

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
July 8, 1977

To Leninist Trotskyist Faction Coordinators:

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed are the following items:

1) A translation of an article by Nahuel Moreno that appeared in the April 1977 issue of Revista de America, entitled "'Combate'... But Not Against Reformism."

2) A February 1, 1977, letter from Comrade Moreno to the United Secretariat.

3) An April 1, 1977, reply to Comrade Moreno from the Bureau of the United Secretariat.

4) A March 30, 1977, reply to Comrade Moreno from Ernest Mandel.

5) A motion adopted by the United Secretariat meeting of March 22-24, 1977, which proposes to begin a written discussion with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International on the subject of the crisis of Stalinism, and a statement by Galois and Johnson on this motion.

6) A report by Barry Sheppard on decisions of the meeting of the LTF Coordinating Committee which was held at the time of the April 30 to May 2 United Secretariat meeting.

7) An April 26, 1977, letter and attachments from Peter Camejo to Mercedes of the Workers Tendency in the LCR of Spain concerning the call for a republic.

8) A March 19, 1977, letter from Trotskyists in Argentina to the United Secretariat requesting that a point on Latin America be placed on the agenda for the next world congress.

9) Correspondence concerning the Healy slander campaign against the Fourth International.

a) April 2, 1977, letter to Ken Coates from Michael Banda, General Secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

b) April 8, 1977, letter from Ken Coates to Joseph Hansen.

c) May 8, 1977, letter from Joseph Hansen to Ken Coates.

d) April 6, 1977, letter from Alan Jones of the IMG in Britain to Joseph Hansen and George Novack.

e) April 22, 1977, letter from Joseph Hansen to Alan Jones.

10) January 10, 1977, letter from the International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency to the Political Committee of the SWP (U.S.).

11) March 15, 1977, letter from Barry Sheppard for the Political Committee of the SWP to the International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency.

12) Letter from John Benson concerning the next Steering Committee meeting of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction.

13) Several documents relating to the International Bolshevik Tendency:

a) Four letters from the United Secretariat, dated December 21, 1976, concerning organizational resolutions of the Bolshevik Tendency that appeared in the internal discussion bulletin of the Portuguese PRT (for the resolutions themselves, see LTF mailing No. 5, dated March 12, 1977).

b) Four letters dated January 27, 1977, from leaders of the Bolshevik Tendency to the United Secretariat.

c) A letter from Capa to the United Secretariat, dated February 2, 1977. This is in response to a November 29, 1976, letter from Galois to Capa and Orestes, which can be found in LTF mailing No. 2, dated December 23, 1976.

Comradely,

Caroline Lund

Translation of an article that appeared
in the April 1977 issue of Revista de America

'Combate' . . . But Not Against Reformism - by Nahuel Moreno

I have carefully read through the special issue of Combate, the publication of the Spanish LCR (Liga Comunista Revolucionaria), which appeared in February 1977. It is an extraordinary, exceptional issue that seeks to sum up and symbolize what kind of journal they would like to publish. More than anyone else in the Fourth International, these heroic and self-sacrificing Spanish comrades deserve to be spoken to frankly. This special issue will prove to have great importance for the International, inasmuch as it is the confirmation in reality of the prognosis we made about the danger of a slide toward total capitulation to the European Communist parties.

On this account, with deep sadness, I find myself compelled to denounce this special issue of Combate as one of the worst expressions of centrism and opportunism that I can remember. It is thousands of kilometers from Nin and light years from Lenin and Trotsky. It is so opportunist and centrist that there is not a single criticism of the national policies of the PCE (Partido Comunista de España) and the PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español). Even to say that there are no criticisms is not going far enough -- there is not a single critical sentence or comment. The only three comments on the reformist parties concern regional or sectoral questions.

1. On page 7, they make a "harsh criticism" of the CP-controlled Movimiento Democrático de Mujeres (Democratic Women's Movement) for two organizational derelictions in building and carrying out the first demonstrations of the working women of Madrid.

2. On page 8, they criticize the "PCE and PSOE" for their electoral tactics in Euskadi (only in Euskadi?), which led them into making deals with the Basque rightists.

3. On page 9, they say, referring to the "Round Table of the Political and Trade-Union Forces of the Valencian Country": "The bourgeois organizations within it, and the working class forces that are participating actively in the Negotiating Commission dealing with the regime -- the PCE and PSOE -- have capitulated to the central government and aggravated the crisis."

Silence Means Assent

Does Combate have nothing to say, not even a word, about the policies of the PCE and the PSOE toward the "democratic opening" offered by the government of Suarez and King Juan Carlos? Is the treacherous policy of the PCE and the PSOE in the Basque country an exception to the rule? Did the local party organizations break the discipline of their national parties, or is their course part of a nationwide policy? What about the PCE's policy toward the assassination of the lawyers, was that correct or a betrayal? What about the lines the PCE and the PSOE are following in the union movement, do these represent a class-struggle position or an opportunist one? Are the leaderships of the reformist parties working in an underhand way for a social pact in the service of the bourgeoisie or aren't they? Are the big working-class parties taking a consistently republican stance or are they ready to make a pact with the

monarchy? Are they or are they not in favor of building a general strike against the regime?

A special issue of a revolutionary newspaper that fails to raise and to answer these politically fundamental and decisive questions has nothing to do with Leninism or Trotskyism. Such a paper is a wretched sheet that does nothing but offer some news about trade-union struggles and the oppressed nationalities; it is not a revolutionary Marxist organ.

Thus it is not by chance that the following sentence can be found in the Manifesto of the LCR to Public Opinion as a Whole: "The LCR is an organization that in the worst years of the dictatorship combined its efforts with those of the other workers parties and of the nationalities in the fight for freedom and against capitalist exploitation."

Similarly unsurprising is the lamentable explanation that the LCR is internationalist "because we believe in the necessity of international working-class solidarity against the power of the trusts and the multinationals, and we maintain close fraternal relations of the Fourth International."

Nowhere in the entire journal or the manifesto is it explained that we maintain an independent national and international organization precisely because the PCE and the PSOE on a national scale, like the CPs and the SPs on an international level, are parties that betray the working class, that practice a policy of class collaboration and therefore do not struggle against capitalist exploitation, parties that as a result have created a crisis of leadership in the workers movement both internationally and in Spain.

In its manifesto, the LCR says exactly the contrary: "the . . . (Spanish) workers parties" are "united" "in the fight" "against capitalist exploitation." A word to the wise is sufficient -- the LCR has only tactical differences with the PCE and the PSOE, since they have been united for long years "in the fight" "against capitalist exploitation."

Why and in What Way We Are Internationalists

According to the special issue of Combate and the manifesto, the LCR is internationalist for the same reason as the Stalinists: out of "international working-class solidarity against the power of the trusts and the multinationals."

This non-Marxist conception of internationalism, meaning a common front against the trusts and the multinationals, is used by the Stalinists to oppose permanent revolution on a national and international scale, since limiting the struggle to a fight against the multinationals leaves open the possibility of popular fronts with the supposedly "nonmonopolistic" and "national" bourgeoisie.

And this is not far-fetched speculation. Anyone familiar with "Eurocommunist" propaganda knows that its favorite camouflage is "antimonopolistic" verbiage, which appears very radical but which serves as a justification for popular fronts with the supposedly "nonmonopolistic" bourgeoisie. The way "internationalism" is formulated in the manifesto of the LCR is nothing but a "Trotskyoid" echo of this key point of the demagoguery of "Eurocommunism," and it in no way exposes this demagoguery.

Trotskyist internationalism flows from a conception of the world revolution, from the permanent revolution. This internationalism is embodied in the World Party of the Socialist Revolution, the party of the revolution against all exploiters, from the multinational to the regional bourgeoisie. For this reason Marx and Engels founded the first and second internationals when trusts and multinationals did not yet exist, because they wanted to make the international socialist revolution.

We are inheritors of this program of the international socialist revolution and therefore we denounce the betrayals of the second and third internationals, which abandoned forever this program of the international revolution. We point out the betrayal of the Communist parties, which conceal their implacable struggle against the international socialist revolution and their class-collaborationist politics under the mantle of "international working-class solidarity against the power of the trusts and the multinationals."

[Translation]

Bogotá
February 1, 1977

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat of
the Fourth International

Dear Comrades:

In my capacity as a member of the United Secretariat, as a Trotskyist leader over a period of thirty-five years and an activist for thirty-seven, as a leader of the Bolshevik Tendency and the Socialist Workers party of Argentina, I have decided to take on the responsibility of personally addressing the United Secretariat, the three current tendencies in the International, and all responsible leaders and activists to ask that we make an immediate public disavowal of the statements--which I consider to be revisionist--made by Comrade Mandel to the Barcelona magazine Topo Viejo [Old Mole--translator] and published in Nos. 2 and 3 of that magazine in November and December 1976.

I. The Statements by Comrade Mandel:

1. In the statements we are referring to, Comrade Mandel holds that the European Communist parties have ceased being counterrevolutionary and treacherous, that they are undergoing a transition--"Eurocommunism"--and that it cannot be said how it will end up. A few quotes illustrate this adequately:

"It will also be difficult--I don't say it will impossible but it certainly will be difficult--for the PCE [Spanish CP] to adopt a position clearly favoring strikebreaking, as the PCI [Italian CP] and the PCE itself have done in some periods of their existence. That is because the relationship of forces in the Spanish workers movement is very different."

"The French far left--despite its limitations, weakness, and organizational divisions--today has real political weight and has the potential capacity to force the reformist leadership of the CP to make a revolutionary turn."

"The comrades leading the (Spanish) Communist party, especially the worker cadres, will have to take it on and resolve it, and I hope and trust that they will prove capable of resolving it positively, in the sense that they will return to the path of revolutionary Marxism."

"Eurocommunism is the politics of a transition, although no one knows where or to what it is heading. Perhaps it represents a transition toward the Communist parties being absorbed by the social democracy, something which in my opinion is quite unlikely but not totally excluded. Perhaps it is a transition toward a new Stalinism. And it also could be--why not?--a transition on the part of the worker cadres of the party toward again discovering revolutionary Marxism, Leninism. The political struggle and

practical experience will tell us what is going to happen."

2. According to Comrade Mandel, the future of the European CPs is uncertain and he does not reject the possibility that they might once again become revolutionary Marxist parties. Thus he tells us, "Eurocommunism is the politics of a transition, although no one knows where or to what it is heading....it could be a transition toward again discovering revolutionary Marxism, Leninism." "The comrades leading the (Spanish) Communist party"; "I hope and trust that they will prove capable of resolving it positively, in the sense that they will return to the path of revolutionary Marxism." "The reformist leadership of the (French) CP" can be "forced to make" "a revolutionary turn." In order to hide his revision and capitulation, Comrade Mandel combines such predictions with expressions like "on the part of the worker cadres of the party," "especially the worker cadres," "leaders of the (Spanish) CP," and "the French far left" in each of those quotations, respectively. Following the same line of reasoning, he affirms "that the relationship of forces in the Spanish workers movement" is the reason why the Spanish CP cannot be outright strikebreakers.

But such circumstances exacerbate his revisionism and do not conceal it as Comrade Mandel thinks, since that means that the Communist parties can once again become revolutionary because of the pressure from their worker cadres in Spain, from "the far left" in France. To put it another way, the creation of the Fourth International was a tragic historic error since the Communist parties are salvageable for the revolution if the worker cadres, the far left, or the relationship of forces exerts strong pressure on them.

3. Comrade Mandel commits a very grave error; he confuses the role of strikebreakers in economic struggles with a political counterrevolutionary role. Political betrayals are much more serious than the role the CP plays in the trade-union struggles of the workers movement. Many years ago, Comrade Pierre Frank explained how the French CP practices a certain degree of day-by-day defense of the workers in the factories, a certain vanguard leadership role in economic struggles, in order in this way to be able to maintain the prestige that enables it to carry out horrendous political betrayals. Comrade Mandel has not grasped this dialectic of the CPs. What is involved is the CPs' role as political strikebreakers, their role as traitors and political counterrevolutionaries, leaving aside the small or large concessions they gain for the rank and file in the economic struggles of the workers movement. And during 1976 the PCE was tireless in its political betrayals of the Spanish proletariat and oppressed nationalities, and in its playing on the side of the regime, without Comrade Mandel noticing it and feeling obliged to denounce them. The Basque comrades must tell the entire International

whether Comrade Mandel is correct or not, whether the CP is getting better or worse in the political fights against the regime.

4. What Comrade Mandel does not say in his interview is as serious as what he says. Nowhere does he show that the European Communist parties, especially the Spanish CP, are betraying and will continue increasingly to betray as long as the revolutionary upsurge continues, because that is the function the Communist parties have been conditioned to fill since 1935, since they adopted the strategy of class collaboration and popular fronts with the bourgeoisie.

Nowhere does Mandel speak about the irreversible crisis of the Communist parties, a crisis provoked by the insoluble conflict between their politics and counterrevolutionary leadership and the rise of the mass movement. On the contrary, he systematically insists that he in no way rejects the possibility that the Communist parties, including their leaderships, might move in a revolutionary direction.

Nor does he expose the counterrevolutionary united front between the Kremlin, the CPs, the imperialists, and the Socialist parties. He does not point out that the European CPs are inside that counterrevolutionary united front.

II. The Counterrevolutionary Treacherous Character of Eurocommunism:

1. Only an impressionist could say that there are three possible variants for Eurocommunism--social democracy, Stalinism, and revolutionary Marxism. Eurocommunism is a double adaptation by the Communist parties--to the upsurge of the masses in Europe and to imperialism itself. The adaptation to the mass upsurge has only one goal--to better serve the imperialist counterrevolution. For a Trotskyist, the discussion on Eurocommunism has a limit-- the impossibility of the Communist parties and their leaderships becoming revolutionary again. To put it another way, the discussion can only revolve around the formal changes the European Communist parties are making so as to better serve the imperialist-Stalinist counterrevolution during the upsurge of the European revolution.

If the problem is posed in this way, there is only one question to be answered: Are the European Communist parties already neo-Social Democratic or are they still Stalinist? In our opinion they are Stalinist because they maintain their close relationship with the USSR. If there were a war between their imperialists and the USSR we think they would defend the workers state and not imperialism. But since the conflict today is not between the USSR and imperialism, but rather between the revolutionary upsurge and the (imperialistic-bureaucratic) European counterrevolution, the

CPs, like the Socialist parties, form part of that counter-revolutionary front. Therefore, the CPs adopt social democratic positions for the workers and the mass movement, so as to better play their counterrevolutionary role. They are closer and closer to their own imperialists without having reached the point of being their direct agents, which would convert them into social democratic parties. But this difference is secondary right now since in face of the revolutionary upsurge, the social democrats and European Communist parties are playing a similar role. The social democracy fills that role closely and directly linked to its imperialists, and the CPs, via the Kremlin. But the function is identical--to serve the counterrevolution through class collaboration.

2. Trotskyism has as one of its reasons for being the implacable struggle against the Socialist and Communist parties, which have gone over to the camp of imperialist counterrevolution and increasingly betray the working class. For Trotskyists, this passing of the reformist parties into the camp of the imperialist counterrevolution is a decisive and irreversible fact that led to the founding of the Fourth International. If it had been possible to change and transform the Socialist and Communist parties into revolutionary parties, first the Third International and later the Fourth International would not have been founded. The Trotskyists state that the Communist parties the world over, and especially in Europe, clearly follow a traitorous policy of popular fronts and collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Can Eurocommunism mean that the CPs are abandoning their popular frontist policy, as Comrade Mandel suggests? We categorically deny that possibility.

The degeneration of both internationals flowed from deep social causes--the bureaucratization of these parties, which provided a solid economic and social base for their reformism and tied them for life, for economic and social reasons, to the camp of the imperialist counterrevolution. Although the process of degeneration of the Third International was different from that of the Second International, in going from the center to the periphery--from the bureaucratization of the CP of the USSR to the national parties--this did not stop it from being a process of bureaucratization and degeneration that marked all the Communist parties. All of them are based on a political and trade-union bureaucracy. Where these parties win mass support this bureaucratization is accentuated, but with "national" characteristics, since this privileged bureaucracy begins to have its own "national market" as the main source of its income, through its trade unions, parliamentary posts, and party apparatus. That is the situation in the Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese CPs.

This bureaucratization, this privileged layer, is what makes it impossible for sociological reasons to have a revolutionary regeneration of the national Communist parties.

3. The fact that some Communist parties have taken power or have led a revolution does not mean that they have changed historically and structurally, that they have stopped being counterrevolutionary. The same is true when a privileged trade-

union bureaucracy leads a victorious strike. Just because it has done so does not mean it has stopped being a counter-revolutionary bureaucracy, in the last analysis, an agent of the imperialist bourgeoisie and of counterrevolution in the ranks of the working class. That is, because of their bureaucratic character, these parties, even if they have taken power and led a revolution, continue opposing and fighting against any domestic and international development of the permanent revolution. To put it another way, they continue to be sworn enemies of the development of the international socialist revolution although they have led a victorious national revolution.

When that happens, it is due to very concrete, specific objective conditions that Trotsky himself foresaw in the transitional program: "However, one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.), the petty-bourgeois parties including the Stalinists may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie." (Trotsky, *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, Pathfinder, 1973, page 95.)

However, Trotsky did not deduce from that that the Stalinist parties would stop filling their role as traitors and counter-revolutionaries, nor did he deduce that we should stop fighting them mercilessly.

The defeat of the exploiters of a country carried out by Stalinists in such "completely exceptional circumstances" took place while they were betraying the workers of the entire world. Thus, the defeat of imperialism in China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Eastern Europe was the price Stalinism had to pay to domesticate and smash the workers revolution in Western Europe.

In addition, most of those victories took place in the colonial world, in peripheral countries. Although the victories weakened the imperialists, they also made it possible for them to recover and survive with the help of Stalinism and the CPs. At the same time the victories provided the Stalinists with a vindication of their concepts of the revolution by stages and socialism in one country and therefore with a means to continue strengthening themselves in the mass movement through the world--the ultimate insurance for the imperialist counterrevolution.

