisis of the equilibrium established between imperialism and Stalinism and the general collapse of its weakest links, a broad layer of revolutionary activists has broken from the reformist apparatuses and has potentialities for exercising a considerable influence on sectors of the masses, as well as the students, and for taking the lead of their mobilizations.

On the other hand, the working class as a whole remains largely under the control of the traditional leaderships through the mass organizations they control. Although these leaderships are being more and more frequently outflanked by the masses in action, such uncontrolled mobilizations cannot by themselves lead to major sections of the working class breaking free from the tutelage of the apparatuses. Nonetheless, this has resulted in a sharpening of internal conflicts within the traditional organizations that has taken various forms.

Whether the new revolutionary rise culminates in a way favorable to decisive victories by the world working class depends on the ability of the communist vanguard to build a new leadership through its intervention in the big class

confrontations that are approaching. The present phase offers great opportunities for Trotskyists to make advances in building revolutionary parties. The massive mobilizations of various oppressed sectors outside the bounds of reformist politics are throwing up many activists who can and must be won to revolutionary Marxist positions. But, on the other hand, the weak base of the Trotskyist organizations in the working class, the consequence, in part, of the previous political orientation, makes them unable as yet to offer an alternative leadership to major sectors of the class.

This situation more than ever requires the Trotskyists to lay out a very clear strategic perspective. *The party can only be built on the basis of securing the dominant role in society for the working class, the only revolutionary class, or intervening in all other oppressed classes and strata on the basis of the interests of the working class.* Obviously this perspective must be implemented through tactics taking into account the uneven processes of radicalization promoted by the current phase of sharpening in the general crisis of imperialism and the bureaucracy. This applies to the student movement, the barometer of the bourgeois crisis and the weak link in the armor of the reformist apparatuses. The first question that must be asked is how to *integrate into a plan for overcoming the crisis of revolutionary leadership, which must inevitably be centered on an effort to root ourselves in the class struggles*, the present radicalization of other strata and the intervention of the Trotskyists in it.

On the other hand, the Ninth Congress posed the question in the following different terms: "Either continue a routine determined by the situation in the traditional mass organizations and by the deformed, centrist manifestations of the revolutionary rise characteristic of the present historical phase of the world revolution; or orient frankly toward what is most progressive and promising in the present stage, that is the new young revolutionary vanguard, and by rapidly strengthening our organizations on this basis, undertake with better chances of success the construction of a new leadership." ("The Place of the Ninth Congress. . .," E. Germain.)

After an at least implicit rejection (which was delayed for some years) of the fundamental analyses of the previous phase, the analyses that had formed the basis of the "entryist tactic," *the changes that had occurred in the past decade were taken note of and projected as the perspective for the following phase, at the very time when the processes of the class struggle were reaching new stages.* Thus, for example, at a time when whole sections of the vanguard were completing their disillusioning and catastrophic experience with Guevarist and Debrayist positions, a "strategy of guerrilla warfare" was adopted. Another case in point was the underestimation of the factors stimulating a working-class upsurge and the overestimation of the supposed omnipotent control of the reformist—especially Stalinist—leaderships over the present rise of proletarian struggles in the imperialist countries. (This overestimation of the power of the reformist apparatuses is reflected in the great majority of the Ligue Communiste documents since 1969-70, as for example in Bulletin No. 30.) Of greater gravity, as we see it, regardless of the conditions and perspectives opening up, is the *shifting of the main axis of intervention* for Trotskyists away from win-

ning a foothold in the working class, which is *possible today* by turning to mass work — and instead setting out to win the "new vanguards," inasmuch as they offer better possibilities for "building an organization" which *in another phase* could be turned toward the worker and popular masses. Moreover, this "new vanguard" also requires *a new type of activity* by the sections of the Fourth International. We were supposed to be going into a phase when in a broader movement of a mass character we would be able to take "revolutionary initiatives and demonstrate in practice" that a revolutionary orientation was possible and effective. This was the price of being able to become a *pole of attraction* in the new mass vanguard and win hegemony within it. This vanguard would never be won by ideas and programs alone. It would be won by ideas and programs incorporated in organizations capable of *demonstrating the value of these concepts by the actions they lead*.

What demonstrating the value of revolutionary Marxist positions in practice through "revolutionary initiatives," becoming a "pole of attraction," etc., etc., meant concretely was undertaking a guerrillaist course in Latin America in which "the technical preparation cannot be conceived merely as one of the aspects of the revolutionary work, but as the *fundamental aspect*. . . ." ["Resolution on Latin America," *Intercontinental Press*, July 14, 1969, p. 720.] Guerrilla warfare, moreover, was to be "the principal axis for a whole period . . . even if at the start the attempt may seem to have come from abroad or to be unilateral. . . ." [*Ibid.*]

In Europe this meant concentrating all the efforts of the sections on taking advantage of the readiness and militancy of radicalized youth in line with the policy of "building the organization" according to an "initiativist" line of action designed to differentiate ourselves politically. This has led to separating the workers struggles from those of the radicalized youth through the absence of any strategic links between the two and especially through the failure to integrate these struggles into the framework of a united front policy conceived of as a general orientation. This involves *compartmentalizing* the student struggles themselves, whose general political projection is reduced to serving as the "mass base" for the key aims of the organization and keeping the student radicalization from falling into the hands of the reformists and spontaneists. It seems doubtful that any real gains are being made in winning a solid working-class base. But in the not very distant future this will make our base in the student milieu itself precarious.

But the issue is much broader. Today the new middle classes, the poor peasantry, and the traditional petty bourgeoisie are awakening to struggle. The drawing away of these sectors is opening major fissures in the already shaken bourgeois stability. This process is producing legions of activists who are essential to building the party. None of these currents can achieve their progressive aspirations except through the political program communists fight for. But in trying to broaden and radicalize them, revolutionists cannot overlook the political and ideological content that runs through them. Thus, for example, entire sections of militants produced by the radicalization of the new middle classes may move from a rapid break with reformism to a neo-Narodnik solution. This is almost an international phenomenon. It goes back to another

international phenomenon, the lack of a proletarian leadership with mass influence. In order to integrate the struggle of these strata into the process of building a revolutionary party of the working class, communists must take a stand against all neo-Narodnik policies and ideologies. This is the prerequisite for consolidating the healthiest part of the vanguard of the old and new petty-bourgeois strata on the basis of an alliance with the revolutionary proletariat and an adherence to its objectives and its *methods*. Or, on the other hand, are we projecting a new version of the "dialectic of sectors of intervention" aimed now at exploiting the "military capacities" of the new middle strata and giving them the leadership to cover up their neo-Narodnik course with a revolutionary Marxist coloration? This is the perspective that seems to flow from some of the positions expressed in the current discussion in the *Ligue Communiste* (Bulletin No. 30).

We are not unaware that transmitting centrist or ultra-left pressures into our organization is a risk we are going to have to run if we want to work with these milieus. The only guarantee against such a danger is a policy of *strengthening the position of the proletariat*, a united front policy flowing from the need to prepare the class and its vanguard for the coming confrontations and which puts its struggles at the center of the revolt of the other oppressed sectors. In order to prepare for the rise of workers and popular struggles, which they saw as inevitable despite a series of past defeats, and to correct the ultraleftist deviations that had appeared in the international communist vanguard itself, Lenin and Trotsky waged a dogged struggle in support of the united front policy, developing a whole body of teachings on this subject that goes from *The Infantile Disorder* to the documents of the Third and Fourth Congresses of the Communist International. We cannot say that the International has attempted anything like this on the eve, as it is, of vast and decisive mass mobilizations.

Comrade Germain explains that the "turn" of the Ninth Congress "represented a need profoundly felt by cadres and militants no matter in what geographical area they are active." And we think that he is right. The fundamental area of work for the majority of the European sections is the radicalized youth milieu. The sections with the most weight came out of this milieu, and this is the origin of their young leaderships (including ours). The new orientation defined as giving priority to winning the "new vanguard" and consciously restricting the work that is *possible as of today* in establishing a foothold in main sectors of the working class has reinforced the pressure exerted by ultraleft tendencies from outside and even from inside the Fourth International.

The kind of activity promoted by the orientation of the Ninth Congress conflicts with the theoretical and political heritage of the Trotskyist movement.

A prolonging and deepening of the course undertaken can only lead to a revision of our historic theoretical and political principles. The Maoism-Trotskyism-Castroism (!) of the PRT (Combatiente) is only one example. But we need not go so far afield. While the majority of the United Secretariat denies that the "new course" of "guerrilla strategy" in Latin American conflicts with building revolutionary parties on the basis of the Transitional Program, this is precisely the meaning of developments

already in process in sections such as the Ligue Communiste. Bulletin No. 30 of the Ligue leaves no room for doubt. The authors of this document *have the merit of formulating in a consistent way the theoretical and political roots of the turn of the Ninth Congress*. Thus, they say that Hansen is right as against Maitan when he says that an organization is not built independently of its strategy but on the basis of its strategy. So, the conclusion they reach is that "if we speak of an orientation of armed struggle and more precisely of guerrilla warfare in the case of Latin America, this fact affects the whole process of building the party." That is, for these comrades, it is not the "neo-Trotskyist" strategy of guerrilla warfare that must be put in question but building the party according to the "paleo-Trotskyist" method of the Transitional Program.

It is beginning to become clear that the ultraleft course is heading into a blind alley on all fronts. In Latin America the impasse of the PRT-ERP is evident, as well as the fruitlessness of the conceptions that impelled a handful of activists in the Bolivian POR to try to organize a guerrilla struggle jointly with the ELN, not believing that increased opportunities could develop for Trotskyists to work openly and gain a base among the worker and popular masses. These possibilities were exploited by the Stalinists or by opportunists of the Lora type. The POR's attempts to make a partial and hasty rectification of its line at the last minute under Torres could not make up for the time and energies lost (cf. "The Lessons of Bolivia," by Anibal Lorenzo).

In capitalist Europe not only is the LCR in crisis but various sections are experiencing new difficulties. The

empirical rectifications of the line of the Ninth Congress are becoming completely insufficient. Although in our country the En Marcha tendency aspires to be a model for future developments with its discovery of a united front "tactic" that starts off by conjuring away the main axes of a class-struggle line, the driving force in unifying the workers struggles, which is possible only on the basis of working-class political independence—axes that could be driven like a wedge into the contradictions of Stalinism. Thus, the *class united front*, the unvarying strategic orientation of revolutionary Marxists, implemented by various tactics depending on conjunctural factors, is being combated in the name of a *unity* of apparatuses supposedly made possible by the correlation of forces among them.

We state, as the central conclusion to be drawn from our crisis, that the strategy of building the party in a struggle to mobilize the workers through transitional demands is the strategic objective by whose achievement the Trotskyists will be judged "on the historic scale." But this is also the only means by which today we can and must win to Trotskyism in practical daily struggle the broad layer of militants that this first stage of the revolutionary rise is impelling toward a break with reformism and Stalinism, a process that is being blocked and diverted by the centrist and ultraleftist by-products that Stalinism is generating in its death agony, as a result of the terrible political regression it has inflicted on the world workers movement.

Signed: CRL, CRM, DAN, JUL, MTN, S, TR, SIM, JQ.

October 18, 1972

# BUILDING THE LCR, SPANISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

## *I. The LCR, Spanish Section of the Fourth International*

The present struggle of tendencies has become more and more centered on the question of building the party and the International. The "Encrucijada" tendency has presented the organization—and above all those members who have most recently joined—with a view of internationalism whose semblance to reality never goes beyond caricature. On the basis of this, it has been developing conceptions (orally for the moment) that gravely compromise the fundamental acquisitions of the organization. We therefore feel it necessary to review the principal stages through which our international conception has been forged, indicate what concrete steps are to be taken today, and point out the (immediate) grave dangers that mark the positions of the "Encrucijada" tendency. On the basis of the written documents promised for the Congress, we expect that the positions of "Encrucijada" will be defined more precisely through the debate itself.

### *1. The Comunismo Group and Its Conception of the International*

The nucleus of militants who formed the Comunismo group rapidly acquired a correct understanding of the principles concerning the party and the International, differentiating them from all the others aiming to build a party in Spain. For the Comunismo group, the achievement of the historic objectives of the proletariat—the destruction of the bourgeois state and installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a soviet republic that would open the period of transition to socialism—could not be achieved without the construction of a revolutionary part capable of leading the working class and the exploited masses to the seizure of power. But this party could only be conceived as a section of a revolutionary international, since in the imperialist epoch the rebuilding of a revolutionary movement in Spain is conditioned by the conjuncture of the class struggle on a world level, i.e., an *interdependency* exists between the various sectors of the world revolution. For this reason it would be impossible to conceive of a national strategy outside the framework of an international strategy and, therefore, of a national party that was not the Spanish section of a revolutionary international.

Nevertheless, this conception of fundamentally correct principles was still abstract and allowed for many opportunist interpretations. The Comunismo group took a road towards a theoretic but nonmilitant version of these principles.

Faced with the problem of what international to build, it abandoned the sphere of concrete analysis of the programs of the internationals now existing, which would have been the only method enabling it to express its agree-

ment or disagreement with the organizations advancing these programs and thus deciding if the building of an international should take place through one of these organizations or if it was necessary to formulate a new program and build a new international.

The Comunismo group's alternative remained theoretical because it abandoned the sphere of concrete analysis in order to dedicate itself to "intervening" in the history of the workers' movement, so that at each historic moment it had to distinguish between the correct alternatives and the incorrect ones, in this way uncovering the "red threat" of revolutionary Marxism from Marx's time to the present. This would enable it to make a "scientific" choice of one of the present currents. At the same time, it was a non-militant choice since theory was not seen as a tool for the practical revolutionary transformation of society, but as a preliminary step—whose outcome it was impossible to determine precisely—justifying a waiting attitude in the class struggle. The practical consequences of this position could only be opportunist, since, when the class struggle demanded intervention, the Comunismo group could only offer empirical answers (AEG intervention, etc.), thus reflecting the sectarian and ultraleft character shared by the whole far left at that time.

The Comunismo group gave up this opportunist position after two discussions involving different tendencies, the result of which was its transformation into the LCR, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, through which it consciously abandoned the centrist camp to adhere to revolutionary Marxism.

In the first tendency discussion, at the time organizational relations were established with the Fourth International, a minority that favored continuing the road taken by Comunismo faced a majority that defined itself through the programmatic theses of the Fourth International and through intervention in the class struggle in conformity with these theses. The tendencies were reabsorbed, for the moment, as a result of the minority's agreement with this alternative and its inability to develop a different international position.

Nevertheless, the organizational affiliation of the Comunismo group was unable to prevent a crisis caused by sectarian and ultraleft positions resulting from its previous history. And it became worse when the struggles against the War Council of Burgos resulted in a qualitative leap in the class struggle. The second tendency discussion within the Comunismo group was the expression of the crisis caused by these positions. The majority tendency tried to overcome the crises by deepening its understanding of the programmatic theses of the Fourth International, and especially the analyses of the Ninth World Congress. The minority tendency, made up of those

comrades who had played the most significant role in the previous minority, sought to overcome them through the theses of the OT, and to this end invoked the "formal" character of the earlier affiliation to the Fourth International (which it too, had accepted). In these documents we have already explained our self-criticism—in the beginning a rigid and sectarian attitude that facilitated and accelerated the Lambertist evolution of some comrades whose first positions were very closely tied to the solution of concrete problems raised by our intervention (minority actions, independent activity by the organization, united front, etc.); later a bureaucratic attitude leading to their expulsion and through this to ending the discussion.