That traitorous role of world Stalinism--of all Communist parties in the world without exception, whether or not they have broken with Moscow, whether or not they have taken power--is concretized in the lamentable role they have played in the domestication of the industrial proletariat throughout the world for more than two decades. This role has been both direct and indirect. It has been a direct role insofar as the Communist

parties have been the hegemonic political force and indirect because the CPs' bureaucratic policies arrest the revolution where they have influence, thus aiding the trade-union and social-democratic bureaucracy in the countries where the Stalinists don't have hegemony to continue controlling the working class.

4. Despite the betrayals of Stalinism, the proletariat in the metropolitan countries began to raise its head in Western Europe. This historic event, which has only one meaning--the beginning of the end of capitalist-imperialist rule on a world scale--will lead the Communist parties throughout the world, especially the Western European parties, to unheard of lengths in their betrayals.

To have combatted and denounced the Communist parties for decades as counterrevolutionary and now--when the revolutionary upsurge that would reveal the increasingly treacherous role of those parties is upon us--to assert that the European Communist parties have "the politics of a transition, although no one knows where or to what it is heading," as Comrade Mandel states, is to use an umbrella on sunny days. The moment of the final, implacable battle against the Communist and Socialist parties has arrived, the moment to expose them to the masses--to millions and millions of workers--as counterrevolutionary, treacherous parties. The time has come to intensify and extend the systematic, implacable denunciation by the Trotskyists of the traditional Communist and Socialist parties. This is not the time to water it down, forget it, or worse--assert that we do not know what their politics will be. As Trotskyists we know what they will do--betray the working class more than ever.

5. This systematic denunciation does not mean forgetting the united front tactic or the crisis the Communist parties are bogged down in. To apply the united front tactic in a revolutionary, communist, Trotskyist, way, it must be accompanied by a clear delimitation from and denunciation of the mass reformist parties to which it is directed. That is how Lenin and Trotsky acted toward the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in 1917. Later, that was the policy of the Third International when it oriented toward a united front with the social democratic parties--not for a single minute did it stop denouncing them as traitors at the same time that it called on them to form a united front. If the most intransigent denunciation is not combined with a call for a united front, you end up capitulating to the reformist parties.

A variant of basic importance in applying this tactic of the united front must be our call for unity in action with the reformist parties (including the CP) against fascist attacks or reactionary

coups, which threaten revolutionists as much as they do reformists. This permanent danger to the rising workers movement--that is, fascist or reactionary putschs--must be fought with the most consistent policy of the united front. But it must be fought through a communist application of the united front tactic, which is to say, without halting for a single minute the attack against the Communist and Socialist parties for being the real cause--because of their policy--behind the fascists and reactionaries raising their heads and their being able--due to the policy of those treacherous parties--to attack those same parties. That is, more than ever we raise the banner of the united front with the reformist parties in order to defend those very parties from the attack of the reactionaries. But more than ever we also continue to denounce those parties as the main cause behind the reactionaries' raising their heads and attacking them.

The same thing happens with the crisis that inevitably takes place in the Communist parties during any big rise of the mass movement. It is necessary to distinguish carefully between the characterization of the policy of a Communist party and the characterization of its crises. The crises of the Communist parties are a very positive phenomenon because they help us cut these counterrevolutionary parties to pieces. But if someone confuses a crisis with the policy of the party, he can fall into the aberration of believing that because a treacherous party has entered a crisis, the party can stop being treacherous and therefore change its politics. A person who thinks like that helps the bureaucratic counterrevolutionary leadership of those Communist parties to overcome or alleviate the crises, since he moderates the implacable denunciation needed to accelerate the crises of such a counterrevolutionary party and to destroy it. A real Trotskyist uses the crises of any bureaucratic leadership and of any Communist party to accelerate the crises, pointing out that that leadership and party cannot be saved for the revolution. Our aim is clear and unambiguous--to explain to the workers that that leadership and that Communist party are definitely lost to the revolution, that they are agents of the imperialist counterrevolution in the ranks of the workers movement. Along with that we must point out that, precisely because the Communist party cannot be saved for the revolution, its crisis is very positive because it means the disappearance, destruction, or wiping out of that party, a process we favor and want to bring about.

6. Everything we have been saying is occurring ever so slowly at present in Italy, France and Spain. The Italian Communist party today is the greatest guarantee of the bourgeois order. In fact, it is collaborating in full with the Christian Democratic government and the Italian big bourgeoisie. The "democratic concessions" granted to the ranks of the Italian trade-union movement have an obvious goal--to place the CP in position to better develop its counterrevolutionary policy to serve the Italian imperialists. The French CP, through the

"Union of the Left," presents itself as the gravedigger of the French workers' revolution.

Events have confirmed the viciously treacherous role of the Spanish CP. It has been the safeguard of the post-Francoist regime and even of Francoism. It has been the party that successfully prevented the organization of a mass general strike that would overthrow the regime. It is the party that is liquidating the workers' commissions so as to better serve Spanish imperialism and the regime. It has saved the regime in the current situation and Carrillo makes public statements favoring a government of national unity under the king. So, pleased with that, the righteous indignation of the workers over the appearance of fascist gangs is diverted into demonstrations that in fact lead to propping up the politics of the Spanish government. Rarely have we seen a more abject and treacherous policy. But this is just the beginning. We will see much worse betrayals by the PCE.

In its own way, Portugal foretells the future of all the European Communist parties. There, the CP tried to turn over the embryos of workers and people's power to the MFA, a wing of the imperialist army. Or it fought them directly with fire and sword. It sold out the just strikes of the workers' movement against the austerity plan of Vasco Gonçalves and called for support to this plan of the imperialist government.

This is what the European Communist parties have done, and, we repeat, it is nothing more than an example of what they will do in the future--betrayals that will be much more horrendous and catastrophic than the ones they have already carried out. That is, history is showing that the Trotskyists' attack of so many years against Stalinism and the CPs was more than justified, and future history will show this to be still more the case--that they are traitors and counterrevolutionaries. It will show that one of the fundamental reasons for being of the Trotskyists is to wage the most inplacable fight against the CPs and to denounce them as treacherous, counterrevolutionary parties, just as bad as the social democratic parties.

III. Comrade Mandel's Contradictions

1. Comrade Mandel contradicts what he himself wrote or voted for some time ago. The international's public document on Spain, "The Death Agony of Francoism," was written by the IMT, which is led by Comrade Mandel.

In that document, which is deplorable in its concrete analysis and policy for Spain, a principled position in opposition to the CP is maintained. Here is what the Mandelists said somewhat more than a year ago:

(over /)

"For twenty years now the Spanish CP and its various allies have obstinately pursued the strategy of putting pressure on the bourgeoisie (the "peaceful general strike") and of offering big capital ever more sweeping guarantees of class collaboration and respect for bourgeois order in an effort to win the replacement of the dictatorship by a bourgeois-democratic regime. The formation of the Junta Democrática is only the latest variant of a single and unchanging strategy: convincing the Spanish bourgeoisie that it can change its political system without its class power being seriously threatened."

"The CP wants to assure the Spanish bourgeoisie that the regime can be changed under conditions that would leave intact not only its economic power and its private property, but even its state and its instruments of repression against the workers; this is the real content of their treacherous policy." [The English original, published in the June 19, 1975, issue of Inprecor, reads: "The leadership of the CP and its allies want....(the rest is the same)--Translator.]

"While the effects of this policy on the bourgeoisie remain weak today, this will not be the case immediately after the overthrow of the dictatorship. At that point, an alliance with the Social Democratic reformists, the neo-Social Democrats, or Stalinists could appear to significant sectors of the bourgeoisie as a last resort in halting the revolutionary upsurge with a palliative that does not immediately threaten their class rule. But the ability of the reformists and Stalinists to carry out this counterrevolutionary work does not depend solely on their intentions [original says: "intentions and political orientation--Translator], but also and above all on the scope of the social crisis and the mass movement, as well as on the level of the class consciousness of the masses, the degree of self-organization and centralization they have attained, the relationship of forces between reformists and revolutionaries within the workers movement, and the progress made on the road to the construction of the revolutionary party." (Our emphasis.)

2. According to "The Death Agony of Francoism" the PCE's policy was and will continue to be the same as the one they have followed in the last "twenty years"--a "counterrevolutionary," "treacherous" policy. According to the same document, insofar as the revolution is on the upswing, the CP will be more useful to the bourgeois counterrevolution. Exactly the opposite of what Mandel tells us publicly today, in this way going against an official document of the international and of his faction. Comrade Mandel should have quoted and defended this public document of the international and his faction before the journalists.

He could have brought it up to date giving current examples of the betrayals of the Spanish CP and predicted future betrayals. Instead of that, he acted like a slick defense lawyer for the Spanish CP and the European CPs.

By acting in this way, Comrade Mandel commits two crimes. He in no way helps in the implacable struggle of the Spanish, French, and Italian Trotskyists against the current betrayals of the Communist parties in those countries. Instead of denouncing them with exclamation points, he limits himself to a series of question marks about the future of their politics.

The other crime is that any vanguard worker who has begun to attack the CP for its treacherous counterrevolutionary policy, who has begun to listen to our criticisms, after reading Comrade Mandel will find himself faced with a big question--should he break with the Communist party or pressure it to change its policy? Any worker who tends toward revolutionary positions in France, after reading Comrade Mandel must have very great doubts--isn't the best policy to pressure the Communist party more and more to make "the revolutionary turn" Mandel predicts if it is pressured enough? That is, the conclusions to be drawn from Comrade Mandel's statements reinforce the hopes and confidence, now greatly diminished, of thousands of workers in the European Communist parties, instead of leading them to the logical conclusion of breaking with those parties. The statements of Comrade Mandel inevitably lead to an orientation that only means capitulation to the European CPs.

Comrades, I think I have exhaustively shown the gravity of the statements made by Comrade Mandel and the need to take our distance from them publicly.

This disavowal should be the result of a fraternal interchange of opinions among all the leaders, tendencies, factions, and members. It should be a statement that we continue to support the classical, principled analysis of Trotskyism with regard to the Communist parties.

That is, we can change the tone, we can examine the different tactical variants appropriate with regard to such a declaration criticizing the statements made by Comrade Mandel, but what is necessary is a declaration to counteract the real catastrophe Comrade Mandel has inflicted on our European Trotskyist members and on our international as a whole.

None of these proposals should be taken as a public or internal characterization and attack on Comrade Mandel. In this, we are not judging the historical trajectory of Comrade Mandel, who deserves the greatest praise as one of our top leaders for more than 30 years. Instead, we are judging the impact of lamentable public statements on the future of our international. That is how this should be taken.

With orthodox Trotskyist greetings, awaiting your speedy reply,

N. Morenc

April 1, 1977

Dear Comrade Moreno,

We received your letter dated February 1, 1977, on March 21, 1977, and we brought it to the attention of the United Secretariat meeting on March 22-24, 1977.

The matter of Comrade Mandel's interview with the Spanish magazine, Viejo Topo, was quickly cleared up. The United Secretariat was informed that the views attributed to Comrade Mandel by Viejo Topo were not his views, were not expressed by him in the interview, and that he had not had the opportunity to see the text of the interview before it was published. On learning this, the United Secretariat readily decided that the best solution was the one that Comrade Mandel himself had proposed: he would write a correction and ask Viejo Topo to publish it. The comrades of the LCR of Spain also informed us that if this correction was rejected by Viejo Topo, then they would publish it.

The United Secretariat also mandated the Bureau to reply to your letter.

We were astonished that before sending us your letter you did not check in advance with Comrade Mandel to ascertain whether he actually expressed the views attributed to him by Viejo Topo. This was particularly surprising since these views are so contrary to the well-known positions of the Fourth International that have been defended on many occasions by Comrade Mandel. No leader of the Fourth International, for example, has presented the position, either publicly or internally, that the West European Communist parties are changing their counterrevolutionary nature. It seems to us that the matter could have been settled without lengthy polemics, if the precaution of checking the facts had been taken. Besides being an elementary courtesy, this was doubly called for before accusing another comrade of "crimes."

We were even more surprised that the letter we received from you was mimeographed, and that seven weeks had elapsed between the time it was written and the time we received it. Thus there are grounds to assume that it has been given broad circulation. The comrades who received the mimeographed letter were presented with only one side of the argument -- yours -- without having had the opportunity to hear Comrade Mandel's explanation, and without even knowing about the solution that the United Secretariat worked out to deal with the problem. This procedure is highly prejudicial to an objective discussion.

Comrade Mandel is writing a reply to your letter. We will send it to you as soon as it is completed. We insist that it be given the same circulation as your own mimeographed letter. We will make the exchange of correspondence on this matter known to the leaderships of the sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International.

Revolutionary greetings,
United Secretariat Bureau

March 30, 1977

Dear Comrade Moreno,

Your letter of February 1, 1977, surprised me as much by its contents as by its tone.

You start from the assumption that by making some statements to a Spanish magazine, Viejo Topo, one of the leading members of the Fourth International and of the United Secretariat has "betrayed" Trotskyism. You use a lot of space demonstrating the "betrayal." You circulate these "denunciations" throughout the world movement (hence the mimeographed form of the letter) even before sending it to the United Secretariat (the letter dated February 1, 1977, only reached us on March 19). You even go beyond the organizational limits of the Fourth International and submit that letter to a vote of the young Costa Rican organization, which is not yet affiliated to the Fourth International. Yet you do not take the elementary precaution of first ascertaining whether the ideas which you attribute to comrade Mandel, and which you denounce so violently, are really those of the accused comrade. It is incorrect in and of itself to conduct basic polemics in tendency struggles on the basis of unverified interviews and not on the basis of political documents written by tendencies. An excellent way to educate comrades in the "principled" conduct of discussions among revolutionists, indeed!

For an experienced leader of the movement such as yourself, it would have been elementary to first write me a letter, or even to have called me by telephone and asked: Have you really said what Viejo Topo attributed to you, and is this really your opinion?

This precaution was all the more called for, since you must have read in my first interview published by Viejo Topo the rather unbelievable statement that I was opposed to democratic centralism! You know quite well that this is not my opinion at all. I have consistently defended a strict application of democratic centralism inside all sections of the Fourth International, and inside the F.I. as an international, including in correspondence with you. For this reason alone, you should have been a bit suspicious as to the seriousness with which the editors of the Viejo Topo has summarized a long interview I gave them on the request of the comrades of the Barcelona LCR. You should have inferred from that one example at least this one conclusion: that I hadn't had the opportunity to reread and correct this summarized transcript of my statements before it was printed; otherwise I would never have let such a preposterous statement pass. And you would have been wise to first consult me in order to know what part of the statements attributed to me in relation to "Eurocommunism" correspond or do not correspond with my views.

Instead of acting in such a responsible way, you rushed into violent denunciations, some of whose exaggerated formulas border on the grotesque ("Comrade Mandel commits two crimes." "Comrade Mandel has caused a real catastrophe for our European Trotskyist militants and our International as a whole." For comrade Mandel, "the creation of the Fourth International has been a tragic historical error," etc., etc.).

The question must be raised: why did you act in such a way? And the answer seems obvious: because you were motivated not primarily

by the need to defend the integrity of the Trotskyist program, the image of the Fourth International, or the chances of making rapid progress in its expansion, but exclusively by petty factional considerations. Your desire to make some occasional factional capital by playing on the lack of information of inexperienced comrades took precedence over the need to publicly defend the unity, solidarity, coherence, and programmatic integrity of the Fourth International the world over, especially in Spain, where today we have the greatest opportunities for making rapid progress. In doing this you made a serious error, which the rank-and-file militants will judge. You likewise seriously miseducated some young comrades on the manner in which to conduct political discussions in a revolutionary organization without letting them degenerate into an unprincipled brawl that doesn't teach anybody anything except blind factionalism. We hope that such errors will not be repeated. It is certainly not in the interests of the political discussions that your tendency wants to conduct with the rest of the Fourth International to adopt such behavior. This can only make political clarification more difficult.

You are right to assign great importance to a correct analysis by the Fourth International of the phenomenon of "Eurocommunism" (more correctly, the programmatic and political evolution of such parties as the Italian, Spanish, French, British, Swedish, Belgian, Japanese, Mexican CPs, etc.). You follow all the publications of the Fourth International in that respect, watching with an eagle eye for any signs of "revisionism," as a self-appointed guardian of "orthodox Trotskyism." This should have at least made you conscious of the fact that leading spokespeople of the United Secretariat, of the Fourth International, and I myself have in innumerable writings in a consistent way not left the slightest doubt as to the basically right-wing and pro-capitalist turn of the CP leaderships, a turn which has as its basic thrust the deepening of class collaboration with the imperialist bourgeoisies, even more blatant betrayals of potentially revolutionary mass upsurges than those already committed by Stalinist parties in capitalist countries since the historic turn of the Comintern toward popular frontism in the 1934-35 period.

We have consistently defended these positions for several years. Two years ago we published a document submitted to a meeting of our European Political Bureaus on the evolution of the European CPs in which we characterized this evolution as a process of gradual Social Democratization, but one which had not yet reached the stage of a qualitative transformation of the CPs into classical Social Democratic parties, given the degree of privileged relations they still maintained with the Soviet bureaucracy. We stick to that position today.

On July 13, 1976, I wrote an article for INPRECOR concerning the Berlin conference of Communist parties, in which I said:

"Does this mean that we applaud the success incontestably won by 'Eurocommunism' and 'polycentrism' at the East Berlin conference? This would be to fall into a one-sided and opportunist evaluation of the balance-sheet of this conference.

"First of all, the increased prestige won at low cost by the Berlinguers and companies in East Berlin increases their ability to manipulate and thereby betray the rising proletarian revolution in the West as well as the rising

political revolution in the East. Significant evidence for this is provided by the euphoric commentaries of R. Havemann (who is nevertheless an honest, critical, and leftist communist and a fierce opponent of the bureaucracy) published in the July 5 issue of the West German weekly *Der Spiegel*. Enthusiastic about the 'democratic' professions of faith of the 'Eurocommunist' leaders and hoping for innumerable beneficial repercussions for opposition communists and toilers in the 'people's democracies,' Havemann fails to see the decisive concessions to the bourgeoisie. The abandoning of any struggle to destroy the bourgeois state apparatus and the strangling of the self-organization of the masses that is the inevitable consequence of attachment to bourgeois-parliamentary institutions imply the risk of defeat of the socialist revolution in southern Europe."
(INPRECOR, No. 56, July 22, 1976. Our emphasis.)

In September 1976 I was interviewed at length by the editor of the French revolutionary Marxist theoretical magazine Critique Communiste on the problems of revolutionary strategy in Western Europe. The interview appeared in the September/October 1976 issue (no.8-9) of that magazine. It contains the following passage:

"The Communist parties . . . are bending to the pressure of the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy, for example in their abandonment of the concept of 'dictatorship of the proletariat.' We completely disagree with such concessions and continue to uphold the entire classical Marxist-Leninist polemic against the inadequacies, the formalism, the class character and the indirect, oppressive, and severely truncated nature of bourgeois parliamentary democracy."

And further on:

"The objective results of the policies of the reformists are the following: growing impotence of the left government; inability to meet its promises; rising disillusionment among the masses and the creation thereby of a fertile ground for demobilization and demoralization and the return in force of reaction, whether through violence or even by legal and electoral means. This confirms that we have no choice in the matter: either we extend the mass outflanking toward victory, or else decline and defeat are inevitable."

On January 14, 1977, I spoke in London in the name of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International at the mass rally convened to condemn Healy's slander campaign against comrades Joseph Hansen and George Novack. *Intercontinental Press* (No. 4, Vol. 15, February 7, 1977) reported that I stated the following:

"Whatever one may think about all the intricacies of so-called Eurocommunism, of which we are of course no friends whatsoever, no apologists -- which we don't cover up -- it is a new stage in the reformist degeneration of these parties, preparation for the deeply counterrevolutionary role of these parties in the coming revolutionary struggles in southern Europe." (Our emphasis.)

Anyone familiar with all these statements, which have been made consistently and continuously for many years, should have at least pondered why suddenly, in between two declarations identical in con-

tent, I would tell a Spanish paper in October 1976 the opposite of what I said in September 1976 and in January 1977. This should have increased your suspicions that the editors of Viejo Topo had misrepresented my views when they condensed a long, detailed analysis into a few paragraphs.

Finally, I must remind you of another important fact from the recent history of the Fourth International. For ten years a protracted discussion has been going on in the Fourth International on the nature of the Chinese and Vietnamese CPs. Members of the United Secretariat and the Fourth International have different opinions on this question. But you are perfectly aware of the position that most leading comrades of the majority, and myself in particular, have consistently defended in the course of this discussion. Given that the Chinese, Vietnamese, and Yugoslav CPs had indeed overthrown capitalism in their own countries at the head of a revolutionary mass movement, albeit with bureaucratic methods and opportunist policies, it was dangerous and would open the road to revisionism to call these parties Stalinist, i.e., parties of the same type as the French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, British, and Swedish CP, which, in our opinion, were unwilling and unable to overthrow capitalism in their countries.

We strongly insisted on the fact that this was not only due to the class collaborationist policies of these Stalinist parties, but in particular to the way in which they recruited and educated their members and cadres, i.e., to the practice and experience of these cadres. People who have been trained exclusively in reformist practice and experience for twenty years are unable to act otherwise, even under "new" and "exceptional" circumstances. (Stalinist parties can only overthrow capitalism in the wake of the Soviet army, which is completely excluded in Western Europe today.)

A representative of your tendency was present during several United Secretariat discussions in which we challenged the comrades of the Liga Socialista of Spain to answer clearly and unequivocally as to whether they thought the Spanish CP would overthrow capitalism in Spain under any circumstances. Our answer was an unequivocal "No." We still wait for an unequivocal answer from the LC.

We note that in your letter of February 1, 1977, you yourself throw confusion on this question by mixing the question of the counterrevolutionary effects of a party's policy on a world scale with the specific question of the revolutionary or counterrevolutionary role of that party in the concrete revolution unfolding in its own country. One can agree with the statement that Maoism plays a counterrevolutionary role on a world scale. But in the third Chinese revolution of 1946-49 the Chinese CP did not play a counterrevolutionary role. It is not "counterrevolutionary" to overthrow capitalism in the most populated country in the world, comprised of one quarter of mankind. We completely deny the ability of the Western European CPs to do the same thing in their countries. That's why we think it is misleading, to say the least, to lump them all together in the same category.

There are possibly certain differences in the Fourth International on the question of "Eurocommunism" and how to deal with it. These differences should be discussed thoroughly in the period leading up to the Eleventh World Congress. But they are not situated where you pretend to locate them. Nobody in the leadership of the

Fourth International, and certainly no comrade associated with the IMT, believes that the "Eurocommunist" parties could become revolutionary or centrist parties, that under the pressure of the masses or under the pressure of the changed relationship of forces inside the labor movement between them and the revolutionary vanguard they could lead a proletarian revolution or overthrow capitalism. Neither does anybody believe that the leaderships or bureaucratic apparatuses of these parties could reform themselves or change their social nature in any way whatsoever, so as to enable them to play a revolutionary instead of a counterrevolutionary role. Any attempt to sidetrack the discussion into that channel, i.e., to attribute ideas to comrades that they do not hold, have not held, and which are contrary to their clearly and unambiguously expressed opinions, is completely sterile and factional. In reality, it is a diversion preventing real discussion about real or potential differences.

The potential differences which we can detect in your letter (whether they are real or not will only be determined by further discussion) could revolve around three problems:

1) The dynamic of the world crisis of Stalinism, which is stimulated by "Eurocommunism." You make a mistake in stating that, given there are no differences between imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy as to what should happen in Western Europe, the concessions of the West European CPs to the imperialist bourgeoisie are acceptable to the Kremlin. Contrary to what occurred in 1934-38 or 1941-47, this time the right turn of the CPs has not been accomplished under instructions from the Kremlin, but has taken forms which at least partially go against the interests of the Kremlin. This turn was initiated by the pressure of specific national situations and social forces in the various imperialist countries, i.e., attempts by the CP bureaucracies to escape from their long-term political isolation, to further insert themselves into the structures of the bourgeois state, to find electoral agreements with the Social Democracy, to be accepted as potential government partners by bourgeois parties, while at the same time making some concessions to the powerful antibureaucratic pressure of the West European working class in a period of increasing mass mobilizations in many countries. This pressure led to changes in CP policies at different moments, with different rhythms, and in different forms (there is not "one," but several "Eurocommunisms"). While this conforms to the Kremlin's line of "peaceful coexistence" in general terms, it also openly hurts the interests of the Kremlin through its repercussions in Eastern Europe and the USSR. We believe you underestimate the effects of the criticisms made by the "Eurocommunists" (be they mild and hesitant) of some of the repressive acts of the Kremlin in Eastern Europe and the USSR. This type of criticism strongly stimulated the opposition in these countries. In fact, contrary to what happened in 1934-38 or 1941-47, this time the turn of the CPs has created a deep, growing, and lasting rift inside world Stalinism, a rift we must exploit.

2) There is a need for our movement to take political initiatives of a propaganda and sometimes even an agitational nature in face of the contradictions of "Eurocommunism," initiatives which go beyond the simple combinations which you propose of "denunciation plus united front." Denunciations are necessary. United front initiatives are necessary. But more is possible and necessary today. Our sections should try to widen the cracks in the Stalinist monolith which "Eurocommunism" has created, for example, by forcing the Western European

CPs to defend the victims of bureaucratic repression in the East in a real way, and not simply with lip service. They should also start a big offensive in favor of workers democracy, right of tendency, etc. inside the mass organizations, especially the trade unions controlled by the CPs in Western Europe. To be sure, any success we obtain in this field does not change the nature of the CP bureaucracy, nor does it solve the problem of revolutionary leadership in and of itself. But it helps the building of the revolutionary party by making it easier for revolutionaries to operate, to discuss, debate, and criticize the reformist policies inside the mass organizations. Every battle won for internal democracy in the trade unions is a step forward in the battle against reformism and Stalinism. Today the leaders of "Eurocommunism" are very vulnerable on all these questions. Campaigns by our forces and sympathizers can have a broad response among advanced workers and CP members themselves. These responses and successes increase the chances of a victorious fight against the treacherous policies of the CP leaderships.

3) We are convinced that in the course of a rising mass struggle, in a prerevolutionary and especially a revolutionary situation with stronger and stronger Trotskyist parties with correct policies, serious and deep splits will occur in the mass CPs. Whole layers of Communist working class cadres will be won over to revolutionary Marxism. In fact, it will be impossible to build revolutionary mass parties in Western Europe and to conquer the majority of the working class without winning over important sectors of the proletarian cadres of the CPs.

Discussions around these questions would be very fruitful. Factional quarrels around ideas falsely attributed to comrades are utterly sterile and self-defeating. They contribute neither to the class struggle nor to the building of the Fourth International.

Fraternally yours,

Ernest Mandel

Motion adopted by the March 22-24, 1977 United Secretariat

In accordance with the motions previously adopted on relations with the OCRFI, and after receiving the OCRFI's response to these proposals, the USFI decides:

1. To hold a meeting with an OCRFI delegation as soon as possible to consider the modalities of the public discussion between the latter and the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

2. To establish as the first topic in this discussion: The Crisis of Stalinism.

3. To proceed to prepare this public, written discussion in the following way:

a. The presentation of the positions of the Fourth International in this discussion must take place under the control of the United Secretariat;

b. The Bureau of the USFI is mandated to prepare a draft document for this public discussion to present to the USFI;

c. In order to avoid beginning the discussion from pre-established positions, this document should be the result of a process of real discussion within the leadership bodies of the International. In this way the basic positions of the International can be determined, as well as any disagreements that may arise in this or that area;

d. In the framework of carrying out this procedure the USFI will allow the public expression of differences that might exist within it;

e. After a balance sheet of both the public discussion and possible common actions is drawn the USFI will decide on the forms for continuing the discussion.

4. In order to consider the problems related to the practical realization of this public, written discussion, a meeting will be held between the Bureau of the United Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Political Bureau of the LCR, and representatives of the SWP leadership.

5. In its letter of March 7, 1977, addressed to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, the OCRFI asserts: "Comrade Lambert in no way contests having said that the OCI had taken measures to follow the political discussions held in the LCR. This was done since no other solutions are possible, given the type of relations that exist between the LCR and the OCI. The USFI decides to publish this letter in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin, accompanied by a response from the Political Bureau of the LCR. The USFI delegation is mandated to take this point up at its next meeting with the OCRFI delegation.

Galois, Johnson statements on the OCRFI motion

We voted for the motion on the OCRFI, because it represents a **step** forward towards opening up a process of discussion between the USFI and the OCRFI. We still think it would have been preferable to have initiated an internal discussion rather than a public one. We also think it would have been preferable to have suggested a few more topics to initiate the discussion; such as women's liberation and the Latin American revolution, in addition to the crisis of Stalinism.

“Report on the Meeting of the LTF Steering Committee, April 30-May 2, by Barry Sheppard” is unavailable at this time.

New York, April 26, 1977

Dear Mercedes,

Thank you for your letter with your document on the elections and the positions of the LCR. I think your document handled several important points quite well.

Raul has sent me all the documents of the Third Congress of the LC. At last I am reading them along with the major document of the Congress of the LCR-ETA VI. This last document I received from the British (IMG) comrades. In this letter I only want to take up the question of the slogan of the republic. To help think through this question, I am enclosing two articles you may find of interest.

They are: An article by Pierre Frank written in 1946 (see the last three pages), and an article by Trotsky entitled "Problems of the Italian Revolution" written May 14, 1930.

Neither of these articles is an indepth exposition on the question of the slogan for a republic although both refer to it. In Trotsky's writings in 1931 on Spain there are three passages which I think has been misinterpreted by some comrades. I enclose those three pages which include the following quotes, "The republic is now the official slogan of the struggle." "The slogan of the republic, of course, is also the workers' slogan." "The more quickly their best elements (proletariat - PC) join us, the sooner the democratic republic will be identified in the mind of the masses with the workers' republic."

I do not believe that from these three phrases one can conclude that Trotsky's position was in favor of our using the slogan republic. In my opinion, he says three simple things; republic was the official slogan of a mass struggle, the workers also raised this slogan and that we should seek to change the masses to support a "workers' republic." There is obviously a substantial difference between saying that the workers raised the slogan and saying that the slogan is part of our program which we should raise. I agree that the exact phrases in both Spanish and English are imprecise to determine Trotsky's meaning.

There may be other articles by Trotsky that take up the slogan of a republic, but the 1930 article and the 1931 passages are the only two I know of.

Only the last three pages of the article by Pierre Frank refer to the question of a republic. But I believe you will find the entire article very interesting on questions dealing with the adjustments made in the forms of bourgeois rule, after fascist governments were ousted in various countries in Europe at the end of the Second World War. Of course, Pierre Frank might express himself somewhat differently today,

but I think his point on the importance of bonapartist regimes for the bourgeoisie is quite relevant. Likewise Trotsky's letter to the Italians raises some general considerations about the meaning of bourgeois democratic interludes that can come about after the collapse of fascism. He sees such a period as possible only if the socialist revolution is not carried through. The proletarian character of the struggle in Spain today confirms the point Trotsky is making. So I think you will find those two articles of interest.

In this letter I would like to outline to you how I see the question of the slogan republic. Our starting point should be that the slogan republic can have two rather different implications.

The call for a republic can express an elementary democratic sentiment--against a monarchy, for example. It can be interpreted to mean nothing more than the idea that the people should choose the government; this is the strict dictionary definition of the word. On the other hand, the call for a republic can express a basic political objective: the idea that a bourgeois democratic regime is the objective to strive for.

We support any mass struggle for democratic rights regardless of how confused its expression may be; but we oppose the idea that the objective should be a bourgeois government. Thus the entire point hinges around how the slogan is interpreted in the concrete circumstances.

The reformist parties, of course, identify the struggle for bourgeois democratic rights with support to bourgeois democratic governments, and seek at all times to confuse and confine the struggle for democratic rights to adjustments within the framework of a bourgeois regime. Sometimes they raise the slogan of a republic precisely in order to express this objective. Our goal and task is exactly the opposite--to try and make clear the difference between democratic rights and a bourgeois regime.

One of the central axis of anti-Communist propaganda on a world scale is that of trying to equate democratic rights with capitalism. Although this varies from country to country the idea that capitalism means liberty, while socialism means totalitarianism is the underlying theme in most anti-communist propaganda. They are much aided in this propaganda by the experience of the Stalinist regimes. This propaganda has an impact on the masses; many people believe that the struggle for more freedom, more democratic rights, is interlocked with support for certain forms of bourgeois parliamentary rule.

In seeking to make our position clear we must avoid sectarianism. The key to this is to recognize the content and dynamic of any mass struggle for democratic rights, whatever the slogans that are popularized and foremost at the moment. We are not neutral in the struggle to improve the rights (and therefore the fighting position) of the proletariat under capitalism. For example, we favor governmental posts to be elected not appointed, or that parliament be elected with proportional representation, or that a parliament should have only one

house not two. All three of these examples are strictly within the context of a bourgeois regime. But this in no way implies any concession in our political opposition to all forms of a bourgeois regime. As a matter of principle we never call for a bourgeois government or support bourgeois candidates.

We raise our slogans with the goal of seeking to help the workers gain a clear understanding of their own class interests. Thus in dealing with the situation in Spain today, we have to try and separate out the sentiment to struggle for democratic rights, which we support, from the objective of a bourgeois government, which we oppose. We try to link the struggle for democratic rights with our objective of a workers government. To do this we raise a coordinated series of slogans to express our position, even if at one moment or another we concentrate agitationaly on a specific democratic slogan.

In order to achieve clarity it is often important to complement one slogan with another in our propaganda, for instance, the call for a constituent assembly with the call for a workers government or a workers and peasants government (the latter is probably best in Spain today). These two demands are complementary. A constituent assembly offers the opportunity for the highest expression of democratic rights within the context of bourgeois society. The "free" election of delegates to an assembly to decide what kind of government should be established. Such a call for a constituent assembly by itself does not specify what government should exist, and does not in any way imply support for a bourgeois government. But our call for a constituent assembly should be combined in our propaganda, with our answer to the question of who should govern, the working class, expressed as a workers and peasants government, and further concretized, depending on the specific situation in the class struggle, in the call for a CP-SP government or some other concrete formula.

What does the slogan of the republic express in Spain today? If it is understood by the masses as simply a generic demand that the people should decide on all questions of government rather than accepting the decisions of a monarchy, then the slogan is not in itself in conflict with our class principles. It is then a tactical question of whether and how we might utilize this slogan. I believe this has been the position in essence that the T.O. has held.

But if the slogan is understood to mean that the objective is to return to the second Spanish republic or to set up some other sort of bourgeois democratic regime, then the slogan cuts across our class principles, as Pierre Frank explains in his article of 1946.

It seems to me that the basic limitation in using the slogan of a republic is that it is very difficult to separate these two aspects-- democratic rights (down with the monarchy) and a bourgeois republic (Spain 1931-1939). And at least the slogan leads itself to promoting this confusion. That is why it seems best to explain our position by centering our propaganda around the following axis: down with the monarchy and all institutions of Francoism, for full democratic rights, for a constituent assembly, for a workers and peasants government.

The republic slogan can also help lend itself to promoting confusion in the direction of the concept of revolution by stages: that first we must fight for a democratic stage under bourgeois rule, and only later for socialism. This is the case today in Spain where there is enormous pressure transmitted and promoted by the reformist workers parties that we are now fighting for a democratic stage. With this totally false differentiation between the struggle for democratic rights and the socialist revolution, the reformists are able in the name of "democracy" to oppose the class demands of the workers which are rising objectively out of the living class struggle. This ties in logically with their support for a social pact and their opposition to proletarian methods of struggle in favor of class collaboration, agreements, negotiations, etc.

This brings me to another problem I see. It is possible to bend towards the "democratic" stage posture if the slogan republic becomes, in effect, our governmental slogan. I think this danger is expressed in the LSR document, "After the Referendum," in which these comrades propose an electoral bloc under the slogan for the Third Republic as the most important point and no mention whatever is made of our own governmental slogan. The T.O. (Workers Tendency) is correct in insisting that we should raise our class governmental slogan in the elections. I see that in the proposed program for an electoral bloc, the LCR, like the LSR, leaves out any governmental slogan. This is done at the very time when everyone in Spain is discussing who should rule, what kind of government should exist. We must take a clear position on this. It is the question of questions to clarify in this election. We are for a workers and peasant government, for a workers republic.