These self-criticisms cannot, however, obscure the profound character of the Lambertist split. Once the theoretical and nonactivist option on the international question was rejected, the solution of the strategic and tactical problems of the Spanish revolution could only be considered by the members of Comunismo in relation to one of the programs already existing on the international level, and therefore in relation to an international organization. If the class struggle is the test of an organization, the intervention of the Fourth International and the OT in May 1968 and of the LCR and the Aurora group in Spain in Burgos are small examples that suffice to confirm the profound differences separating us from the Lambertist nucleus.

## 2. *The LCR and Its Decision to Join the Fourth International*

In the present debate, the "Encrucijada" tendency has raised the question of our "formal" affiliation to the Fourth International. We are absolutely unable to agree with this characterization. For this reason we have to review what the character of our affiliation was, and show its correctness and fruitfulness.

In the first place, our affiliation was based on the programmatic theses of the Fourth International, i.e., on its analysis of the dialectic of the three sectors of the world revolution and the tasks they raise for revolutionary Marxists. Our affiliation especially took into account the theses of the Reunification Congress and of the Ninth World Congress, since a militant affiliation requires basing oneself on the concrete situation and the present tasks of the revolutionary Marxists, in order to deal with them in practice. However, our program was not based solely on the theses of the Ninth World Congress. Our basic principles as a whole, our *fundamental program*, is contained in the basic documents of revolutionary Marxism, in the first four congresses of the Communist International, in the programmatic documents of the Left Opposition and the Fourth International. It is this program as a whole that defines the Fourth International and that we based our affiliation on.

Today it is clear that the LCR understood part of this fundamental program poorly or superficially. Specifically, it was incapable of utilizing this program to correctly define the tasks of revolutionary Marxists in Spain on a series of points. Various political errors, revealed mainly in the perpetuation of sectarian and ultraleft features, resulted from this.

An organization must be conscious of its errors and must analyze their objective roots in order to correct them. However, we don't believe that an organization can exist without making errors. It is a question of their not being serious and, in any case, that they be corrected rapidly. One has to judge the method of building the LCR from this point of view. It is a question of analyzing its intervention in the struggle, of determining the gravity of the errors committed, of examining the methods it has used to correct them, and of determining if it has been able to progressively reduce the margin of error and increase its ability to correct them. We have converted our programmatic affiliation into an active intervention in the class struggle, in which we have occupied a vanguard position in all the important struggles (election boycott, construction strike, SEAT, IMENASA, student struggles, Ferrol, etc.). If, in these conditions, the "Encrucijada" comrades, after their "critical review," could speak of the LCR's "centrism," it only goes to show how far the spirit of a sect has become embedded. A sect, having developed an abstract view of the class struggle, judges the fighters who intervene in it in the light of the "special features" defining the sect itself (in this case its conception of the united front)—if the fighters reflect these "special features" they are revolutionary Marxists; if not, they are centrists. The real relationship between these "special features" and the class struggle is, for them, a secondary matter.

It was in consequence of the tasks arising in our active intervention that we undertook the discussion and elaboration that enabled us to overcome a series of errors. A determinant role in this has been played, not only by our relationship to revolutionary Marxism (which the debate forced us to understand more clearly), but by our organic relations with the Fourth International. A short review of our main corrections makes that clear.

## 3. *Errors and Corrections*

On the strategic plane the discussions became centered on the overthrow of the dictatorship. The analyses of the Fourth International ("Twilight of Francoism," and the recent editorial in *Quatrième Internationale*), and the discussions concerning them, were decisive in grasping how the crisis of Francoism opened a process of permanent revolution without the need to resort to erroneous conceptions holding that the overthrow of the dictatorship was necessarily linked to the immediate installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Intimately connected with this perspective was the question of the slogans the revolutionary Marxists should put forward to mobilize the masses against private property and the bourgeois state. The LCR in its discussions had maintained positions in which . . . [line missing] . . . remained toned down and in its place gave an exaggerated importance to slogans of the radical democratic type (revolutionary constituent councils). Here too the discussion with the Fourth International (see the interview with the Spanish Commission) was what made possible an understanding of the episodic and conjunctural character of democratic slogans of this type in the mobilization of the masses and of the need, right now, to put forward transitional slogans intimately related to the struggle of the masses for their deepest felt demands.



With respect to the Workers Commissions, the Fourth International took a critical position toward our ultra-left analysis of them. The different organizational relations prevented holding discussions with the necessary rapidity. It was also in documents of the Fourth International that the relation between these unitary organizations of working-class self-defense in all spheres, and the overthrow of the dictatorship and the appearance of organs of dual power was posed. (See Jebracq's document and the one by the Spanish Commission.)

Regarding the analysis of the Spanish Communist Party [PCE] and the far left, the contribution of the Fourth International was decisive in overcoming the catastrophic straight-line view of the PCE's decomposition, making it possible to understand the specific character of its crisis through analysis of the PCE's relations with the Soviet bureaucracy, its utopian Freedom Pact Program, and the weakness of its organizational control over a very combative movement of the masses in which the slogans of the far left are beginning to find a wide audience. (See the interview with the Spanish Commission.)

Through the Fourth International's intervention we have been able to redefine the tactical axes of the building of the League, orienting our intervention toward the development of united front activities intimately linked with our strategic perspective (see the G and M paper). The united front question, which was the central point in the debate with the Lambertists, was not taken by us, however, as an opportunity to reduce the differences of opinion with them, but rather to better understand the opportunist character of the "united front strategy" which, stumbling along under Stalinist leadership, leads to weakening the revolutionary wing of the proletariat, in contrast to the objective of the united front tactic as Lenin and Trotsky understood and applied it.

In short, the correction of the League's errors, which has at times called for greater capacity to make the principles of revolutionary Marxism come alive in Spain, is only explained through our programmatic affiliation with the Fourth International and by its intervention in our development. If we were unable to correct many errors previously, this was in large measure because of the weakness of our ties to the Fourth International, a consequence of the International's still too weak centralization.

#### 4. "Encrucijada's" Positions

Obviously the comrades of "Encrucijada" do not share our opinion. We can distinguish two phases in their positions. The first phase, which seems to have already ended, was characterized by an emphasis on the "national point of view" and by the tendency's conversion into a circle within the LCR. The second phase, still confused because of the lack of documents, strikes us as fraught with major opportunist dangers.

In the first place, the comrades of "Encrucijada" base their fight in opposition to the tactical axes that have characterized the intervention of the LCR in the previous period. The crisis of these axes was evident to everyone, but the tendencies have taken different directions to resolve it. The comrades of "Encrucijada" see in them the consequences of the "follower" attitude of the LCR leadership, labeling it the "Fourth International's adminis-

trator." According to this view, the leadership, renouncing its tasks of elaboration, patched up certain theses of the Ninth World Congress ("on the French pattern") and applied them abusively to the conditions in Spain where, owing to the advance of the prerevolutionary situation, they had no validity. The elaborations concerning the united front in the light of the "national situation" ought to have resolved the LCR's problems and at the same time ought to have been a beacon for the rest of the Fourth International's European sections.

The comrades of "Encrucijada" moved in the direction of reversing the real relations that the LCR and the Fourth International had maintained up to that time, and that had made the correction of our previous errors possible. Revolutionary theory—at least for Europe—would be worked out in that section where the class struggle was most advanced. The International as a whole would learn from the LCR, which would develop the united front theory left incomplete by Trotsky, not sufficiently developed by the Fourth International, and now claimed by "Encrucijada" as its own.

This reversal of the correct relationship between the whole and the parts, which represented a retreat to the "national point of view," reached its logical conclusion in the "Encrucijada" tendency's recent interest in narrowing its organizational relations through international contacts with the Fourth International to those which would lead to "informing but not having to discuss."