To say this in no way contradicts the correct effort by the LCR to seek out and concentrate on specific democratic demands, and seek as wide a bloc in action on those specific slogans. This is what the LCR did recently regarding the call "to legalize all working class political parties." But as the T.O. explains, an election poses the question of who should govern. Our tactics in an electoral campaign cannot be treated in the same way as our united front tactics for action over specific issues in the class struggle. In an election campaign, we must aim to present our overall political position particularly as concerns the question of who should govern. This question separates us from the popular frontist positions of the centrists and Maoists as well as the CP and SP. But if we fail to present our class governmental slogan in the elections, we cannot effectively differentiate ourselves from these currents.

For the bourgeoisie the maintenance of the monarchy is quite important to insure a slow and stable transition from Francoism to a government with a more popular base of support. Thus today the SP and CP are backing the efforts of the bourgeoisie to maintain a bonapartist regime based on the monarchy, and oppose raising the slogan for a republic. But with the stormy rise of the class struggle and the potential for a rapid disenchantment with the monarchy, the slogan of a republic could come to the fore. This cannot be ruled out and would require tactical shifts in how we present our propaganda as well as direct intervention into any mass movement.

I do not see any problem in our propaganda explaining, "we are opposed to the monarchy, let the people decide what government they want through a constituent assembly. We favor a workers and peasants government. We say: down with the monarchy, for a republic, a workers republic that will end capitalism and establish socialism."

In thinking through this question, we must keep in mind how the slogan republic is understood, at what stage the mass movement is at and how best to explain our program and to help mobilize the masses in struggle. It must be crystal clear whenever we say republic we mean a workers republic (i.e., a workers and peasants government), and can in no way be interpreted as a bourgeois republic. For us, that is a question of principle.

Peter

P.S. I am also sending you under a separate cover an Education for Socialist Bulletin entitled: "The Workers and Farmers Government" by Joseph Hansen. This bulletin includes a series of articles on the meaning and correct usage of the slogan workers and farmers government including the original discussion at the Fourth World Congress of the Third International. I especially recommend that you read the article on page 49 by Michel Pablo published in 1947, which I think you will find very useful.

CC: LC, LCR

leaged report of the Industrial Committee which declared that "it would be comparatively easy for a number of employers . . . to deliberately provoke industrial disputes with the object of embarrassing the Labour Government. This situation calls for discrimination in our relationship to strikes and we should be careful that we are not used as tools of the employers in any such attempts." This is only one step away from the war-time position of the Stalinists which branded all strikes as provocations of the employers and called upon the workers not to yield to such provocations, not to strike.

The main capital of the LLP during the past years has consisted of its Parliamentary Group and its tradition in the Labour movement. Without the M.P.s it will be nothing. The development, more precisely the degeneration, of the LLP has verified the prediction of the last RCP Congress. We said:

"As a current separate and apart from the reformists and the revolutionaries, the LLP will not be able to maintain itself. Like its brother parties on the continent of Europe it will disappear ignominiously from the scene."

The Conference revealed that there are very few elements remaining in the LLP who are not steeped in its centralist atmosphere as to be capable of absorbing the revolutionary ideas of Trotskyism. Those who have such capacities will be propelled in our direction. The coming struggles will demonstrate the viability of Trotskyism, of the programme and method of revolutionary Communism.

MP" and all that the General Secretary can say is "must you go?" Some of the Conference had illusions that the passing of the anti-affiliationist resolution would have a sobering effect on the right wing and would put them back on the rails. Subsequent events will have dispelled their illusions. They are to be left in the remnants of the independent alternative programme, without a perspective, without hope for the future.

The plight of the rump of Communist wealth, which has suffered an identical fate to that of the LLP (Millington, Labour Party), may provide the basis for fusion. C. A. Smith, Communist wealth Chairman, has had such an idea in mind for some time and has been making approaches to the LLP behind the scenes. It will solve nothing if it does take place. It will not halt the decay of either organisation. These two lame dogs will prove incapable of helping each other over the stile.

The Conference showed that the possibilities of the LLP playing any great role in the future are growing ever more dim. Its literature circulation, its general activity, its active membership do not compare with those of the RCP. Such industrial influence as it exerts is at the official level. Its trade union leaders, Bob Edwards, Tom Stephenson and Will Ballantine, lacking a firm policy, do not assist the Party's industrial development but transmit the pressure of the Labour and trade union bureaucracy into the LLP. This was shown by the unchal-

lump support given to the anti-affiliation resolution was a mélange of pacifist and sectarian confusion. Many of the ideas expressed were from the recipe book of third period Stalinism against which the right wing solemnly warned.

But our comrades have not yet gone. From the depths of my socialist conscience I make this appeal to them—"Must you go? Can't you stay?" There has been no bolting nor barring of doors. There was a perfectly reasonable difference of opinion on a tactical problem. The Party has decided. The doors of the Party are wide open to all who are prepared loyally and sincerely to implement Conference decisions. Remember what the Party has meant to you. Will you find such joy in Socialist service elsewhere? Is there not an imperious need for an independent Socialist Party? I am sure there is and I am certain that the LLP is such a Party. Therefore, comrades, we want you to stay with us. We don't want you to go."

Despite the efforts of the pro-affiliationist right wing, the second resolution was carried by 75 votes to 50. The decision of the LLP to remain outside the mass Labour Party is virtually its death warrant. Lacking a revolutionary programme, discipline and leadership it can never become an alternative to the Labour Party. The workers cannot distinguish its policy from that of the mass Labour Party and, consequently are unable to understand the reason for its separate existence.

But this sentimental claptrap has fallen on deaf ears. Those Party Officers whom McNair promises will implement the Conference decision "not only in the letter but in the spirit" are already on their way out! Fenner Brockway is resigning from the political secretaryship and editorship of the NEW LEADER. Two of the Parliamentary Group, McGovern and Campbell Stephen, together with most of the Glasgow Councillors, are preparing to go over to the Labour Party. This is all the respect they have for Conference decisions "arrived at in accordance with the genuine democratic procedure which governs the

The LLP is now completely split. The party is underlined in an article by John McNair in the NEW LEADER of May 4th. The General Secretary endeavours to prevent a split by a tearful appeal to the right wing who are deserting to the Labour Party in defiance of the majority decision of the Conference. He writes:

"This decision (to stay outside the LP) was arrived at in accordance with the genuine democratic procedure which governs the LLP and it will be implemented, not only in the letter but in the spirit, by our National Council and by our Party Officers.

I think many of us heaved a sigh of relief when the final decision was

DEMOCRACY OR BONAPARTISM IN EUROPE? BY PIERRE FRANK

The following article is presented for International discussion by a leading member of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste, French Section of the

The problems of the proletarian revolution are posed today in Europe under the most varied aspects. It is not surprising therefore that differ-

ences on these questions are expressed in the ranks of the revolutionary vanguard. The comrades of the Socialist Workers Party in particular have dis-

Fourth International. It does not represent the view of the W.I.N. A reply will be published in our next issue.

[Article printed in the June-July, 1946 issue of Workers International News.]

discussed several questions concerning democratic demands and the possibilities of democratic regimes in Europe. For some it was only a question of putting the emphasis on democratic demands while for others one of putting it on the slogans of soviets and the Socialist United States of Europe, this difference would very likely be resolved in the daily activities of the parties, provided both tendencies knew how to connect dialectically the democratic slogans and the specific slogans of the proletarian revolution. On the other hand a question which must be treated with the greatest precision and which cannot be settled by daily activity is that of the nature of the present regimes in Europe. It is a theoretical problem of the first importance to know whether or not we have democratic regimes in Europe, for differences on this point must finally result which is not necessarily the case with democratic slogans—in different polities, as happened on the question of the nature of the Soviet State which has so often been brought forward during the years of Stalinist degeneration and reaction.

Do Democratic Regimes Exist in "Liberated" Europe?

Our reply to this question obviously does not depend on the criteria required by the Foreign Office and the State Department for the diplomatic recognition of a government, any more than on those defined by Stalinist propaganda. Bourgeois democracy is a political form the analysis of which has been made by the most eminent Marxists and it is their analysis which serves completely to guide us on this matter.

The principal problem of Europe is Germany. Unfortunately, under present conditions, the political forms and formations there are still only in an embryonic state; the military occupation governments stifle all political life capable of disturbing their own aims. Consequently, Germany scarcely affords us criteria concerning the political forms of the state in Europe. Throughout that part of Europe occupied by the Red Army great overtures are taking place; but the Stalin-

ist manoeuvres completely distort the simplest bits of information. In any event we are not confronted with democratic governments far or near. These are governments based on capitalist property, under the control of the Moscow bureaucracy, and with a greater or lesser base in the worker and poor peasant masses. Only the presence of the Red Army assures their continuance.

But after all, the discussion among the American comrades has dealt, and moreover rightly so, with the countries of Western Europe, those which are in the "zone of influence" of American and British democratic imperialism.

Unquestionably, the most characteristic example in this zone is that of France, which once again constitutes the most appropriate subject for a Marxist study of specifically political questions. Let us say in the beginning that everything that is true for France is not necessarily true at present for Italy, the Scandinavian countries, Belgium, etc., but it is certainly in France that the political tendencies manifest themselves with the greatest clarity and distinctness.

Do we have a democratic regime in France? Comrade Morrow, in an article aimed at summarizing the positions of his tendency in the discussion, replies in the affirmative in the following terms:

"The struggle of the masses is limited by the fact that it still accepts the leadership of the reformist parties. The objective resultant is bourgeois democracy.

Another factor working for bourgeois democracy is the resistance of a section of the French capitalist class, led by de Gaulle, to U.S. domination. There was much indignation at the plenum, notably from Comrade Cannon, when I defined the Gaullists as a bourgeois-democratic tendency. The majority could not understand this quite simple phenomena, that a section of the French capitalist class, first to resist German imperialism and then to resist U.S. domination, was for a period basing itself on the masses through the mediation of the reformist

parties." (Fourth International, May 1945).

We shall endeavour to show by an analysis of the class relations that this reasoning is faulty on a number of points. As one knows, it is always profitable not to examine a question solely by its appearance at a given moment, but to see it in its historical development over a longer period. This is very easy for us to do since the Fourth International has taken very clear positions on France over a period of many years.

In February 1934 a violent reactionary attack dealt a mortal blow to the democratic Third Republic. The new regime was defined by Trotsky as follows: "a preventive Bonapartist regime cloaking itself with the worn-out formulae of the parliamentary state and manoeuvring between the insufficiently strong camp of the fascist regime and the insufficiently class conscious camp of the proletarian state." (August 1934).

The violent reactionary attack awakened the labouring masses. A strong surge to the left took place, which forced a leftward shift of the Bonapartist governments, at the same time that the Popular Front was created to check and mislead the revolutionary movement of the masses. The year 1936 saw the triumph of the Popular Front thanks to the exploitation of strong democratic illusions, but it also saw a strong surge of the workers into mortally hostile camps deepened. The regime of the Popular Front was not a democratic regime it contained within itself numerous elements of Bonapartism as we shall see further on.

With Munich and the liquidation of the Popular Front, the governments of Deladier and Reynaud, resembling those of Doumergue and Flandin, prepared the Bordeaux transaction of June 1940 which served to install the Petain regime. Despite the support it received from German imperialism (it held power only with German support and went under as soon as the German Army had to quit French territory), this regime was not considered by us as fascist but rather as

Bonapartist. In the notes he dictated for an article shortly before his assassination, which he did not have the time to write, Trotsky expressed himself as follows:

"In France there is no fascism in the real sense of the term. The regime of the senile Marshal Petain represents a senile form of Bonapartism of the epoch of imperialist decline... Precisely because Petain's regime is senile Bonapartism it contains no element of stability and can be overthrown by a revolutionary mass uprising much sooner than a fascist regime." (Fourth International, October 1940).

Several months later a manifesto of the International Secretariat entitled "France Under Hitler and Petain" declares:

"The swift invasion of the German troops has shattered the administrative system. The only group representing a certain relative solidity were the top ranks of the Army. Around them rallied some Anglophobe politicians. This combination was crowned by the octogenarian Petain. The new Bonaparte did not even use cannon against parliament, which decided on its own hook to disappear."

The struggle for democracy under the flag of England and the United States will not lead to a noticeably different situation. General de Gaulle struggles against slavery at the head of colonial governors, that is to say, of slave masters. In his appeals this 'leader' uses, just like Petain, the royal 'we'. The defence of democracy is in good hands! If England should install de Gaulle in France tomorrow, his regime would not in the least be distinguished from that of the Bonapartist government of Petain." (November 1940).

Thus our most responsible international body had predicted that a simple substitution of gangs following a victory of the Allies would not signify a change in the nature of the political regime. Have events verified this prediction or not? We find ourselves in the presence of an evaluation on the historical scale based on positions which were defended for many years by

the Fourth International against all other theories and cheap labels spread by the other tendencies and formations of the labour movement. If an error was committed it would truly be a considerable one and we would be urgently obliged to seek the reasons for it and correct it. As for ourselves, we don't believe that our organisation was in error on this point. We sought to define the regime of de Gaulle in 1944 at the moment when he had ceased being the leader of a military legion at London and had become the head of the government installed in Algeria as the step before becoming the head of a personal evaluation which does not have the authority of the citations given above but one may well excuse us for reprinting it here, for it applies in large measure to the present regime in France.

"The significance of the sentence pronounced by the Algiers tribunal goes far beyond the personality of Puchet and of his judges. The sentence reveals the 'common nature' of the Petain regime in France and the de Gaulle regime now established in North Africa which lays claim to the future government of France. At the same time, the sentence may serve to lay open some of the differences between the two regimes.

The Petain regime is the dictatorship of the army and the police in the service of big capital. This is Bonapartism, not fascism. It is Bonapartism propped up by the Gestapo and the German occupation troops.

The de Gaulle regime—especially since its establishment at Algiers—contains an ever increasing number of men from the army and the police who have deserted Vichy. This too is Bonapartism. It is Bonapartism propped up by the Allied troops and the crumbs of Lese-Lend.

The differences between these two Bonapartist regimes are in no way exhausted by the fact that some of these French patriots have a marked preference for the Basic English as opposed to the jargon of the 'Voelkisher Beobachter'.

In France, independent working

class organizations are driven to illegality by Petain; in Algeria, where reaction still reigned supreme at the time of the proletarian offensive of 1936, the de Gaulle regime cannot help tolerating the open expression of trade unions and working class parties and must even seek their collaboration.

In France, Petain is constantly being spurred on by the agitation of the fascist organizations, in particular by Doriot's PPF. In Algeria, these same fascist organizations have been reduced to illegality and there actually appears to be no fascist movement in existence at Algiers. Obviously, one of these bonapartist regimes leans essentially on fascist reaction, whereas the other leans more towards the exploited masses. This is no wise to the credit of one or other of the leading cliques, it is simply the resultant of the class forces in operation; but it is a fact of great importance for the future development of the class struggle. (Fourth International, June 1944).

We don't see that the "liberation" of France has brought fundamental changes in the above-mentioned characteristics of the de Gaulle regime. Unquestionably the weight of the worker masses is markedly heavier in France than in Algeria and the stronger democratic traditions are factors which contribute to weakening the regime and force it to drape itself in enough shapeless camouflage to hide its Bonapartist traits; but it doesn't change its nature.

Bonapartism

After having shown the continuity of our political analysis for more than ten years of French history and before proceeding to a more penetrating study of the de Gaulle regime, we believe it worthwhile to review some generalizations on Bonapartism at the cost of a new series of citations.

In "Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State" Engels explains how a Bonapartist form of state appears under certain circumstances: "At certain periods it occurs that the struggling classes balance each other so nearly that the public power

gains a certain degree of independence by posing as the mediator between them. The absolute monarchy of the 17th and 18th century was in such a position balancing the nobles and the burghers against one another. So was the Bonapartism of the first, and still more of the Second Empire, playing the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and vice versa. The latest performance of this kind, in which rulers and ruled appear equally ridiculous is the German Empire of Bismarckian make, in which capitalists and labourers are balanced against one another and equally cheated for the benefit of the degenerate Prussian cabbage junkers."

Limiting ourselves in this article to the Bonapartism of the capitalist regime we merely call to mind the definition of Bonapartism applied and explained on many occasions by Trotsky in reference to the Stalinist dictatorship. But Trotsky was very insistent in attributing this conception of Bonapartism to the von Papen and von Schleicher governments in the months preceding Hitler's coming to power; he did this in two pamphlets one of which "The Only Road" devotes itself mainly to this very question. He showed the same insistence concerning the Doumergue and Flamin ministries in France which had resulted from the violently reactionary attack of February 6, 1934. He showed the differences in the class relations between a democratic regime and a Bonapartist regime:

"The passing over of the bourgeoisie from the parliamentary to the bonapartist regime does not finally exclude Social-Democracy from that legal combination of forces upon which capitalist government bases itself. Schleicher, as is well known, sought in his time the aid of the trade unions. Through his friend Marquet, Doumergue has without doubt relations with Joubaux and Co. . . . The essence of the democratic state consists, as is well known in the fact that everyone has the right to say and write what he pleases but that the big capitalists retain the power of deciding all im-

portant questions. This result is obtained by means of a complicated system of partial concessions (reforms) becomes exhausted. Social-Democracy ceases to be the main political support of the bourgeoisie. This signifies: capital can no longer rely upon a tamed public opinion; it needs a state apparatus which is independent of the masses—i.e. Bonapartist.

In the one case, society turns almost in a circle about the big bourgeoisie as a pivot; the latter find in the petty bourgeoisie and in a section of the working class a stable foundation; consequently the government and the state apparatus rest on these strata by means of a parliamentary majority. In the other case the big bourgeoisie does not find sufficient support in the masses which are polarised towards the camp of the revolution and the camp of the counter-revolution; under these conditions in order to save the social order the state apparatus, with the forces of repression in the forefront, tends to raise itself above society. This machine no longer rests on a mass base but maintains itself in unstable equilibrium between two camps; these feats of social gymnastics come to a lamentable end the moment one of the camps takes the initiative in a decisive struggle.

The examples mentioned above for Germany of 1932 and France of 1934 are those of a weak bonapartism in the period of capitalist decline; the qualification of bonapartism in their case was not contested in our ranks probably because, as Trotsky wrote, it is still easy to recognize in an old man the characteristics which he possessed in his youth.

But the bonapartism of declining capitalism can cloak itself in other costumes. In certain cases it is fairly difficult to recognize it, for example in the case of governments of the left, even very much to the left, notably of the Popular Front type. There bonapartism is so outrageously varnished with a democratic sheen that many allow themselves to be taken in by it. The existence of bonapartist elements in the Kerensky regime was the subject of a chapter of "The History of

the Russian Revolution" by Trotsky characterized Kerensky as "the mathematical centre of Russian bonapartism." This theoretical evaluation was in agreement with that of Lenin who, on September 23, 1917, wrote to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party: "We must give . . . a correct and clear slogan: to drive out the Bonapartist gang of Kerensky with its take pre-parliament." There was no question there of an agitational formula. In "State and Revolution", the greatest Marxist classic on the question of the state, Lenin, after having recalled the terms of Engels cited above with the same examples, adds the following phrase: "Such, we add, is the present Kerensky government in Republican Russia since it began to persecute the revolutionary proletariat, at a moment when, thanks to the leadership of the petty bourgeois democrats, the soviets had already become impotent while the bourgeoisie was not yet strong enough openly to disperse them."

Certain individuals may be surprised to see an idea applied to regimes so widely separated from one another and will doubt its usefulness. Many other ideas familiar to Marxists are applied to extremely wide fields and yet are no less correct and useful. For example centrism. Also, for example, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is applied to the Paris Commune under its leadership of Proudhonists and Blanquists, as well as to Soviet Russia under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. The term "bonapartism" does not completely exhaust the characterization of a regime, but it is indispensable to employ it in present day Europe, if one wishes to go forward with the least chance of error. Let us add finally that Marxism is not alone in the possession of such important general ideas; all the sciences do likewise. Thus chemists call bodies carbides which differ more widely from one another than the bonapartism of Schlicher and that of Kerensky. And chemistry doesn't get along so badly either on that account. The contrary is true.

Let us note that the greatest theoreticians of Marxism did not at all

define the political nature of a bourgeois regime by the positions which the latter held in the field of foreign policy but solely and simply by the position it occupied in relation to the classes composing the nation. Let us likewise observe that the limitation of the struggle of the masses because of the treacherous leaderships (according to the expression of Comrade Morroy) or, what amounts to the same, the paralysis or impotence of the mass organizations (to employ the terms of Lenin or Trotsky) does not give as "objective resultant" a bourgeois democracy in the conditions of present day France, but rather a bonapartism which possesses an apparent strength.

The de Gaulle Government

The conditions which dictate a bonapartist regime to the bourgeoisie equally dictate a foreign policy which is in no way a policy of "resistance." The social crisis of France acquires a particular acute character precisely because of the change of its world position. But to see French capitalism or German imperialism and becoming democratic by virtue of this is to fall into error.

France's crisis owes its extreme acuteness to the fact that a great power of the 19th century must accommodate itself to a second-rate position in the capitalist world of the twentieth century, because of the weakness of its economic base which has remained stagnant in the face of the development of new and younger powers. A retrogression of this type (like that occurring in Great Britain after its "victory" in the Second World War) does not only signify securing a camp stool in place of an armchair in the international conference, but above all a considerable lowering of the national revenue, and therefore a considerable reduction in the standard of life, particularly for the working masses. The first luxury article that capitalism tries to eliminate under such circumstances is democracy. Well before 1939 big capital in France understood that it could no longer claim a seat of great power as in the past. It had to find a protector for a future

full of threats. Inertia had more or less kept it trailing behind British imperialism but it was easy to see that the latter was also in serious straits although it had more reserve to hold out longer. To resist the revolutionary movements it was necessary to look elsewhere than London and its allies in democracy. Beside, French heavy industry had some special business reasons for orienting French capital towards German imperialism, which, with the coming to power of the Nazis moved forward with seven-league boots.

But if French capitalism turned its eyes towards German imperialism and was guilty of counter-revolutionary defeatism in 1940 in the interests of its domestic politics, it none the less sought to prevent those few cards which remained in its hand from being completely taken away, knowing that German imperialism was still far from having consolidated its position and that it had not been able to secure any better ally than Italy. On the other hand an important section of French capitalism (finished goods, industries, luxury articles, tourist trade) could not because of its special interests neglect the American continent where it had its principal customers. As a result, French imperialism, pulled from opposite sides, endeavoured to play an intermediary role between Germany and the United States immediately after the debacle of June 1940, hoping to be able to earn a small commission for this work. It hasn't been forgotten that certain elements of American capitalism lent themselves for a time to this (Leahy mission). But when it became clear that the United States was intransigent toward German imperialism and the latter had no further chance of victory, this role of go-between was abandoned and the Bank of France and the Comités des Forges themselves became "resistant" in their own fashion, of course. Billions were transferred to Algeria in the months preceding the occupation of North Africa by the Americans; the top French administration made contact with de Gaulle.

For a little more than a year, de Gaulle, as head of the government, while endeavouring from time to time to rattle his wooden sabre a bit, tried to re-establish this courtier's policy, adopting it to the new principal power that is to say, the U.S. and the USSR, and ignoring England. De Gaulle quickly signed a treaty of alliance with the U.S.S.R. but this document soon proved to be worthless, for Stalin, having nothing to get from de Gaulle, let him down in all the international conferences which have been held since then. In his recent visit to Washington de Gaulle obtained some loans for French economy (in which sufficiently important American business interests are involved) but he returned empty-handed from the political point of view. It took him less than a year to learn that it is one thing to play the role of arbiter between two weaker states and another thing for a small state to wish to manoeuvre between two great powers. General de Gaulle would have been able to learn something about this without having to experience it if he had addressed himself to certain ancient Polish colonels. Finally, de Gaulle who was openly attacked by a section of the French bourgeoisie for his policy of isolation has taken a small step towards England and the countries of Western Europe by proposing to create an association resembling one for the blind and the paralyzed.

Any way one may examine it this foreign policy of French capitalism is in no way "resistant" and, besides, there is nothing in it which predisposes the "Gaullists" to democracy.

If one studies the class relations in France, the bonapartist character of the de Gaulle government appears in the greatest clarity, since the day of "liberation" up to the elections of October 21, 1945 and to the conditions created by them.

The liberation of Paris was accomplished under the leadership of the Comité National de la Résistance (CNR), whose mass base was constituted by the workers' organizations (General Confederation of Labour, Communist Party, Socialist Party) and the militias composed in great part of worker members of these organizations. The CNR and more particularly the

workers' organizations, would have been able at this time to establish themselves in power, supporting themselves on the militias and the local committees of resistance. (These last represented in a bureaucratic fashion, and not democratically, the proletariat and the exploited masses in general.) In this period de Gaulle personally had very few real forces and would not have been able to oppose the CNR. As for the reaction and the old capitalist forces they were completely demoralized and disorganized and were hiding themselves. To save the capitalist regime thus left stripped bare, it was necessary from the very beginning to find something to cover it again and to camouflage it for the eyes of the masses. For this desired effect the uniform of a resisting general was used and they raised him as the representative of the nation, above classes, parties and groupings. In many respects this operation resembled that which occurred in February 1917 when the conciliators of the Petrograd soviet yielded the power, surrendering without firing a shot, to a provisional government without any real base.

It goes without saying that the bonapartism thus created has not at all the intention of leading too precarious an existence. It seeks to create a base for itself while securing the complicity of the leadership of the political formations and others who, in the given period, canalize the class forces between which it tries to maintain itself.

Traitorous Working Class Leaders

From the very first de Gaulle had to obtain the collaboration of the leaders of the parties which included the working class in order to accomplish the dissolution of the militias, the submission of the local committees of resistance to the organizations of the old bourgeois states as well as a unification of all the armed forces under the control of the government artificially created by these leaders themselves. Despite the support of the traitorous leaders, this operation took several months to achieve.

Every bonapartist government in France has tried to create a base for itself in the peasantry; the army hav-

ing been for a very long time a sort of protector of the middle peasantry (see "The Eighteenth Brumaire" in particular where Marx wrote "The uniform was the holiday costume of the peasant." In the new circumstances de Gaulle has remained faithful to the bonapartist tradition. Shortly after the Second World War when the countryside suffered from the manpower shortage and it was necessary to resort to the employment of prisoners of war for the tasks of trained workers, especially in the mines, de Gaulle attempted to maintain an army of one million men, that is, a standing army superior to those which France had preceding the years of re-armament and direct preparation for the war. Promises have been made to the peasantry, higher prices have been allowed for their products, etc., without much being accomplished, however, in the way of results, since the peasants need manpower, materials, livestock, seeds, manufactured products; since there is a shortage of all these things; and since the profits they can make on the black market cannot be used to obtain these things.

The elections which have just taken place provide one of the most striking proofs of the bonapartist character of the regime. Elections, a constituent, a parliament, a government responsible to an elected assembly, are so many disagreeable things for the general. He couldn't throw all this into the garbage can. What he was interested in above all was to wield stable power which would not be at the mercy of an assembly. Look he said, at the history of the Third Republic with its cascades of falling ministries. Thus he decided that simultaneously with democratic elections to elect an assembly on the bases of programme and parties, there should be held a referendum in the nature of a plebiscite designed to deprive the elected assembly of the greater part of its rights and to preserve, on the other hand, the greater part of the power in his own hands. Upon the announcement of this referendum a number of the democratic politicians of France shouted "bonapartism." Surely it was not a knowledge of Marxist literature on this

question but very simply an elementary knowledge of the history of their country which led them to such declarations.

For a long time the French bourgeoisie has sought to resolve a problem that the years have made as insoluble as squaring the circle. It wanted "a strong state," in part to insure the defence of its frontiers, but mainly to hold in check the domestic enemy, the working class; but all the same, it did not wish this state to become too strong for each time that it has permitted the state to entrench itself too strongly, it quickly found its own position in contact with the military books. To assure themselves that the state would not be further disturbed by political conflicts, the generals evinced an intention to transform the whole country into a barracks and to deprive everyone, including the bourgeoisie themselves, of political rights. This is the essential reason why even the most reactionary and personally arbitrary democratic politicians of the Third Republic, notably Clemenceau and Poincaré, opposed and fought vigorously against the interference of the generals in politics. But that is already ancient history.

In the October 21 elections the end of the democratic regime was incontrovertibly demonstrated by the inglorious foundering of the principal formation of the Third Republic, the Radical party, which had dominated and been maintained in every possible and imaginable way by that Republic. In "Whither France" Trotsky showed among other things that the policy of the Popular Front, the alliance of workers' organizations with the Radical party, was going in a direction directly contrary to the development of the situation, that is to say, to the decomposition of bourgeois democracy and of its principal party, that of the Radicals.

But the voting has created a situation in which bonapartism is literally under one's nose. The double vote of October 21—the democratic elections and the plebiscite—has resulted in the most desirable situation for a general of the coup d'état.

Votes Almost Equally Divided

In the elections for the Constituent Assembly, the votes were pretty nearly equally divided between three parties: the Stalinist Party followed by a majority of the proletariat and by an important layer of the petty bourgeoisie of the towns and countryside; the Socialist Party, with a minority of the proletariat (without however losing its working class base in northern France) and a very great number of petty bourgeois votes. Finally the Movement Republican Populaire (MRP), organized by Catholic politicians, who before the war flirted with the Popular Front and during the war participated in the resistance, but who were always solid pillars of the capitalist regime. In return, they received on October 21 all the votes of the reactionaries who have realized that they had no chance at all under their old colours.

The plebiscite is such a model stratagem that you can say without fear of deception it could only have been conceived beneath the kepi of a general. A direct question for or against de Gaulle would never have given the desired result, for the present day bonapartism is too weak to intimidate the voters. Therefore guide was necessary. It was decided to pose two questions instead of one. (They even dreamt for a moment of posing three to do the job better.) To the first question there was no doubt that, save for a tiny minority of greybeards, everyone was going to reply Yes; the Third Republic is dead. To say Yes to the first question was to influence many voters to say Yes to the second question; besides it is easier to say Yes than No even in a referendum. It sufficed to wrap the second question in fine-spun language to finish the sowing of confusion. The result was a majority of about 60 percent of the votes for de Gaulle, who on the strength of this will receive the post of head of the government from the new assembly.

What is going to happen? De Gaulle, feeling strong with 13,000,000 votes behind him, does not have to share counsel with anyone. Before him is an assembly with three parties of

tion. In the other case, we would advance the slogan which, if we made the mistake of adopting it, would make us the promoters of a completely vague state form. 'The Republic'? This slogan does not concern a partial objective but puts to the fore the very question of the state. What republic can we recommend in the current epoch? The Republic of Workers and Peasants Societies alone, and not a bourgeois Republic. The slogan of 'the Republic' is absolutely silent on this point and can only, by its confusion, favour the class enemy.

It is evident that, despite our rejection of this slogan, we will not be neutral in the plebiscites which may be held in Europe on the question of the monarchy. We shall call the workers and peasants to vote against the monarchy, but clearly specifying that we do not have the choice as to the other term of the alternative, that we are voting against the monarchy but not in favour of the bourgeois republic.

It is almost twenty years ago that the Italian Social Democrats in one of their fits of theoretical audacity inscribed in their programme of the struggle against fascism the slogan of 'the democratic republic of the toilers' and, for a certain period, the Italian Communist Party, in one of its zig-zags to the right, had an equivocal position towards this slogan. When in 1930 a section of the leadership of the Italian CP broke with Stalinism, and turned the New Italian Opposition and turned toward the Left Opposition, this slogan was the object of a clarification in the exchange of views which took place at that time. The old opposition, that of the Bordighists, had an absolutely negative attitude on democratic slogans; it was especially necessary that the new Italian comrades should not take for their part a position which could be exploited by the Bordighists and which would have been fatal in the struggle against fascism. In a letter to the comrades in the NOI Trotsky expressed himself as follows on the slogan of the Italian Social Democrats:

While advancing one or another set of democratic slogans we must irreconcilably fight against all forms

of democratic charlatanism. Such low-grade charlatanism is represented by the slogan of the Italian Social Democracy: 'The Democratic Republic of the Toilers'. The 'Toilers Republic' can be only the class state of the proletariat. The 'Democratic Republic' is only a masked rule of the bourgeoisie. The combination of the two is a naive petty bourgeois illustration of the Social Democratic rank and file (workers, peasants) and deliberate treachery on the part of the Social Democratic leaders (all these Turatis, Modiglianis and their ilk). Let me once again remark in passing that I was and remain opposed to the formula of a 'National Assembly on the basis of workers-peasant committees', precisely because this formula approaches the Social Democratic slogan of the 'Democratic Toilers Republic' and, consequently, can render extremely difficult for us the struggle against the Social Democrats." May 14, 1930.

The slogan of 'the Republic', as such is also as erroneous and pernicious as that of 'The Democratic Republic of the Toilers' although, we are persuaded, few comrades in our international organization would have at present an inclination to mix in the above fashion the forms of bourgeois power with the forms of proletarian power. But it is not the thoughts and intentions of this or that comrade which are under discussion but the slogan of 'the Republic' itself. This is not a democratic slogan but, to employ the strong expression of Trotsky, democratic charlatanism.

The theoretical principles and positions which are a part of the accumulated capital of the Bolshevik-Leninists gained in the course of their years of struggle against Stalinism, reformism and all the varieties of centrism in this workers movement, and which we have called to mind in this article, obviously far from exhaust the questions which arise on the European situation. But it is indispensable to take them as a point of departure to permit our militants and our sections to orient themselves correctly despite the enormous confusion which rages and which, unhappily, will not fail to rage for the

duration of a complete period, up to the point when the events and ourselves, in assisting events by a correct

policy, consciously array an important fraction of the working class under the flag of the Fourth International.

THE JEWISH QUESTION

By LEON TROTSKY

I publish herewith four statements by Trotsky during the last years of his life expressing his views on the Jewish question. The first is in the form of an interview given to correspondents of the Jewish press upon his arrival in Mexico. The second is an excerpt from an article in "Thermidor and Anarchism" written in 1937. The third is a letter which Trotsky addressed to the Jews massacred by the mounting wave of anti-semitism and fascism in the United States, calling upon them to support the revolutionary struggle of the Fourth International as the only road to their salvation. The fourth statement is from the archives of Leon Trotsky.

I.

Before trying to answer your questions I ought to warn you that unfortunately I have not had the opportunity to learn the Jewish language, which moreover has been developed only since I became an adult. I have not had, and I do not have the possibility of following the Jewish press, which prevents me from giving a precise opinion on the different aspects of so important and tragic a problem. I cannot therefore claim any special authority in replying to your questions. Nevertheless I am going to try and say what I think about it.

During my youth I rather leaned toward the prognosis that the Jews of different countries would be assimilated and that the Jewish question would thus disappear in a quasi-automatic fashion. The historical development of the last quarter of a century has not confirmed this perspective. Decaying capitalism has everywhere swung over to an exacerbated nationalism, one part of which is anti-semitism. The Jewish question has loomed largest in the most highly developed capitalist country of Europe, in Germany.

On the other hand the Jews in differ-

ent countries have created their press and developed the Yiddish language as an instrument adapted to modern culture. One must therefore reckon with the fact that the Jewish nation will maintain itself for an entire epoch to come. Now the nation cannot normally exist without a common territory. Zionism springs from this very idea. But the facts of every passing day demonstrate to us that Zionism is incapable of resolving the Jewish question. The conflict between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine acquires a more and more tragic and more and more menacing character. I do not at all believe that the Jewish question can be resolved within the framework of a rotting capitalism and under the control of British imperialism.