A little later, the leaders of the tendency took another step in the internal logic of their "national" view. It had not yet been brought out that the Political Bureau of the LCR was a poor "administrator" of the United Secretariat's positions, but rather that the very positions themselves of this body on the international plane were incorrect. These positions, which in reality were already reached by July, and which signified a fundamental modification of the initial documents of the tendency and would have placed the debate on an international level, have not as yet been written down. This has not lessened the irresponsibility of "Encrucijada's" leaders, who could lavish adjectives like "revisionism" and "Pabloism" on the United Secretariat and the Fourth International without having to bother about concretely specifying their differences with the United Secretariat and through this carry out their responsibilities in an international debate.

This attitude, combined with the deprecation and abandonment of intervention in the class struggle in some areas, and a distorted concept of "democratic centralism," have been enough to convert the "Encrucijada" tendency into a "circle" within the LCR, in the words of its own leaders. A circle is characterized by a situation where any political opinion may be put forward in the most irresponsible manner without having any practical consequences either in the intervention in the class struggle or in the internal functioning of the organization that must carry out the intervention. The main leaders of the "Encrucijada" tendency seem to have turned against this state of affairs and to have abandoned their own tendency. But aren't they the ones who, by their attitude toward the Fourth International, bear the major responsibility?

## 5. "Encrucijada's" Way out

Having reached the point of becoming a circle, it is not strange that a series of comrades seek a new basis for their own tendency, and that sanctioned by the irresponsible attitude of their leaders towards the Fourth International and the LCR, and defending the concept of the united front as the fundamental strategic axis, they seek a possible way out in the OCI. These comrades contended that they had made a self-criticism of their own positions. We think, however, that the organization as a whole should have the right to know specifically which of their documents the comrades submitted to self-criticism.

The positions of the comrades who have constituted the "Encrucijada No. 2" tendency are not much more encouraging. The Central Committee has been called upon to recognize a new tendency without first being able to familiarize itself with the group's platform. The main leader of this tendency is capable of placing before the Central Committee's membership what he judges to need elaboration by his tendency. Another leading comrade is capable of stating his agreement with the framework of the Fourth International at the same time he characterizes this organization as "centrist."

The data as a whole does not make it possible for us to politically characterize the new tendency. But the organization of a new circle worries us. We think the organization, having had one experience in this field, must not permit two. It is necessary to ask these comrades for a precise political definition of their differences with both the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the "En Marcha" tendency. We demand that they spell out precisely which positions of the old "Encrucijada" tendency they retain and which they don't, as well as a self-criticism of their positions regarding the class struggle, the LCR, and the Fourth International which led their degeneration into a circle.

This is the only way the new tendency can fulfill its responsibilities on the national and international levels.

## 6. Our Positions With Respect to the Fourth International

Our principled position with respect to the Fourth International needs no repetition. We support the programmatic theses of the Fourth International. We agreed with the resolutions of the Ninth World Congress and we intend

to employ them in militant intervention in the class struggle. Our principled attitude does not mean we don't recognize errors by the Fourth International and don't try to correct them. But we have already explained that we are not partisans of reconstructing ideal histories without errors or zig-zags, but rather that we place much more value in the ability to correct these errors, in the effort to place oneself effectively in the vanguard of the world proletariat. The specific debate we propose that the LCR hold in preparation for the Tenth World Congress will be the occasion for us to make our contribution to the analysis of the world situation, to the definition of the tasks of the revolutionary Marxists and the methods best adapted to carry them out.

An indispensable condition for active intervention in this elaboration is the maintenance of a militant position with respect to the class struggle. The class struggle in Spain represents the most advanced point of maturation of a prerevolutionary situation in Europe. But only through a militant intervention can we accomplish the tasks that the European revolution and the building of the Fourth International demand of us. These tasks are not solely national—the councils of Burgos already showed potential and effectiveness of the international movement, which the advance of the revolution will only heighten. Moreover international campaigns like Burgos, Vietnam, Bolivia, etc., are not only needed for the international mobilization against imperialism, but as a requisite for education of an international vanguard and the LCR itself.

In order to be up to the level of the tasks the world situation places before the revolutionary Marxists, to be able first to centralize the programmatic elaboration and then progressively intervene at this level, an important step forward is needed in the centralization of the Fourth International. We do not believe that we must work out the program in the "national context" in order to project it on to the international level. We believe it is necessary to integrate the analysis of the "national context" within the totality of the international situation, which can only be done through a strong international center. For the same reason, we don't believe the strengthening of the center must wait for the development of the "national" parties, but rather that success in building national sections depends in great part on the ability to build an international center which is up to the present tasks.



## II. Party Building, Program, and Intervention in the Movement

1. Our adherence to the Fourth International is based on agreement with the programmatic documents which define it, meaning it is based on a common analysis of the current state of imperialism on a world scale, and on the understanding of the tasks of revolutionary Marxists. Without this, the development and application of national strategy and tactics is impossible. But our adherence to the Fourth International does not solve the diverse tasks raised by the specific national situation, although, as we have explained before, the intervention of the Fourth International in defining a correct strategy and tactics for the League is decisive. We won't attempt to repeat here the analysis of the tasks posed by the overthrow of the dictatorship and the opening of a process of permanent revolution, since we have done this in other documents (see the last two parts of the Political Bureau document). We must deal with the most precise problem, the measures that the LCR, the revolutionary Marxist vanguard representing the historic interests of the proletariat, should carry out in order to win the masses to its politics and lead them to the destruction of the bourgeois state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must deal with the relationship that exists between the intervention of the LCR in the concrete struggles of the class, in its preparation for future battles, and in the defense at all times and in all places of the proletariat's interests as a whole by the revolutionary Marxist vanguard. This way of looking at the question brings us directly to the question of the Transitional Program.

2. The Social Democracy, which developed in the epoch of rising capitalism, divided its program into two parts: the *minimum program*, which consists of a series of reforms to be carried out within the framework of capitalism; and the *maximum program*, which makes the substitution of socialism for capitalism possible at some indeterminate time in the future. There was no link whatsoever between these two programs. On a day-to-day basis the Social Democracy fought for the elementary demands of the working class, not without some success, and while still claiming that the *definitive liberation* of the proletariat would only come through socialism, which in this schema constituted the far horizon of the struggles. When capitalism entered its phase of decline, when it could no longer be a question of systematic social reforms, the Social Democracy was transformed into social imperialism. Since the defense of these demands was impossible without overstepping the limits of capitalist property and the bourgeois state, and since for the Social Democracy socialism was only a word for holidays, the Social Democracy transformed itself into the best defender of the bourgeois state.

3. The Third International's Stalinist degeneration, after numerous zig-zags, led, in the popular front tactic, to programmatic conceptions that were basically similar to those of primitive Social Democracy. The theorizing since the second imperialist war about a "new democracy" and "political and social democracy" have only consolidated

and systematized these reformist concepts. Thus Santiago Carillo centers his party's activity on economic and social demands of the workers that are limited enough to be granted by a provisional government, which will open the era of democracy and will gradually transform itself into socialism. In this policy, not only is the achievement of socialism compromised, but also the very satisfaction of the partial demands of the workers.

4. The Fourth International, the continuator of the Third International under Lenin and Trotsky's leadership, uncompromisingly denounces all these reformist frauds. In the epoch of the decline of capitalism, to the extent that these partial and systematic reforms are possible, the task of the revolutionary Marxists is to mobilize the masses to take power as the central task of the present period, as the prerequisite for winning real and durable gains.

However, this does not mean that the workers cannot wrest partial concessions from capitalism or at least defeat capitalism's continual attacks on the masses' standard of living.

5. This outlook has nothing to do with propagandism, which would limit itself to preaching about its final objectives within the classes. This is the characteristic of propagandistic sects and of ultraleftism.

The task of the revolutionary Marxists is to mobilize the masses for the seizure of power, and to do this they must develop the concrete struggles of the proletariat, which is the only way to lead the proletariat to fight for its final objectives. The characteristic feature of the present epoch is not for the revolutionary party to withdraw from the day-to-day struggle, but for it to develop an indissoluble link between the day-to-day struggle and the tasks of the revolution.

6. The masses can only learn through action. Therefore the revolutionary Marxists must formulate demands flowing from the deepest felt needs of the broad masses and defend these demands through mass struggles, without being concerned with whether or not these demands are compatible with the capitalist system. But because the elementary demands of the masses at all times face putrefying capitalism's destructive tendencies, the revolutionary Marxists formulate a system of transitional demands that begin with the present conditions and present consciousness of broad layers of the working class, and that invariably lead to a single conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat. The goal of these transitional demands is to help the masses, through their daily struggle, to find the bridge between their present demands and the program of the socialist revolution.

7. By its very nature, the program that the revolutionary Marxists put forward must be codified in light of the dynamics of the struggle. It always goes beyond the minimum program advanced by the reformists and centrists. It pushes the struggle forward through "a system of demands that as a whole weaken the strength of the bourgeoisie, organize the proletariat, and constitute stages

in the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, and each of which gives specific expression to a need of the broad masses, even if these masses do not yet consciously identify themselves with the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"To the extent that the struggle for these demands embraces and mobilizes ever broader masses, to the extent that this struggle counterposes the vital needs of the masses to the vital needs of capitalist society, the working class will become conscious of the fact that if it wants to live, capitalism must die. This realization must lead to its willingness to fight for the dictatorship. The task of the Communist parties is to broaden the struggles which develop in the name of these concrete demands, to deepen them and link them together." (Third Congress of the Communist International, "Thesis on Tactics.")

8. In order to do mass work the LCR must now lay out a program of action (see the form in the Political Bureau document), which it advances through agitation and propaganda, and which is always linked to initiatives in action, even though in many cases these can only attract a broad vanguard. Because of the specific development of Spanish capitalism, of the dictatorship, and the extent of the mass movement's development, this action program of the LCR must combine economic and democratic demands with transitional slogans and socialist themes in order to establish a bridge between the present conditions and level of consciousness of broad layers of the working class and the seizure of power. But neither the social reforms nor the democratic slogans can be placed incidentally in our program as a means of mobilizing the masses. In the course of struggle, these slogans are [replaced?—word missing] with transitional slogans to guide the proletariat to the seizure of power. In the course of the mobilization they must be replaced by others, which are more advanced, in order to preserve the transitional and profoundly dynamic character of the program.

9. The development of a transitional dynamic is not "spontaneous" or "automatic." In its struggles, the working class does not "spontaneously" develop transitional slogans capable of leading it to the revolutionary seizure of power. Without the building of the revolutionary party, the weight of bourgeois ideology and the influence of the bureaucratic apparatuses continue to dominate the working class. Transitional demands are not a substitute or shortcut for this task. They only make it possible to carry it out effectively. In fact, the introduction of transitional demands in the proletariat's struggle requires a revolutionary Marxist vanguard which, due to its Marxist understanding of reality, can develop a system of demands that fit the concrete situation, can spread these demands among the advanced workers and masses through its propaganda and agitation, and can incorporate at least an important portion of these advanced workers into its ranks. The revolutionary Marxist vanguard must be able to win enough prestige and authority among the workers to assume the leadership of the masses during generalized struggles, which require that the revolutionary Marxist organization be able, at least at certain times and in certain places, to carry out actions that serve as models

to show the workers in practice the effectiveness of revolutionary Marxist politics and organization.

In this way then, setting a transitional dynamic into motion presupposes the existence of a revolutionary Marxist organization, the combat arm of the proletarian vanguard, which shows the masses the correct road and which, placing itself at their head, organizes their struggles.

10. There is no a priori answer to when a demand in the revolutionary Marxist program should be developed in a propagandistic form, an agitational form or through practical campaigns in action. It depends on the objective situation and on the mood of the masses. The party, through its propaganda and agitation, establishes a dialogue with the masses, gauges their mood and helps to change it by educating the masses in the present and future requirements of the class struggle. When a slogan, which has been the subject of propaganda and agitation among the masses, begins to find a broad echo among them, the party is obligated to throw forces into the struggle around the slogan, with the goal of making it come alive in the class struggle, placing it on a higher lever, closer to the revolutionary struggle for power.

11. Owing to the very nature of a transitional program, revolutionary Marxists cannot restrict themselves to solely publicizing and developing it within the vanguard and the masses. Such a practice could only be opportunist.

Trotsky had already noted that the Transitional Program adopted at the founding congress of the Fourth International was not a complete program: "We don't speak here about the social revolution, of the seizure of power by insurrection, the transformation of capitalist society into the dictatorship, the dictatorship into the socialist society. This [the Transitional Program] brings the reader only to the doorstep. It is a program for action from today until the beginning of the socialist revolution."

Therefore we say, on the one hand, that the Transitional Program does not, by itself, constitute our *fundamental program*, the whole of our basic principles.

But these basic principles cannot remain a dead letter, like an academic delimitation without any influence on the activity of the party. On the contrary, all the members of the party must be well grounded in these principles, as one of the prerequisites—among others—for developing a program of transitional demands and to be able to open a path from the doorstep to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of socialism. Around these objectives the revolutionary Marxist organization must develop systematic propaganda, converting it into the perspective of all its struggles. Constant ideological struggle in defense of these principles against all reformist and centrist currents is another irrevocable task.

The struggle to put forward a program of transitional demands is essential for the revolutionary mobilization of the masses, but does not eliminate the need for prior tasks, but rather rests on them. If it were carried out in any other way, the struggle against propagandism and ultraleftism could only be a cover for a development towards opportunism.

### III. The Dialectical Construction of the Party

1. The revolutionary Marxist organization is defined by its historic objectives—the destruction of the bourgeois state and the building of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the first step towards the construction of socialism—and by its understanding of the methods needed to advance these objectives.

During the building of a revolutionary Marxist organization, its program—the expression of the historic interests of the proletariat—is always distinct from the consciousness of the mass movement, in *contradiction* to the tasks which the mass movement will develop "spontaneously" or through reformist and centrist organizations. The fusion of the revolutionary Marxist program with the mass movement is based on the revolutionary instinct of the masses, on their seeds of consciousness, on *transforming them* into communist political consciousness through a struggle against their "spontaneous" consciousness and the influence of noncommunist leaderships. The living instrument of this fusion between the program and the mass movement is the party, the combat organization of the proletarian vanguard, which seeks to win the masses to communist politics through the experience of their own battles. From this it is clear that the building of the party would be impossible without intervention in the concrete struggles of the masses.

But the masses make the revolutionary Marxist program their own only during the seizure of power, during the revolutionary crisis. Only then is the party clearly seen as the revolutionary leadership of the entire class. Only then does this class cease to be a dominated class, converting itself into a class which assumes its active role in history. Only at this point does the constant tension between the movement's historic and present aims, between building the party and intervening in the mass movement, temporarily disappear. It reappears in the period of the construction of socialism (although the need for the party disappears with the disappearance of classes) but in a different form because the proletariat, taking its destiny in its hands, has initiated the seizure of power, the first step toward a classless society.

If one can never speak of the identity between the tasks of party building and intervention in the mass movement, the contradiction between the two is very marked in the first stages of the building of a revolutionary Marxist organization, when this organization, because of the small size of its forces, can find itself limited to a propaganda group with very limited intervention in the mass movement. The first task of this group is to study this program and advance it, showing that only on the basis of this program is it possible to meet the needs of the mass movement. On the basis of this activity the small revolutionary Marxist group can win members and accumulate the forces that make an ever more important intervention in the movement possible. In this sense it is possible to speak of a phase in the building of the party characterized by the primitive accumulation of cadres, in the sense that in the main the group's activity is absorbed by these tasks. No Chinese wall separates this stage of primitive accumulation from intervention

in the mass movement, which must be engaged in from the very beginning. It is solely a question of the relative importance of these tasks within the totality of the party's activity.