And how, you ask me, can socialism solve this question? On this point I can but offer hypotheses. Once socialism has become master of our planet or at least of its most important sectors, it will have unimaginable resources in all domains. Human history has witnessed the epoch of great migrations on the basis of barbarism. Socialism will open the possibility of great migrations on the basis of the most developed technique and culture. It goes without saying that what is here involved is not compulsory displacements, that is, the creation of new ghettos for certain nationalities, but displacements freely consented to, or rather demanded by certain nationalities. The dispersed Jews who would want to be reassembled in the same community will find a sufficiently extensive and rich spot under the sun. The same possibility will be opened for the Arabs, as for all other scattered nations. National topography will become a part of the planned economy. This is the grand historical perspective that I envisage. To work for international socialism means also to work

1. You remind me that I once criticized the slogan "Republican Assembly on the Basis of Workers' and Peasants' Committees," a slogan formerly put forward by the Italian Communist Party. You tell me that this slogan had an entirely episodic value and that at present it has been abandoned. I would like nevertheless to tell you why I consider it to be erroneous or at least ambiguous as a political slogan. "Republican Assembly" constitutes quite obviously an institution of the bourgeois state. What, however, are the "Workers' and Peasants' Committees"? It is obvious that they are some sort of equivalent of the workers' and peasants soviets. Then that's what should be said. For, class organs of the workers and poor peasants, whether you give them the name of soviets or committees, always constitute organizations of struggle against the bourgeois state, then become organs of insurrection, to be transformed finally, after the victory, into organs of the proletarian dictatorship. How, under these conditions, can a Republican Assembly—supreme organ of the bourgeois state—have as its "basis" organs of the proletarian state?

I should like to recall to you that in 1917, before October, Zinoviev and Kamenev, when they came out against an insurrection, advocated waiting for the Constituent Assembly to meet in order to create a "combined state" by means of a fusion between the Constituent Assembly and the workers' and peasants' soviets. In 1919 we saw Hilferding propose to inscribe the soviets in the Weimar constitution.¹⁹⁶ Like Zinoviev and Kamenev, Hilferding called this the "combined state." As a new type of petty bourgeois, he wanted, at the very point of the most abrupt historical turn, to "combine" a third type of state by wedding the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie to the proletarian dictatorship under the sign of the constitution.

The Italian slogan expounded above seems to me to be a variant of this petty-bourgeois tendency. Unless I have understood it in a wrong sense. But in that case it already has the incontestable defect of lending itself to dangerous misunderstandings. I profit by it to correct here a truly unpardonable error committed by the epigones in 1924: they had found in Lenin a passage saying that we might be led to wed the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets. A passage saying the same thing may likewise be discovered in my writings. But what exactly was involved? We were posing the question of an insurrection that would transmit the power to the proletariat in the form of soviets. To the question of what, in that case, we would do with the Constituent Assembly, we replied:

PROBLEMS OF THE ITALIAN REVOLUTION¹⁹⁵

May 14, 1930

Dear Comrades:

I have received your letter of May 5. Thanks very much for this study of Italian communism in general and of the various tendencies within it in particular. It filled a great need for me and was most welcome. It would be regrettable if your work were to be left in the form of an ordinary letter. With a few changes or abridgments, the letter could very well find a place in the pages of *La Lutte de classes*.

If you do not mind, I will begin with a general political conclusion: I regard our mutual collaboration in the future as perfectly possible and even extremely desirable. None of us possesses or can possess preestablished political formulas that can serve for all the eventualities of life. But I believe that the *method* with which you seek to determine the necessary political formulas is the right one.

You ask for my opinion concerning a whole series of grave problems. But before attempting a reply on some of them, I should formulate a very important reservation. I have never been closely acquainted with Italian political life, for I have spent only a very short time in Italy, I read Italian very poorly, and during my time in the Communist International I did not have the opportunity to dig deeper into an examination of Italian affairs.

You should know this fairly well yourselves, for how explain otherwise the fact that you undertook so detailed a work to bring me up to date on the pending questions?

It follows from the foregoing that my answers, in most cases, ought to have only an entirely *hypothetical* value. In no case can I consider the reflections that follow as definitive. It is quite possible and even probable that in examining this or that other problem I lose sight of certain highly important concrete circumstances of time and place. I will therefore await your objections and supplementary and corrective information. Inasmuch as our method, as I hope, is common, it is in this way that we shall best arrive at the right solution.

"We shall see; perhaps we shall combine it with the Soviets." We understood by that the case where the Constituent Assembly, convoked under the Soviet regime, would have a Soviet majority. As this was not the case, the Soviets dispersed the Constituent Assembly. In other words: the question was posed of whether it was possible to transform the Constituent Assembly and the Soviets into organs of one and the same class, and not at all of "combining" a bourgeois Constituent Assembly with the proletarian Soviets. In one case (with Lenin), it was a question of the formation of a proletarian state, of its structure, of its technique. In the other (with Zinoviev, Kamenev, Hilferding), it was a question of a constitutional combination of two states of enemy classes with a view to averting a proletarian insurrection that would have taken power.

2. The question we have just examined (the Republican Assembly) is intimately connected with another which you analyze in your letter, namely, what social character will the antifascist revolution acquire? You deny the possibility of a bourgeois revolution in Italy. You are perfectly right. History cannot turn back a considerable number of pages, each of which is equivalent to half a decade. The Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party already tried once to duck the question by proclaiming that the revolution would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but "popular." It is a simple repetition of what the Russian Populists said at the beginning of this century when they were asked what character the revolution against czarism would acquire. And it is still this same answer that the Communist International gives today with respect to China and India. It is quite simply a pseudorevolutionary variant of the social democratic theory of Otto Bauer¹⁹⁷ and others, according to which the state can raise itself above the classes, that is, be neither bourgeois nor proletarian. This theory is as pernicious for the proletariat as for the revolution. In China it transformed the proletariat into cannon fodder of the bourgeois counterrevolution.

Every great revolution proves to be *popular* in the sense that it draws into its wake the entire people. Both the Great French Revolution and the October Revolution were wholly popular. Nevertheless, the first was bourgeois because it instituted individual property, whereas the second was proletarian because it abolished individual property. Only a few hopelessly belated petty-bourgeois revolutionists can still dream of a revolution that would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but "popular" (that is, petty-bourgeois).

Now, in the imperialist period, the petty bourgeoisie is incapable not only of leading a revolution, but even of playing an independent role in it. In this way the formula of a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry," henceforth constitutes a simple screen for a petty-bourgeois conception of a *transitional* revolution and a *transitional* state, that is, of a revolution and a state that cannot take place in Italy or even in backward India. A revolutionist who has not taken a clear, point-blank position on the question of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry is doomed to fall into error after error. As to the problem of the antifascist revolution, the Italian question, more than any other, is intimately linked to the fundamental problems of world communism, that is, of the so-called theory of permanent revolution.¹⁹⁸

3. Following from what has been said comes the question of the "transitional" period in Italy. At the very outset it is necessary to establish very clearly: transition from what to what? A period of transition from the bourgeois (or "popular") revolution to the proletarian revolution—that is one thing. A period of transition from the fascist dictatorship to the proletarian dictatorship—that is something else. If the first conception is envisaged, the question of the bourgeois revolution is posed in the first place, and it is then a question of establishing the role of the proletariat in it. Only after that will the question of the transitional period toward a proletarian revolution be posed. If the second conception is envisaged, the question is then posed of a series of battles, disturbances, changing situations, abrupt turns, constituting in their entirety the different stages of the proletarian revolution. These stages may be many. But in no case can they contain within them a bourgeois revolution or its mysterious hybrid, the "popular" revolution.

Does this mean that Italy cannot, for a certain time, again become a parliamentary state or become a "democratic republic"? I consider—in perfect agreement with you, I think—that this eventuality is not excluded. But then it will not be the fruit of a bourgeois revolution, but the abortion of an insufficiently matured and premature proletarian revolution. In the event of a profound revolutionary crisis and mass battles in the course of which the proletarian vanguard will not have been in a position to take power, it may be that the bourgeoisie will restore its rule on "democratic" bases. Can it be said, for example, that the present German republic is a conquest of the

bourgeois revolution? Such an assertion would be absurd. What took place in Germany in 1918-19 was a proletarian revolution, which for lack of leadership was deceived, betrayed, and crushed. But the bourgeois counterrevolution nevertheless was forced to adapt itself to the circumstances resulting from this crushing of the proletarian revolution and to assume the form of a parliamentary "democratic" republic. Is the same—or about the same—eventuality excluded for Italy? No, it is not excluded. The enthronement of fascism resulted from the fact that the 1920 proletarian revolution was not carried through to its completion. Only a new proletarian revolution can overturn fascism. If it should not be fated to triumph this time either (owing to the weakness of the Communist Party, maneuvers and betrayals of the social democrats, the Freemasons, the Catholics), the "transitional" state that the bourgeois counterrevolution would then be compelled to set up on the ruins of the fascist form of its rule could be nothing else than a parliamentary and democratic state.

What in the long run is the aim of the Antifascist Concentration? Foreseeing the fall of the fascist state by an uprising of the proletariat and in general of all the oppressed masses, the Concentration is preparing to arrest this movement, to paralyze it, and to thwart it *in order to pass off the victory of the renounced counterrevolution as a supposed victory of a democratic bourgeois revolution*. If this dialectic of the living social forces is lost sight of for a single moment, the risk is run of getting inextricably entangled and of swerving off the right road. I believe there cannot be the slightest misunderstanding between us on this score.

4. But does this mean that we communists reject in advance all democratic slogans, all transitional or preparatory slogans, limiting ourselves strictly to the *proletarian dictatorship*? That would be a display of sterile, doctrinaire sectarianism. We do not believe for one moment that a single revolutionary leap suffices to cross what separates the fascist regime from the proletarian dictatorship. In no way do we deny a transitional period with its transitional demands, including democratic demands. But it is precisely with the aid of these transitional slogans, which are always the starting point on the road to the proletarian dictatorship, that the communist vanguard will have to win the whole working class and that the latter will have to unite around itself all the oppressed masses of the nation. And I do not even exclude the possibility of a constituent assembly which, in certain circumstances, could be im-

posed by the course of events or, more precisely, by the process of the revolutionary awakening of the oppressed masses. To be sure, on the broad historical scale, that is, from the perspective of a whole number of years, the fate of Italy is undoubtedly reduced to the following alternative: *fascism* or *communism*. But to claim that this alternative has already penetrated the consciousness of the oppressed classes of the nation is to engage in wishful thinking and to consider as solved the colossal task that still fully confronts the weak Communist Party. If the revolutionary crisis were to break out, for example, in the course of the next months (under the influence of the economic crisis, on the one hand, and under the revolutionary influence coming from Spain,¹⁹⁹ on the other), the masses of toilers, workers as well as peasants, would certainly follow up their economic demands with democratic slogans (such as freedom of assembly, of press, of trade union organization, democratic representation in parliament and in the municipalities). Does this mean that the Communist Party should reject these demands? On the contrary. It will have to invest them with the most audacious and resolute character possible. For the proletarian dictatorship cannot be imposed upon the popular masses. It can be realized only by carrying on a battle—a battle in full—for all the transitional demands, requirements, and needs of the masses, and at the head of the masses.

It should be recalled here that Bolshevism by no means came to power under the abstract slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We fought for the Constituent Assembly much more boldly than all the other parties. We said to the peasants: "You demand equal distribution of the land? Our agrarian program goes much further. But no one except us will assist you in achieving equal use of the land. For this you must support the workers." In regard to the war we said to the popular masses: "Our communist task is to war against all oppressors. But you are not ready to go so far. You are striving to escape from the imperialist war. No one but the Bolsheviks will help you achieve this." I am not dealing with the question of what exactly the central slogans of the transitional period in Italy should be right now, in the year 1930. To outline them, and to effect correct and timely changes, it is necessary to be far better acquainted with Italy's internal life and in much closer contact with its toiling masses than it is possible for me to be. For, in addition to a correct method, it is also necessary to listen to the masses. I want simply to indicate the general

place of transitional demands in the struggle of communism against fascism and, in general, against bourgeois society.

5. However, while advancing this or that democratic slogan, we must fight irreconcilably against all forms of democratic charlatanism. The "Democratic Republic of the Workers," slogan of the Italian social democracy, is an example of this petty charlatanism. A republic of the workers can only be a proletarian class state. The democratic republic is only a masked form of the bourgeois state. The combination of the two is only a petty-bourgeois illusion of the social democratic rank and file (workers, peasants) and an impudent falsehood of the social democratic leaders (all the Turatis, Modiglianis, and their ilk). Let me once again remark in passing that I was and remain opposed to the slogan of a "Republican Assembly on the Basis of Workers' and Peasants' Committees" precisely because this formula approaches the social democratic slogan of the "Democratic Republic of the Workers" and, consequently, can make the struggle against the social democracy extremely difficult.

6. The assertion made by the official leadership [of the Communist Party] that the social democracy allegedly no longer exists politically in Italy is nothing but a consoling theory of bureaucratic optimists who wish to see ready-made solutions where there are still great tasks ahead. *Fascism has not liquidated the social democracy but has, on the contrary, preserved it.* In the eyes of the masses, the social democrats do not bear the responsibility for the regime, whose victims they are in part. This wins them new sympathy and strengthens the old. And a moment will come when the social democracy will coin political currency from the blood of Matteotti²⁰ just as ancient Rome did from the blood of Christ. It is therefore not excluded that in the initial period of the revolutionary crisis, the leadership may be concentrated chiefly in the hands of the social democracy. If large numbers of the masses are immediately drawn into the movement and if the Communist Party conducts a correct policy, it may well be that in a short period of time the social democracy will be reduced to zero. But that would be a task to accomplish, not yet an accomplishment. It is impossible to leap over this problem; it must be solved.

Let me recall at this point that Zinoviev, and later the Manuilskys and Kuusinen, announced on two or three occasions that the German social democracy also essentially no longer existed. In 1925 the Comintern, in its declaration to the French party written by the light hand of Lozovsky,

likewise decreed that the French Socialist Party had definitely left the scene. The Left Opposition always spoke up energetically against this flighty judgment. Only outright fools or traitors would want to instill the idea in the proletarian vanguard of Italy that the Italian social democracy can no longer play the role that the German social democracy did in the revolution of 1918.

It may be objected that the social democracy cannot succeed again in betraying the Italian proletariat as it did back in 1920. This is an illusion and a self-deception! The proletariat has been deceived too many times in the course of its history, first by liberalism and then by the social democracy.

What is more, we cannot forget that since 1920 ten full years have elapsed, and since the advent of fascism eight years. The children who were ten and twelve years old in 1920-22, and who have witnessed the activities of the fascists, today comprise the new generation of workers and peasants who will fight heroically against fascism, but who lack political experience. The communists will come into contact with the full mass movement only during the revolution itself and, under the most favorable circumstances, will require months before they can expose and demolish the social democracy which, I repeat, fascism has not liquidated but on the contrary has preserved.

To conclude, a few words on an important question of fact, about which there cannot be two different opinions in our circle. Should or can Left Oppositionists deliberately resign from the party? There cannot be any question about this. Except for rare exceptions, and they were mistakes, none of us ever did that. But I do not have a clear idea of what is required of an Italian comrade to hold on to this or that post inside the party in the present circumstances. I cannot say anything concrete on this point, except that not one of us can allow a comrade to accommodate to a false or equivocal political position before the party or the masses in order to avoid expulsion.

I shake your hand.

Yours,
Leon Trotsky

sure the convocation of a democratic constituent Cortes; and so that this Cortes can give the land to the peasants, and do many other things, workers', soldiers', and peasants' soviets must be created to fortify the positions of the toiling masses.

6

THE REVOLUTION IN SPAIN

January 24, 1931

1. *Old Spain*

The capitalist chain is again threatening to break at its weakest link; Spain is next in order. The revolutionary movement is developing in that country with such vigor that world reaction is deprived in advance of the hope for a speedy restoration of order on the Iberian Peninsula.

Spain is unmistakably among the most backward countries of Europe. But its backwardness has a singular character, invested by the great historic past of the country. While the Russia of the czars always lagged far behind its western neighbors and advanced slowly under their pressure, Spain knew periods of great bloom, of superiority over the rest of Europe and of domination over South America. The mighty development of domestic and world commerce increasingly overcame the effect of the feudal dismemberment of the provinces and the particularism of the national regions of the country. The growth of the power and importance of the Spanish monarchy in those centuries was inextricably bound up with the centralizing role of mercantile capital and with the gradual formation of the "Spanish nation."

The discovery of America, which at first enriched and strengthened Spain, subsequently worked against it. The great routes of commerce were diverted from the Iberian Peninsula. Holland, which had grown rich, broke away from Spain. Following Holland, England rose to great heights over Europe for a long time. By the beginning of the second half

Published in pamphlet form by the Communist League of America in March 1931, in a translation from the Russian by Morris Lewitt.

of the sixteenth century, Spain had already begun to decline. This decline assumed an official character, so to speak, with the destruction of the Great Armada (1588). The condition that Marx called "inglorious and slow decay" settled down upon feudal-bourgeois Spain.

The old and new ruling classes—the landed nobility and the Catholic clergy with their monarchy, the bourgeois classes with their intelligentsia—stubbornly attempted to preserve the old pretensions but, alas, without the old resources. In 1820, the South American colonies finally broke away. With the loss of Cuba in 1898, Spain was almost completely deprived of colonial possessions. The adventures in Morocco only ruined the country, adding fuel to the already deep dissatisfaction of the people.¹³

Spain's retarded economic development inevitably weakened the centralist tendencies inherent in capitalism. The decline of the commercial and industrial life in the cities and of the economic ties between them inevitably led to the lessening of the dependence of individual provinces upon each other. This is the chief reason why bourgeois Spain has not succeeded to this day in eliminating the centrifugal tendencies of its historic provinces. The meagerness of the national resources and the feeling of restlessness all over the country could not help but foster separatist tendencies. Particularism appears in Spain with unusual force, especially compared with neighboring France, where the Great Revolution finally established the bourgeois nation, united and indivisible, over the old feudal provinces.

While not permitting the formation of a new bourgeois society, the economic stagnation also corroded the old ruling classes. The proud noblemen often cloaked their haughtiness in rags. The church plundered the peasantry, but from time to time it was plundered by the monarchy, who, as Marx said, had more in common with Asiatic despotism than with European absolutism.

How could this be? The comparison between czarism and Asiatic despotism, which has been made more than once, seems much more natural geographically and historically. But with regard to Spain, this comparison retains all its force as well. The difference is only that czarism was formed on the basis of the *extremely slow development* of the nobility and of the

primitive urban centers, whereas the Spanish monarchy took shape under the conditions of the *decline* of the country and the *decay* of the ruling classes. If European absolutism generally could rise only thanks to a struggle by the strengthened cities against the old privileged estates, then the Spanish monarchy, like Russian czarism, drew its relative strength from the impotence of the old estates and the cities. This accounts for its obvious resemblance to Asiatic despotism.

The predominance of the centrifugal tendencies over the central ones in the economy as well as in politics undermined the foundation of Spanish parliamentarism. The government's pressure on the electorate was decisive: throughout the last century, elections unfailingly gave the government a majority. Because the Cortes found itself dependent upon the successive ministries, the ministries themselves naturally sank into dependence upon the monarchy. Madrid held the elections but the king held the power.

The monarchy was doubly necessary to the disunited and decentralized ruling classes, which were incapable of governing the country in their own name. And this monarchy, reflecting the weakness of the whole state, was—between two upheavals—strong enough to impose its will on the country. In short, the state system in Spain can be called "degenerated absolutism, limited by periodic military coups." The figure of Alfonso XIII expresses the system very well, from the points of view of its degeneracy and absolutist tendencies and of its fear of coups. The king's maneuvering, his betrayals, his treason, and his victory over the temporary combinations hostile to him are not at all rooted in the character of Alfonso XIII himself but in the character of the whole governmental system; under new circumstances, Alfonso XIII only repeats the inglorious history of his great-grandfather, Ferdinand VII.

Alongside the monarchy, and in alliance with it, the clergy represents another centralized force. Catholicism, to this day, remains a state religion; the clergy plays a big role in the life of the country, being the firmest axis of reaction. The state spends many tens of millions of pesetas annually to support the church.¹⁴

The religious orders are extremely numerous; they possess great wealth and still greater influence. The number of monks and nuns is close to 70,000, equaling the number of high

school students and more than twice the number of college students. It is no wonder that under these conditions 45 percent of the population can neither read nor write. Most of the illiterates, of course, are concentrated in the countryside.

If the peasantry in the epoch of Charles V (Carlos I) gained little from the might of the Spanish empire, it subsequently suffered the heaviest burden of the empire's decline.¹⁵ For centuries it led a miserable, and in many provinces a famished, existence. Even today more than 70 percent of the population, the peasantry bears on its back the main burden of the state structure. Limited access to land and water, high rents and taxes, antiquated implements, primitive soil-tilling techniques, the requisitions of the church, high prices of industrial products, a surplus rural population, a great number of tramps, paupers, friars—that is the picture of the Spanish village. The condition of the peasantry has for a long time made this group a participant in the numerous uprisings. But these bloody outbursts were not national but local phenomena, dyed in the most varied and often the most reactionary colors. Just as the Spanish revolutions as a whole were small revolutions, so the peasant uprisings assumed the form of small wars. Spain is the classic country of guerrilla warfare.

2. *The Spanish army in politics*

Following the war with Napoleon,¹⁶ a new political force was born in Spain—army officers, the younger generation of the ruling classes, inheritors of the ruins of the once-great empire, and in large measure declassed.

In this country of particularism and separatism, the army necessarily assumed great significance as a centralizing force. It became not only a prop of the monarchy, but also a vehicle for the discontent of all sections of the ruling classes. Like the bureaucracy, the officers are recruited from those elements, extremely numerous in Spain, that demand of the state, first of all, their means of livelihood. And as the appetites of the different groups of "cultured" society greatly exceed the state, parliamentary, and other positions available, the dissatisfaction of those left over nurtures the republican camp, which is just as unstable as all the other groupings in Spain. But insofar as a genuine and sharp social indignation is often concealed

under this instability, the republican movement from time to time produces resolute and courageous revolutionary groups to whom the republic appears as a magic slogan of salvation.

The total size of the Spanish army is nearly 170,000 men, of whom over 13,000 are officers. Fifteen thousand marines should be added to this. The weapon of the ruling classes of the country, the commanding staff also drags the ranks of the army into its plots. This creates the conditions for an independent movement of the soldiers. In the past, noncommissioned officers have burst into politics without their officers and against them. In an uprising in 1836, the noncommissioned officers of the Madrid garrison compelled the queen to grant a constitution. In 1866, the artillery sergeants, dissatisfied with the aristocratic orders in the army, rose in insurrection. Nevertheless, the leadership in the past has remained with the officers. The soldiers, who were politically helpless, followed their dissatisfied commanders even though their own dissatisfaction was fostered by other, deeper social forces.

The contradictions in the army usually correspond to the branch of service. The more advanced the type of arms, that is, the more intelligence required on the part of the soldiers and officers, the more susceptible they are, generally speaking, to revolutionary ideas. While the cavalry is usually inclined to the monarchy, the artillery furnishes a big percentage of the republicans. No wonder the air force, the newest branch, appeared on the side of the revolution and brought with it elements of the individualist adventurism of their profession. The final say remains with the infantry.

The history of Spain is the history of continual revolutionary convulsions. Military coups and palace revolutions follow on each other's heels. During the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth, political regimes kept changing, and within each one of them ministries changed kaleidoscopically. Not finding sufficiently stable support in any of the propertied classes—even though they all needed it—the Spanish monarchy more than once fell into dependence upon its own army. But the atomization of the provinces put its stamp on the character of the military plots. The petty rivalry of the juntas was only the outward expression of the Spanish revolutions' lack of a leading class. Precisely because of this, the monarchy triumphed over each new revolution. A short time

after the triumph of order, however, the chronic crisis once more broke through. Not one of the many regimes that supplanted each other sank deep enough roots into the soil. All of them quickly wore themselves out struggling with the difficulties growing out of the meagerness of the national income, which was inadequate to sustain the appetites and pretensions of the ruling classes. We saw in particular how shamefully the last military dictatorship ended its days. The stern Primo de Rivera fell even without a new military coup; he was simply deflated, like a tire that runs over a nail.

All the Spanish revolutions were the movements of a minority against another minority: the ruling and semiruling classes impatiently snatching the state pie out of each other's hands. If by the term "permanent revolution" we are to understand a succession of social revolutions, transferring power into the hands of the most resolute class, which afterwards applies this power for the abolition of all classes, and subsequently the very possibility of new revolutions, we would then have to state that, in spite of the "uninterruptedness" of the Spanish revolutions, there is nothing in them that resembles the *permanent* revolution. They are rather the chronic convulsions expressing the intractable disease of a nation thrown backward.

It is true that the left wing of the bourgeoisie, particularly personified by the young intellectuals, long ago set itself the task of converting Spain into a republic. The Spanish students who, for the same general reasons as the officers, were recruited primarily from the dissatisfied youth, became accustomed to wielding an influence altogether out of proportion to their numbers. The domination of the Catholic reaction fed the flames of the opposition in the universities, investing it with an anticlerical character. Students, however, do not create a regime. In their highest echelons, the Spanish republicans are distinguished by an extremely conservative social program. They see their ideal in present-day reactionary France, calculating that along with the republic they will also acquire wealth. They are not at all disposed, or even able, to take the road of the French Jacobins;¹⁷ their fear of the masses is greater than their hostility to the monarchy.

If the cracks and gaps of bourgeois society are filled in Spain with declassed elements of the ruling classes, the numerous seekers of positions and income, then at the bottom, in the

cracks of the foundation, are the numerous sium proletarians, declassed elements of the toiling classes. Idlers in finery as well as idlers in rags form the quicksands of society. They are all the more dangerous for the revolution the less it finds its genuine base of support and its political leadership.

Six years of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship leveled and compressed all the dissatisfaction and rebelliousness. But the dictatorship bore within it the incurable vice of the Spanish monarchy: strong towards each of the separate classes, it remained impotent in relation to the historic needs of the country. This impotence brought about the wreck of the dictatorship on the submarine reefs of financial and other difficulties before the first revolutionary wave had a chance to reach it. The fall of Primo de Rivera aroused every kind of dissatisfaction and hope. Thus General Berenguer has become the doorman for the revolution.

3. *The Spanish proletariat and the new revolution*

In this new revolution, we meet, at first glance, the same elements we found in a series of previous revolutions: the perfidious monarchy; the splinter factions of the conservatives and liberals who despise the king and crawl on their bellies before him; the right-wing republicans, always ready to betray, and the left-wing republicans, always ready for adventure; the conspiratorial officers, of whom some want a republic and others a promotion; the restless students, whose fathers view them with alarm; finally, the striking workers, scattered among the different organizations; and the peasants, reaching out for pitchforks and even for guns.

It would, however, be a grave error to assume that the present crisis is unfolding according to and in the image of all those that preceded it. The last decades, particularly the years of the world war, produced important changes in the economy and social structure of the country. Of course, Spain still remains at the tail end of Europe. But the country has experienced its own industrial development, in both extractive and light industry. During the war, coal mining, textiles, the construction of hydroelectric stations, etc., were greatly advanced. Industrial centers and regions sprang up all over the country. This created a new relationship of forces and opened up new perspectives.

The successes of industrialization did not at all mitigate the internal contradictions. On the contrary, the circumstance under which the industry of Spain, a neutral country, flourished under the golden rain of the war was transformed into a source of new difficulties at the end of the war when the increased foreign demand disappeared. Not only did the foreign markets disappear — Spain's share in world commerce is now even smaller than it was prior to the war (1.1 percent as against 1.2 percent) — but the dictatorship was compelled, with the aid of the highest tariff walls in Europe, to defend its domestic market from the influx of foreign commodities. The high tariff led to high prices, which diminished the already low purchasing power of the people. That is why industry after the war did not rise out of its lethargy, which is expressed by chronic unemployment on the one hand, and the sharp outbursts of the class struggle on the other.

Now even less than in the nineteenth century can the Spanish bourgeoisie lay claim to that historic role which the British and French bourgeoisies once played. Appearing too late, dependent on foreign capital, the big industrial bourgeoisie of Spain, which has dug like a leech into the body of the people, is incapable of coming forward as the leader of the "nation" against the old estates, even for a brief period. The magnates of Spanish industry face the people hostilely, forming a most reactionary bloc of bankers, industrialists, large landowners, the monarchy, and its generals and officials, all devouring each other in internal antagonisms. It is sufficient to state that the most important supporters of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera were the Catalan manufacturers.

But industrial development raised the proletariat to its feet and strengthened it. Out of a population of twenty-three million — which would be considerably greater if not for emigration — there are nearly one and a half million industrial, commercial, and transportation workers. To them should be added about an equal number of agricultural workers. Social life in Spain was condemned to revolve in a vicious circle so long as there was no class capable of taking the solution of the revolutionary problem into its own hands. The appearance of the Spanish proletariat on the historic arena radically changes the situation and opens up new prospects. In order to grasp this properly, it must first be understood that the establishment

of the economic dominance of the big bourgeoisie and the growth of the proletariat's political significance definitely prevent the petty bourgeoisie from occupying a leading position in the political life of the country. The question of whether the present revolutionary convulsions can produce a genuine revolution, capable of reconstructing the very basis of national life, is consequently reduced to whether the Spanish proletariat is capable of taking the leadership of the national life into its hands. There is no other claimant to this role in the Spanish nation. Moreover, the historic experience of Russia succeeded in showing with sufficient clarity the specific gravity of the proletariat, united by big industry in a country with a backward agriculture and enmeshed in a net of semifeudal relations.

The Spanish workers, it is true, already took a militant part in the revolutions of the nineteenth century, but always on the leash of the bourgeoisie, always in the second line, as a subsidiary force. The independent revolutionary role of the workers was reinforced in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The 1909 uprising in Barcelona showed what power was pent up in the young proletariat of Catalonia.¹⁸ Numerous strikes that developed into direct uprisings broke out in other parts of the country too. In 1912, a strike of the railroad workers took place. The industrial regions became fields of valiant proletarian struggles. The Spanish workers revealed a complete freedom from routine, an ability to respond quickly to events and to mobilize their ranks boldly on the offensive.

The first postwar years, or more correctly, the first years after the Russian Revolution (1917-1920), were years of great battles for the Spanish proletariat. The year 1917 witnessed a revolutionary general strike. Its defeat, and the defeat of a number of subsequent movements, prepared the way for the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. When the collapse of the latter once more posed in all its magnitude the question of the further destiny of the Spanish people, when the cowardly search for old cliques and the impotent lamentations of the petty-bourgeois radicals showed clearly that salvation cannot be expected from this source, the workers, by a series of courageous strikes, cried out to the people: *We are here!*

The "left" European bourgeois journalists and, trailing after them, the Social Democrats, with their scientific pretensions,

love to philosophize on the theme that Spain is simply going to reproduce the Great French Revolution, after a delay of almost one hundred and fifty years. To expound revolution to these people is equivalent to arguing with a blind man about colors. With all its backwardness, Spain has passed far beyond France of the eighteenth century. Big industrial enterprises, 10,000 miles of railway, 30,000 miles of telegraph, represent a more important factor for the revolution than historical reminiscences.

Endeavoring to take a step forward, the well-known English weekly *The Economist* says with regard to the Spanish events: "We have the influence of Paris of 1848 and 1871 rather than the influence of Moscow of 1917." But Paris of 1871 is a step from 1848 toward 1917. The counterposition is an empty one.

The conclusion L. Tarquin reached last year in *La Lutite de classes* was infinitely more serious and profound:¹⁹ "The proletariat (of Spain), supported by the peasant masses, is the only force capable of seizing power." This perspective is laid out as follows: "The revolution must bring about the dictatorship of the proletariat which would carry out the bourgeois revolution and would courageously open the road to socialist reconstruction." This is the way—the only way—the question can now be posed.

4. The program of the revolution

The republic is now the official slogan of the struggle. The development of the revolution, however, will drive not only the conservatives and liberals but also the republican sections of the ruling classes to the banner of the monarchy.

During the revolutionary events of 1854, Cánovas del Castillo wrote: "We are striving for the preservation of the throne, but without a camarilla which will disgrace it." Now this great idea is developed by Señor Romanones and others.²⁰ As though a monarchy is even possible without camarillas, especially in Spain! . . .

A combination of circumstances is possible, to be sure, in which the possessing classes are compelled to sacrifice the monarchy in order to save themselves (for example: Germany!). It is quite likely, however, that the Madrid monarchy, even with two black eyes, will survive until the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The slogan of the republic, of course, is also the workers' slogan. But for them establishing a republic is not merely a matter of replacing the king with a president, but also of thoroughly purging the feudal refuse from the whole of society. Here the first consideration is the agrarian question.

The relationships in the Spanish countryside present a picture of semifeudal exploitation. The poverty of the peasants, particularly in Andalusia and Castille, the oppression by the landowners, authorities, and village chiefs have already more than once driven the agricultural workers and the peasant poor to the road of open mutiny. Does this mean, however, that even during a revolution bourgeois relations can be purged of feudalism? No. It only means that under the current conditions in Spain, capitalism must use feudal means to exploit the peasantry. To aim the weapon of the revolution against the remnants of the Spanish Middle Ages means to aim it against the very roots of bourgeois rule.

In order to break the peasantry away from localism and reactionary influences, the proletariat needs a clear revolutionary democratic program. The yearning for land and water, the bondage caused by the high rents, acutely pose the question of *confiscation of privately owned land* for the benefit of the poor peasants. The burden of state finances, the unbearable government debt, bureaucratic pillage, and the African adventures pose the need for a *cheap government*, which can be achieved not by the owners of large estates, not by bankers and industrialists, not by the liberal nobility, but only by the toilers themselves.

The domination of the clergy and the wealth of the church put forward the democratic problem: *to separate church and state and to disarm the church, transferring its wealth to the people*. Even the most superstitious sections of the peasantry will support these decisive measures when they are convinced that the budgetary sums that have up to now gone to the church, as well as the wealth of the church itself, will, as a result of secularization, go not to the pockets of the freethinking liberals but to the cultivation of the exhausted peasant holdings.

The separatist tendencies present the revolution with the democratic task of *national self-determination*. These tendencies were accentuated, to all appearances, during the period of the dic-

tatorship. But while the "separatism" of the Catalan bourgeoisie is only a pawn in its play with the Madrid government against the Catalan and Spanish people, the separatism of the workers and peasants is only the shell of their social rebellion. One must distinguish very rigidly between these two forms of separatism. Precisely, however, in order to draw the line between the nationally oppressed workers and peasants and their bourgeoisie, the proletarian vanguard must take the boldest and most sincere position on the question of national self-determination. The workers will fully and completely defend the *right* of the Catalans and Basques to organize their state life independently in the event that the majority of these nationalities express themselves for complete separation. But this does not, of course, mean that the advanced workers will push the Catalans and Basques on the road of secession. On the contrary, the economic unity of the country with *extensive autonomy of national districts*, would represent great advantages for the workers and peasants from the viewpoint of economy and culture.

The monarchy's attempt to ward off the further development of the revolution with the aid of a new military dictatorship is not at all out of the question. But what is out of the question is the serious and long-term success of such an attempt. The lesson of Primo de Rivera is still too fresh. The chains of the new dictatorship would have to be wound over the sores that have not yet healed from the chains of the old one. According to the newspaper dispatches, the king would like to try; he looks about anxiously for a suitable candidate but finds no volunteers. One thing is clear: the breakdown of a new military dictatorship would be very costly to the monarchy and its distinguished representative, and the revolution would acquire a mighty impulsion. "Place your bets, gentlemen!" the workers can say to the ruling classes.

Can the Spanish revolution be expected to skip the parliamentary stage? Theoretically, this is not excluded. It is conceivable that the revolutionary movement will, in a comparatively short time, attain such strength that it will leave the ruling classes neither the time nor the place for parliamentarism. Nevertheless, such a perspective is rather improbable. The Spanish proletariat, in spite of its combativeness, still recognizes no revolutionary party as its own, and has no ex-

perience with soviet organization. And besides this, there is no unity among the sparse communist ranks. There is no clear program of action that everyone accepts. Nevertheless, the question of the Cortes is already on the order of the day. Under these conditions, it must be assumed that the revolution will have to pass through a parliamentary stage.