There won't be any miracle either making it possible, at any stage of the building of the party, to establish an *identity* between the tasks flowing from party building and those of intervening in the mass movement, thereby saving the party from having to educate the vanguard itself and preparing in this way for the adoption of its politics by the entire class.

To understand this *nonidentity* between the tasks of party building and concrete intervention in the mass movement is the prerequisite for correcting our ultraleftist [errors?—word missing] without succumbing to opportunism.

2. Thanks to its relation to the Fourth International, the LCR, since its founding (and already before it in the *Comunismo* group), has had a conception of party building which is totally different from the self-proclamations (PCE-I type) that lead to projecting the tasks and methods of a developed party before having achieved a base among workers and the ability to intervene that characterizes it, resulting in a sectarian relationship to the movement. Our conception is also totally different from spontanéist concepts (BR type) which lead to the negation of party building.

The LCR began by working out its program through the Fourth International in order to assess, from the beginning, the political tasks presented to revolutionary Marxists by the maturation of a prerevolutionary situation. From the beginning, within the limits imposed by the size of our organization, the LCR tried to carry out these tasks in a centralized framework on a national and international scale. We believe that it is through this activity that we will advance in building a base among workers, in our activity within the mass movement, in working out a strategy and program, and in the internal transformation of the LCR itself, making it able to deal in the best possible way with the tasks presented to revolutionary Marxists by the class struggle.

Thus we understood that party building is a dialectical process that will lead the revolutionary Marxist vanguard, as defined by its program, from a small propagandistic group to a rooted party.

3. Today, two years after the founding of the LCR, we must again deal with this formula in order to adapt it to new circumstances.

In addition to the program of the Fourth International, the LCR now has a general strategic guide which, in regard to the crisis of the Francoist dictatorship, determines the tasks of the revolutionary Marxists with a view towards establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. The LCR also has an outline of an action program that establishes a link between the present battles of the proletariat and the installation of a workers government after the overthrow of the dictatorship.

Nevertheless, within the organization there is a feeling of insufficiency, especially on the strategic and programmatic level. This feeling has been demagogically culti-

vated by some comrades, raising hopes for a process of strategic and programmatic development that would finally (!) put an end (or almost) to our insufficiencies in these fields. However, to the extent that the promises have not been translated into positive programmatic and strategic development, they have led, on the one hand, to a feeling of sickly insufficiency (strategic or otherwise) and, on the other hand, to demoralization and disorientation among the cadres.

At the same time, an explanation of where our strategic and programmatic insufficiencies come from, and how they can be overcome, serves to educate the organization.

In the first place, we have to explain that some of our strategic and programmatic insufficiencies have an objective base. A whole series of problems, which we can describe, cannot yet be solved owing to the insufficient development of the class struggle, which has not yet provided the necessary elements for a solution (formula of the workers government, hypothesis of revolutionary crisis, etc.). In these areas we must point out the existence of problems, we must formulate hypotheses, we must be attuned to the development of the class struggle, we must take into account the international experiences (through participation in debate in the Fourth International), but little more is possible right now.

Other shortcomings stem from the level of development of the LCR. In the political sphere these affect our capacity to develop an action program proposing involvement of the vanguard in struggles of the masses (demands of the slogans, housing, etc.). The ability to develop such a program is directly related to the extent the LCR is rooted in the working class, to its capacity to intervene in the diverse battles of the class, to its capacity to develop, at the outset of these battles, and to defend, in the course of them, the slogans best adapted to the specific situation. The ability of a revolutionary Marxist group to develop from its inception a strategic and general programmatic framework (including peasants, housing, etc.) in order to be able to put forward concrete slogans of action capable of mobilizing the masses, is in direct relation to the degree the group has become rooted in the masses and its capacity to defend these slogans in the movement.

The third type of insufficiencies (or in many cases errors) stem from internal causes within the LCR itself. There are still shortcomings in the leadership, in the elaboration of strategy and program, in the organization of discussion, in the shaping and putting into operation of an infrastructure, etc. In brief, these shortcomings deal with building the organization. But we cannot now [word missing] of these errors and the self-criticisms of the leadership and of each of the members. We must understand that our insufficiencies in the strategic and programmatic sphere will not be solved solely through discussion and debate, but also through development of the class struggle, through our intervention in it, and through building the organization.

4. The building of the party is not possible without militant intervention in the mass movement. No group, no matter how small it may be, can limit itself to communist propaganda and agitation. It must participate in the battles of the proletariat, advancing concrete battle slogans and contending for leadership of the struggle.

The breadth of this intervention may be large or small, but it must be a constant activity of the revolutionary Marxist organization. As first priority, the efforts to develop our strategy must center on the problems raised by the intervention of revolutionary Marxists in the class struggle. This is the only way we can utilize Marxism's value as a weapon for the revolutionary transformation of society and not just as an academic tool, brilliant though it may be.

Marxist discussion of the political tasks placed by the class struggle before communists leads inevitably in practice to the formation of tendencies within the revolutionary Marxist organization, with each tendency representing a distinct alternative and seeking the leadership of the organization. A democratically organized political discussion enables the organization to develop a position adapted to the new situation and to reabsorb the tendencies. If this does not happen, if the tendencies persist for a significant period, they begin to take on the positions of different classes and a split becomes inevitable. There is no insurance against splits. The principles of democratic centralism are the only ones that make it possible for the organization to maintain its intervention in the class struggle and to develop a democratic discussion that allows the proletarian vanguard to go forward politically and organizationally strengthened.

5. Thus the organization cannot be thought of solely as a vehicle for carrying out a communist policy in the mass movement. The organization also plays an active role, at times a decisive role, in developing this very policy. In order to convert the LCR into a proletarian combat party we must carry out a number of internal changes. We must strengthen our ties with the Fourth International. We must increase the centralization of the LCR so it can carry out its political tasks in the most efficient manner. We must organize a democratic discussion, enabling the whole organization to carry out its militant tasks in the class struggle. And we must select a leadership.

6. The concept explained above of the role of communist intervention in the class struggle (leaving aside any debate between tendencies) and of the importance of the problems arising from building the organization, allow one to better understand why our criticisms of the "En-crucijada" tendency in these fields, far from stemming from formalism as its leaders like to claim, are structurally related to the only real possibility of party building.

7. All the preceding does not mean that we conceive of the construction of the party as involving the mere addition of individual members to the LCR's present nucleus. We think, in general, that construction of the revolutionary party cannot be achieved without a constant battle to destroy the continuing influence of the PCE, syndicalism, and centrism over the working class. We also think that the construction of the party will only be accomplished on the basis of the revolutionary Marxist program. But, at the same time, the construction of this revolutionary party will involve the incorporation of many militants who are found today in various far-left organizations and many of those who constitute the healthiest and most combative sector of the ranks of the PCE. We therefore believe that the construction of the revolutionary party must pass through a series of splits

in these organizations, through a process of fusions with the organizations and militants who accept the revolutionary Marxist program as their banner. The best way

for the LCR to further this is to advance its program from now on in an integrated way and carry it out in the class struggle insofar as our forces permit.

#### IV. The Tactic of Constructing the LCR

1. The construction of the LCR must begin by: (a) Defining the tasks presented by the objective situation to communists. (b) Beginning to carry these tasks out, even if only on a partial basis, utilizing all the resources the organization has at its disposal at any given time.

The way we interconnect these resources as a whole in the achievement of a broader strategic task constitutes the basis of the LCR's tactics.

Hence our tactics are subordinated to strategy and mediated by the objective situation of the mass movement (need for concrete analysis of the downturns and upturns), on the one hand, and on the other by the organizational reality of the LCR.

Failure to determine tactics in relation to strategy and to tasks deduced from the objective situation leads directly to opportunism (the movement is everything, the goal nothing).

Failure to take into account that the organizational reality of the LCR is decisive when deciding what tactic to employ, leads directly to *propagandism*; either *ultra-left*, where you take your desires for reality and abandon the masses to the influence of the reformist organizations, or *parasitic*, being forced to accept the reformist politics and adopting an attitude of propagandistic condemnation of them.

2. Hence, the definition of our tactic in building the LCR must begin from: (1) the strategic axes of the Spanish revolution; (2) the present period and the tasks arising from it; (3) the real state of the LCR.

In other documents in which we have spoken of our strategic perspective, we have expressed our belief that the Spanish bourgeoisie is not inclined to tolerate the rise of a mass movement within the framework of bourgeois democracy (not even limited). From this we deduce that the crisis of the dictatorship can only be conceived in terms of the violent overthrow of the dictatorship and the opening of a process of permanent revolution which the revolutionary Marxist vanguard must bring to a head—through putting forward a program of democratic and transitional demands—in the destruction of the bourgeois state and the building of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This perspective implies taking as the central slogan of the preparatory period we are now in, the formation of a working-class united front against all forms of alliance with the bourgeoisie, culminating in a slogan for a workers government to carry out an anticapitalist and revolutionary program.

3. Through an analysis of the reciprocal relations between the movement and the various organizations, we can advance a hypothesis about the unleashing of the revolutionary crisis.

(a) The PCE's influence over the class is too weak,

and it has too narrow a field for maneuver, to be able to effectively control the mass movement which, with a combative worker vanguard, has gone beyond the PCE on numerous occasions.

(b) The rise of the movement is expressed in the establishment of united organs of the Workers Commission type which lead the struggle, not only on the economic level but also in politics, and which make it possible for the revolutionary Marxists to convert them into organs for the overthrow of the dictatorship with the capacity of developing into organs of dual power.

(c) The existence of a worker and youth vanguard which has broken with the reformist orientation of the PCE and is trying to get its bearings on the revolutionary road.

In these conditions the most probable scenario would seem to be that the mass movement, going beyond the politics of the PCE, faces up to overthrowing the dictatorship and places in motion more or less widespread organs of dual power. A vanguard in which the revolutionary Marxists may or may not yet have hegemony, which has assimilated the methods of revolutionary struggle in the previous period, will play a decisive role in this movement. In the highly unstable period that the overthrow of the dictatorship ushers in, the role of the revolutionary Marxists will be to impel it toward the dictatorship of the proletariat through a military victory over the bourgeois state.

4. The present period, which we have defined as one of the maturation of a prerevolutionary situation, places on the immediate horizon the preparation of an HGR for the defeat of the dictatorship through advancing unifying class demands, demands capable of giving the struggles an anticapitalist dynamic, directing them against private property and the state, organizing self-defense through pickets which are the embryos of the future militias, organizing their generalization through pushing the formation of workers' commissions, their transformation into elected committees subject to recall, and their heightened coordination.

5. The situation of the rising workers movement and its radicalization, expressing itself through united organizations of the Workers Commission type, through the weak influence of the Spanish Communist Party and its narrow margin of maneuver, through the ease with which the mass movement goes beyond the CP's initiatives through the Workers Commissions, through the existence of an important worker and youth vanguard in which the revolutionary Marxists already exercise relative hegemony, makes it possible that the LCR, through first rooting itself in the working class, can advance its revolutionary alternative by means of a united front tactic

(which prepares the formation of a working-class united front against the dictatorship and capitalism), of which it is now only possible to put forward initial elements owing to the organizational limitations of the LCR.

6. The very characteristics of the period itself show the need to strengthen the Workers Commissions as organs of class self-defense in all spheres, to defend the slogan of proletarian front unity, to formulate concrete slogans in response to the attacks of capital, expressing at a given time the practical form this proletarian front unity should take. If, however, the LCR's base is very weak, the preceding could be limited solely to work by the revolutionary Marxists in the Workers Commissions and to propagandistic defense of proletarian front unity, the forms of which would, as a function of the objective situation, be determined by the specific period. Because of this weak base, the LCR's activity may be limited to participation in the real movements of the class which are led, in the main, by the CP, and to independent activity based on the radicalization of the worker and youth vanguard and unity of action with the far left, aimed at putting forward revolutionary campaigns which have the potential of pulling along the Workers Commissions and the CP in especially favorable situations.

In other words, the practical activity of the revolutionary Marxists, even when they advance the need for a united front against capital, would be dominated by activity aimed at organizing campaigns that go beyond the CP as a prerequisite to forcing the CP into specific joint action campaigns at various times.

7. On the other hand, if the League had a significant base in the Workers Commissions, to the extent that it could set in motion action campaigns with revolutionary leadership through the Workers Commissions, the application of a systematic united front tactic would have the greatest practical importance. In these circumstances, the League, using the campaigns set in motion, could influence through the Workers Commissions the direct struggle through slogans flowing from the objective situation and the mood of the masses, could propose the unification of the proletarian front against the dictatorship and capitalism to the Workers Commissions and the workers parties as a whole. On the basis of its proposal to carry out this practical step, the League would clearly show the differences between its revolutionary Marxist policy and all the reformist and centrist policies, in this way strengthening the revolutionary wing of the proletariat.

As a result of its ability to mobilize an important segment of the proletariat, the League would be able to force the far-left organizations into supporting, on numerous occasions, its practical initiatives in the face of the CP. The same relation with the student movement, now subjected to the contradiction of neither substituting itself for the proletariat nor waiting for the proletariat to engage in revolutionary activity, would change its character, making the united organization of a very broad sector of the student movement possible on the basis of support for the campaigns put forward by already significant sectors of the workers movement.

8. The League currently stands in an intermediate situation between the two mentioned above. Owing to its base, the League can impel a significant mobilization of workers only through the Workers Commissions, through slo-

gans of class struggle, in quite specific situations when the combativity of the movement makes it impossible for the CP to abandon the mobilization and when the slogans put forward connect very directly with the sentiment of the masses because they are already based on prior experiences of the masses.

In these situations, the LCR's attitude must be to take the initiative in preparing and setting the movement into motion, while proposing a united front of the Workers Commissions, workers parties and organizations representing layers of the petty bourgeoisie who are moving in struggle against capital.

Nevertheless, on other occasions the reformist influence dominating the workers movement is too strong to allow the development of a significant movement. However, the independent campaigns proposed by the LCR, aided by the increased radicalization of the worker and student vanguard, and in united action with specific far-left groups (over goals determined at any given moment by concrete analysis of the situation), will be the best way to weaken this influence and even, in specific circumstances, to force the reformist leaderships to support the action. That is to say, the organization of the overcoming of the traditional leaderships is the prerequisite for present or future united activity.

9. Thus, based on the objective situation and on the League's organizational strength, the LCR must now carry out a tactic that weaves together defense of the need for the class united front against the dictatorship and capitalism with agitation and propaganda that conforms to the needs of a given period; permanent united front activity in the Workers Commissions and specific united front activities with respect to the CP. At the same time, the League must combine this with independent activity in which it brings the radicalization of a broad worker and youth vanguard and united action with far-left groups into play in its favor, with the aim of overcoming the collaborationist policy of the CP and forcing the CP into united action on the basis of revolutionary politics (or forcing it to pay for its opposition).

Of course such a tactic must always be formulated in regard to the evolution of the objective situation and the LCR's base. But it is a tactic that can be defined at present in relation to the following axes:

#### *(A) Independent Activity by the LCR*

This is a constant requirement for any revolutionary Marxist group, whatever the conditions in which it develops and whatever tactic it applies. At present the independent activity of the LCR has a specific objective which is that the LCR should appear at the center of politics, supported by the existence of a broad worker and youth vanguard capable of giving it massive support and making it possible, on the one hand, to offer a centralized response to the attacks of the state and the bosses, appearing as the only nationally centralized organization on the far left in opposition to the CP and thus as an alternative on the national level, and on the other hand to take advantage of the preceding conditions for strengthening its hegemony over the far left.

The main fields in which the LCR engages in independent activity are:



(a) The production, distribution and discussion of *Combate*, as a political periodical capable of unifying and standardizing the organization's activity, and able to offer a weapon of struggle to the broad vanguard.

(b) Communist agitation and propaganda on all aspects of the exploitation and oppression of the capitalist dictatorship, calling on the masses to begin struggle against it, and agitation and propaganda for construction of the proletarian dictatorship, and popularization of our strategic outlook.

(c) Political campaigns on a local or state scale around burning questions arising in a national or international conjuncture (self-defense, Vietnam, etc.), concentrating the organization's forces on these points and pushing proposals for action around them.

(d) Communist intervention in the factories, neighborhoods, etc., around the problems the movement is dealing with, the aim being to help the Workers Commissions or similar organizations to adopt the most correct position, or to prepare to go beyond these organizations through building ad-hoc organizations.

(e) Pushing struggles of the proletariat as a whole against an offensive by the dictatorship (Burgos, SEAT, etc.), or organizing solidarity with an isolated struggle (HW, Cometsa). Developing the active support of students, teachers, peasants, for these struggles of the class as a whole.

*(B) Developing United Front Activity Through:*

(a) *Agitation and propaganda through concrete united front slogans.*

The situation of the mass movement will continually place the need for a united front against capitalism on the order of the day as a prerequisite for the success of concrete struggles (united action by the different workers parties and organizations, coordination of the Workers Commissions with representative organizations of the student movement). The revolutionary Marxists, independently of our ability to make these alternatives materialize, will popularize them through our propaganda and agitation as a prerequisite for being able to spur a vanguard to achieve it in practice, and to educate it in the need for a revolutionary united front against the dictatorship and capitalism, and in the need for opposition to every type of pact with the bourgeoisie.

(b) *Continuous united front activity in the Workers Commissions.*

This activity, which is based on our analysis of the Workers Commissions and of the role they can play in the revolutionary overthrow of the dictatorship and in the development of organs of dual power aims at: (1) the formation of a revolutionary tendency within the Workers Commissions which defends a program of action corresponding both to the needs of the movement and to the mood of the masses. This action program, when adopted by the Workers Commissions, allows them to develop their role as self-defense organs of the class in all spheres, overcoming the influence of the CP and the reformists in the course of the struggle; (2) to move ahead in consolidating the influence of the revolutionary Marxists within this revolutionary tendency and within the Workers Commissions in general.

(c) *Specific, temporary united fronts with the CP.*

The CP is faced with a rising movement over which it has a weak degree of control, and which goes beyond its politics on numerous occasions. It is faced with the existence of a far left that already has a mass audience, and with the existence of differences within the CP's own membership. Therefore, the CP finds itself in a position where it is difficult for it to oppose a unitary framework for actions (Workers Commissions, work with the far left, etc.), but which it must channel into a class-collaborationist policy which appears more and more utopian every day.

Because of all of this, it is possible for the LCR, given its present base, to force the CP into united action around specific questions on specific occasions, with the result that it may be possible to build a movement, corresponding to the needs of the movement, that at the same time makes it possible to deepen the contradictions between the CP and the movement as a whole, and between the CP and its own membership.

(d) *Specific, temporary united fronts with the far left.*

The organizations of the far left are fundamentally based on the radicalization of a broad youth and worker vanguard that has broken in practice with the collaborationist policy of the CP and that is seeking to orient itself on the revolutionary path.

All these groups represent different varieties of centrism (ultraleftism, revolutionary syndicalism, spontanéism). Nevertheless, because they represent, in a number of areas of the class struggle (which vary according to the specific group in question), an alternative to the left of the CP, they are able to attract this youth and worker vanguard which still does not have sufficient experience to opt for the revolutionary Marxists in the face of this varied mosaic of centrist currents.

However, this broad vanguard is not completely incorporated within the various far-left groups, although it polarizes around their proposals. Some of these far-left groups themselves have relatively little control over their own members and sympathizers, and even their own cadres can in certain circumstances develop towards revolutionary Marxism (the obvious prerequisite is an uncompromising ideological struggle). Developing specific, temporary united fronts with groups of the far left makes possible the advancement of various objectives. In the first place, it makes it possible to use unity of action with these groups to strengthen a movement for goals that the CP is not willing to take up. This speeds the process of by-passing the CP and forces it to either support the action or face the consequence of a loss of influence in our sectors. Even within united actions with the CP, the specific, temporary united front with far-left groups can be the basis for more advanced campaigns (defense of demonstrations, occupation of workplaces).

In the second place, this united activity, together with the ideological struggle, is the prerequisite for winning hegemony over the youth and worker vanguard, destroying the influence of the various centrist currents within it, whether by loss of influence or by a combination of that with crises and splits that can be used to good advantage by the revolutionary Marxists, or through the evolution of some of these groups towards revolutionary Marxism.

(d) *Dialectic of the sectors of intervention.*

Its objective is to link the mass work in various areas with party building.

Most political groups utilize a particular dialectic of sectors: thus the CP in the years 1964-67 based itself on the Workers Commissions in order to mobilize the student movement in a united fashion through the Sd, to strengthen in this way the central campaigns of its line of national reconciliation. For us the dialectic of sectors of intervention is a tactic that must enable us to relate our mass work in the radicalized youth movement (MU, EM, EFP), and in other peripheral layers in process of radicalization (professors, teachers), to the construction of the party.

The intervention of the revolutionary Marxist organizations in layers other than the proletariat is a requirement of the Leninist policy of trying to forge a revolutionary alliance between important segments of these layers and the proletariat, as a very condition for a broad activity of political agitation making possible the formation of a true communist consciousness in the proletariat. However, the pace and forms of this intervention are determined on the basis of tactical criteria.

The LCR's need to intervene in the student movement and other peripheral layers stems above all from the existence of a broad vanguard with an important degree of political radicalization, a vanguard that is able to draw in other sectors of the masses behind the action initiatives set in motion by the revolutionary Marxists on the basis of their own program.

As a result of this, many aspects of this program, which would otherwise exist only on an agitational and propagandistic level, can be carried out in practice through mass political campaigns and action initiatives which, while they forge an alliance between broad sectors of these nonproletarian layers and the revolutionary proletariat, also make possible the acceleration of the LCR's development of a base in and influence over the working class.

Therefore, a first consequence of the dialectic of the sectors of intervention is that the League does not inter-

vene indiscriminately in all oppressed layers, even if they are in struggle. Instead, it intervenes on the basis of a political decision about the possibility of transforming mass work in these sectors into support for the political initiatives of the revolutionary Marxists, which are designed to accelerate the building of a base in the working class. The second consequence is that revolutionary Marxists must define some axes of intervention in these sectors permitting mass activity, on the one hand, tending to organize resistance by these layers against specific attacks on them by the dictatorship and, on the other hand, making possible a mobilization of its vanguard, drawing along important sectors of the workers movement through initiatives proposed by the League in the sphere of anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle and in support of workers struggles with direct action methods.

The third consequence of the dialectic of the sectors at the present time stems from the extent of the League's base in the working class, which determines a tactic combining united front activities with activities designed to sweep beyond the CP's politics. This pressing beyond the CP affects the peripheral movements themselves. From the present extent of the League's base in the working class flows both the impossibility of achieving an absolute hegemony in the movement of the peripheral layers and the impossibility of thinking about their mobilization within a single framework. Their mobilization will continually be fragmented by the very character of the campaigns proposed by the revolutionary Marxists, both in their own fields and in the more general political sphere. Only through the development of a significant working-class base and as a result of the systematic development of a united front tactic would it be possible to think of this type of united organizations.

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The galley's of this document have not been corrected.