This does not at all exclude the tactic of a boycott of Berenguer's fictitious Cortes, just as the Russian workers successfully boycotted Bulygin's Duma in 1905 and brought about its collapse.²¹ The specific tactical question of the boycott has to be decided on the basis of the relation of forces at a given stage of the revolution.

But even while boycotting Berenguer's Cortes, the advanced workers would have to counterpose to it the slogan of a *revolutionary constituent Cortes*. We must relentlessly disclose the fraudulence of the slogan of the *constituent Cortes* in the mouth of the "left" bourgeoisie, which, in reality, wants a *conciliationist Cortes* by the good graces of the king and Berenguer, for the purpose of haggling with the old ruling and privileged cliques. A genuine constituent assembly can be evoked only by a revolutionary government, as a result of a victorious insurrection of the workers, soldiers, and peasants.

We can and must counterpose the revolutionary Cortes to the conciliationist Cortes; but, to our mind, it would be incorrect at the *present stage* to give up the slogan of the revolutionary Cortes. To counterpose the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the problems and slogans of revolutionary democracy (for a republic, for an agrarian revolution, for the separation of church and state, the confiscation of church properties, national self-determination, a revolutionary constituent assembly) would be the most sterile and miserable doctrinairism. Before the masses can seize power, they must unite around the leading proletarian party. The struggle for democratic representation in the Cortes, at one or another stage of the revolution, can immeasurably facilitate the solution of this problem.

The slogan of *arming the workers and peasants* (the creation of a workers' and peasants' militia) must inevitably acquire an ever greater importance in the struggle. But at the *present stage*, this slogan too must be closely tied to the questions of defending the workers' and peasants' organizations,

the agrarian revolution, the assuring of free elections, and the protection of the people from reactionary military coups.

A radical program of *social legislation*, particularly unemployment insurance; shifting the burden of taxation to the wealthy classes; free popular education — all these and similar measures, which in themselves do not exceed the framework of bourgeois society, must be inscribed on the banner of the proletarian party.

Alongside these, however, demands of a transitional character must be advanced even now: nationalization of the railroads, which are all privately owned in Spain; nationalization of mineral resources; nationalization of the banks; workers' control of industry; and, finally, state regulation of the economy. All these demands are bound up with the transition from a bourgeois to a proletarian regime; they prepare this transition so that, after the nationalization of the banks and industry, they can become part of a system of measures for a planned economy, preparing the way for the socialist society.

Only pedants can see contradictions in the combination of democratic slogans with transitional and purely socialist slogans. Such a combined program, reflecting the contradictory construction of historic society, flows inevitably from the diversity of problems inherited from the past. To reduce all the contradictions and all the tasks to one lowest common denominator — *the dictatorship of the proletariat* — is a necessary, but altogether insufficient, operation. Even if one should run ahead and assume that the proletarian vanguard has grasped the idea that only the dictatorship of the proletariat can save Spain from further decay, the preparatory problem would nevertheless remain in full force: to weld around the vanguard the heterogeneous sections of the working class and the still more heterogeneous masses of village toilers. To contrast the bare slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the historically determined tasks that are now impelling the masses towards the road of insurrection would be to replace the Marxist conception of social revolution with Bakunin's.²² This would be the surest way to ruin the revolution.

Needless to say, democratic slogans under no circumstances have as their object drawing the proletariat closer to the republican bourgeoisie. On the contrary, they create the basis for a victorious struggle against the leftist bourgeoisie, making

it possible to disclose its antidemocratic character at every step. The more courageously, resolutely, and implacably the proletarian vanguard fights for democratic slogans, the sooner it will win over the masses and undermine the support for the bourgeois republicans and Socialist reformists. The more quickly their best elements join us, the sooner the democratic republic will be identified in the mind of the masses with the workers' republic.

For the correctly understood theoretical formula to be transformed into a living historic fact, it must penetrate the consciousness of the masses on the basis of their experience and their needs. To do this, it is important to avoid getting bogged down in details, so as not to distract the attention of the masses; the program of the revolution must be expressed in several clear and simple slogans, which will vary in accordance with the dynamics of the struggle. This is precisely what revolutionary politics consists of.

5. *Communism, anarcho-syndicalism, Social Democracy*

As usual, the leadership of the Comintern started out by overlooking the Spanish events.²³ Manuilsky, the "leader" of the Latin countries, only recently declared that the Spanish events do not deserve attention. There you are! In 1928, these people declared France to be on the eve of the revolution. After having so long accompanied funerals with wedding music, they could not but greet a wedding with a funeral march. For them to act otherwise would mean to betray themselves. When it appeared, nevertheless, that the events in Spain, not foreseen in the calendar of the "third period,"²⁴ continued to develop, the leaders of the Comintern were simply silent. This, at any rate, shows far greater prudence. But the December events made further silence impossible.²⁵ Once more in rigid conformity with tradition, the leader of the Latin countries made a 180-degree turn: we have in mind his December 17 article in *Pravda*.

This article calls the dictatorship of Berenguer, like the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, a "fascist regime." Mussolini, Matteotti, Primo de Rivera, MacDonald, Chiang Kai-shek, Berenguer, Dan — all these are variations of fascism.²⁶ Once there is a ready epithet, why bother to think? To be thorough, only the "fascist" regime of the Abyssinian Negus remains to be in-

cluded in this catalog. *Pravda* informs us that the Spanish proletariat not only is more and more "adopting the program and slogans of the Spanish Communist Party," but also has already "become conscious of its role of hegemony in the revolution." Simultaneously, the official dispatches from Paris speak of peasant soviets in Spain. It is known that under Stalinist leadership the soviet system is adopted and realized first of all by the peasants (China!). If the proletariat has already "become conscious of its role of hegemony," and the peasants have started to build soviets, all this under the leadership of the official Communist Party, then the victory of the Spanish revolution must be considered guaranteed—at any rate, till the time when the Madrid agents are accused by Stalin and Manuilsky of incorrectly applying the general line which, on the pages of *Pravda*, once more appears before us as general ignorance and light-mindedness. Corrupted to the very marrow by their own policy, these "leaders" are no longer capable of learning anything!

In reality, in spite of the mighty sweep of the struggle, the subjective factors of the revolution—the party, the mass organizations, the slogans—are extraordinarily behind the tasks of the movement, and it is this backwardness that constitutes the main danger today.

The semispontaneous spread of strikes, which have brought victims and defeats or have ended with no gains, is an absolutely unavoidable stage of the revolution, the stage of the awakening of the masses, their mobilization, and their entry into struggle. For it is not the cream of the workers who take part in the movement, but the masses as a whole. Not only do factory workers strike, but also artisans, chauffeurs, and bakers, construction, irrigation, and, finally, agricultural workers. The veterans stretch their limbs, the new recruits learn. Through the medium of these strikes, the class begins to feel itself a class.

However, the spontaneity—which at the present stage constitutes the strength of the movement—may in the future become the source of its weakness. To assume that the movement can continue to be left to itself without a clear program, without its own leadership, would mean to assume a perspective of hopelessness. For the question involved is nothing less than the seizure of power. Even the stormiest strikes do not solve

this problem—not to speak of the ones that are broken. If the proletariat were not to feel in the process of the struggle during the coming months that its tasks and methods are becoming clearer to itself, that its ranks are becoming consolidated and strengthened, then a decomposition would set in within its own ranks. The broad layers aroused by the present movement for the first time would once more fall into passivity. In the vanguard, to the extent to which the ground slipped from under its feet, moods favoring partisan acts and adventurism in general would begin to revive. In such an eventuality, neither the peasantry nor the city poor would find authoritative leadership. The awakened hopes would very quickly be converted into disappointment and exasperation. A condition would be created in Spain reproducing, in a certain measure, the situation in Italy after the autumn of 1920.²⁷ The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera was not fascist but a typical Spanish dictatorship of a military clique supporting itself on certain parts of the wealthy classes; but with the conditions pointed out above—the passivity and the hesitancy of the revolutionary party, and the spontaneity of the mass movement—genuine fascism would find a base in Spain. The big bourgeoisie would conquer the unbalanced, disappointed, and despairing petty-bourgeois masses and would direct their restlessness against the proletariat. Of course, we are far from that point yet. But no time should be lost.

Even if we should assume for a moment that the revolutionary movement led by the left wing of the bourgeoisie—officers, students, republicans—leads to victory, then the fruitlessness of this victory would in the final analysis prove it equal to defeat. The base of support of the Spanish republicans, as we have already said, is completely on the present property relations. We can expect them neither to expropriate the big landowners, nor to liquidate the privileges of the Catholic church, nor to cleanse the Augean stables of the civil and military bureaucracy. The monarchist camarilla would simply be replaced by a republican camarilla, and we would have a new edition of the short-lived and fruitless republic of 1873-1874.²⁸

The fact that the Socialist leaders trail behind the republican leaders is quite in the nature of things. Yesterday, the Social Democracy clung with its right arm to the dictatorship of Primo

de Rivera. Today it clings with its left arm to the republicans. The principal aim of the Socialists, who do not and cannot have an independent policy, is participation in a solid bourgeois government. To this end, they would not refuse to make peace even with the monarchists, if it came to that.

But the right wing of the anarcho-syndicalists is in no way insured against the same fate; in this connection, the December events are a great lesson and a stern warning.

The National Confederation of Labor (CNT — Confederación Nacional del Trabajo) indisputably embraces the most militant elements of the proletariat. Here the selection has gone on for a number of years. To strengthen this confederation, to transform it into a genuine organization of the masses, is the obligation of every advanced worker and, above all, of the communists. This can also be assisted by work inside the reformist trade unions, tirelessly exposing the betrayals of their leaders and calling upon the workers to unite in a single trade union confederation. The conditions of revolution will be of extraordinary assistance to this work.

But at the same time we have no illusions about the fate of anarcho-syndicalism as a doctrine and a revolutionary method. Anarcho-syndicalism disarms the proletariat by its lack of a revolutionary program and its failure to understand the role of the party. The anarchists "deny" politics until it seizes them by the throat; then they prepare the ground for the politics of the enemy class. This is what happened in December!

If the Socialist Party were to acquire a leading position over the proletariat during the revolution, it would be capable of only one thing: spilling the power conquered by the revolution into the republican sieve, from which the power would then automatically pass to its present possessors. The great conception would result in a miscarriage.

As far as the anarcho-syndicalists are concerned, they could head the revolution only by abandoning their anarchist prejudices. It is our duty to help them do this. In reality, it may be assumed that a part of the syndicalist leaders will go over to the Socialists or will be cast aside by the revolution; the real revolutionists will be with us. The masses will join the communists, and so will the majority of the Socialist workers.

The advantage of a revolutionary situation lies in the fact that the masses learn fast. The evolution of the masses will

inevitably produce differentiations and splits not only among the Socialists but also among the syndicalists. Practical agreements with *revolutionary* syndicalists are inevitable in the course of the revolution. These agreements we will loyally fulfill. But it would be truly fatal to introduce into these agreements elements of duplicity, concealment, and deceit. Even in those days and hours when the communist workers have to fight side by side with the syndicalist workers, there must be no destruction of the principled disagreements, no concealment of differences, nor any weakening of the criticism of the wrong principled position of the ally. Only under this condition will the progressive development of the revolution be secured.

6. *The revolutionary junta and the party*

The events of December 15, when the workers rose up simultaneously not only in the big cities, but also in the remote villages, demonstrate how much the workers themselves are striving for unity of action. They utilized the signal of the republicans because they didn't have a loud enough signalman of their own. The defeat of the movement apparently did not call forth a shadow of dismay. The masses viewed their own actions as experience, as a school, as preparation. This is an extremely characteristic feature of "revolutionary ascent."

In order to enter the broad road, the proletariat needs even now an organization rising over all the present political, national, provincial, and trade union divisions in their ranks and corresponding to the sweep of the present revolutionary struggle. Such an organization, democratically elected by the workers of the factories, mills, mines, commercial enterprises, railway and marine transport, by the proletarians of the city and village, can only be the soviet. The epigones²⁹ have done immeasurable damage to the revolutionary movement of the whole world, fixing in many minds the prejudice that soviets can only be created by the needs of an armed insurrection and only on the brink of this insurrection. In reality, the soviets are created when the revolutionary movement of the working masses, even though still far from an armed insurrection, creates the need for a broad, authoritative organization, capable of leading the economic and political struggles embracing simultaneously the different enterprises and the different trades. Only if the soviets are rooted in the working class during the

preparatory period of the revolution will they be able to play a leading role at the time of a direct struggle for power. It is true that the word "soviet" after thirteen years of existence of the Soviet regime has now acquired a somewhat different meaning than it had in 1905 or in the beginning of 1917, when the soviets appeared not as organs of power but only as the militant organizations of the working class. The word "junta," directly tied to all of Spain's revolutionary history, expresses this thought better than anything else. On the order of the day in Spain stands the creation of workers' juntas.

With the present state of the proletariat, the building of juntas presupposes the participation in them of the communists, anarcho-syndicalists, Social Democrats, and the nonparty leaders of the strike struggles. To what extent can we count on the participation of the anarcho-syndicalists and the Social Democrats in the soviets? This cannot be foretold from a distance. The sweep of the movement will undoubtedly compel many syndicalists, and perhaps some of the Socialists, to go further than they wish, provided that the communists are able to present the idea of the workers' juntas with the necessary energy. Under the pressure of the masses, the practical questions of the building of soviets, the ratio of representation, the time and method of elections and so forth, can and should become the object of *agreement* not only of all the communist factions among themselves but also with those syndicalists and Socialists who consent to the creation of juntas. The communists, of course, appear at all stages of the struggle with their banner unfurled.

In spite of the newest Stalinist theory, it is hardly likely that the peasant juntas, as elected organs, will appear in any considerable number, prior to the seizure of power by the proletariat. In the preparatory period in the village, different forms of organization will develop sooner, based not upon elections but upon individual selection: peasant unions, committees of the village poor, communist nuclei, a labor union of agricultural workers, and so forth. The propagation of the slogan of *peasant juntas*, based on a revolutionary agrarian program, can even now, however, be put on the agenda.

The correct posing of the question of "soldiers' juntas" is very important. Because of the very character of military organization, soldiers' soviets can appear only in the final period of

the revolutionary crisis, when the state power loses control over the army. In the preparatory period, it will be a matter of organizations of an intimate character, groups of revolutionary soldiers, party nuclei, and, in many cases, personal connections of workers with individual soldiers.

The republican uprising in December 1930 will undoubtedly go down into history as the transition between two epochs of revolutionary struggle. It is true that the left wing of the republicans established connections with the leaders of workers' organizations in order to bring about unity of action. The unarmed workers had to play the role of cheerleaders for the republicans, who were the chief performers. This act was performed fully enough to reveal once and for all the incompatibility of an officers' plot with a revolutionary strike. Against the military plot, which opposed one branch of the service to another, the government found sufficient forces within the army itself. And the strike, deprived of an independent aim and of its own leadership, was necessarily reduced to nothing as soon as the military uprising was crushed.

The revolutionary role of the army, not as an instrument of officers' experiments but as an armed part of the people, will be determined, in the last analysis, by the role of the worker and peasant masses in the course of the struggle. For the revolutionary strike to be victorious, it will have to bring about the confrontation of the workers with the army. No matter how important the purely military features of such a clash may be, politics outweighs them. The masses of soldiers can be won over only by clearly explaining the social tasks of the revolution. But it is precisely the social tasks that frighten the officers. It is natural that the proletarian revolutionists should direct their attention even now to the soldiers, creating nuclei of conscious and daring revolutionists in the regiments. The communist work in the army, politically subordinated to the work among the proletariat and the peasantry, can be developed only on the basis of a clear program. But when the decisive moment arrives, the workers, by the sheer weight of numbers and the force of their assault, must sweep a large part of the army to the side of the people or, at any rate, neutralize it. This broad revolutionary posing of the question does not exclude a military "plot" of the advanced soldiers and officers sympathizing with the proletarian revolution, in the period

directly preceding the general strike and insurrection. But such a "plot" has nothing in common with military coups: its task is of an auxiliary character and consists of insuring the victory of the proletarian uprising.

For a successful solution of all these tasks, three conditions are required: a party; once more a party; again a party!

How will the relations between the various existing communist organizations and groups be arranged, and what will be their fate in the future? It is difficult to judge from a distance. Experience will show. Great events unmistakably put to the test ideas, organizations, and people. Should the leadership of the Comintern appear incapable of offering anything to the Spanish workers except a wrong policy, apparatus commands, and splits, then the genuine Communist Party of Spain will be constituted and tempered outside the official framework of the Communist International. One way or another — a party has to be created. It must be united and centralized.

The working class can under no circumstances build its political organization on the basis of federations. A Communist Party is needed — not in the image of the future state order of Spain but as a steel lever for the demolition of the existing order. It can be organized only on the principle of democratic centralism.

The proletarian junta will become the broad arena in which every party and every group will be put to the test and scrutinized before the eyes of the broad masses. The communists will counterpose the slogan of the united front of the workers to the practice of coalitions of Socialists and a part of the syndicalists with the bourgeoisie. Only the united revolutionary front will enable the proletariat to inspire the necessary confidence among the oppressed masses of the village and city. The realization of the united front is conceivable only under the banner of communism. The junta requires a leading party. Without a firm leadership, it would remain an empty organizational form and would inevitably fall into dependence upon the bourgeoisie.

The Spanish communists have ahead of them glorious historic tasks. The advanced workers of the world will follow with rapt attention the course of the great revolutionary drama, which will sooner or later require not only their sympathy but also their cooperation. We will be ready!

END

Statements by Trotsky on the demand for a republic

"The slogan of the republic, of course, is also the workers' slogan. But for them establishing a republic is not merely a matter of replacing the king with a president, but also of thoroughly purging the feudal refuse from the whole of society. Here the first consideration is the agrarian question." ("The Revolution in Spain," January 24, 1931, in The Spanish Revolution (1931-39), p. 77.)

"We can and must counterpose the revolutionary Cortes to the conciliationist Cortes; but, to our mind, it would be incorrect at the present stage to give up the slogan of the revolutionary Cortes. To counterpose the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the problems and slogans of revolutionary democracy (for a republic, for an agrarian revolution, for the separation of church and state, the confiscation of church properties, national self-determination, a revolutionary constituent assembly) would be the most sterile and miserable doctrinairism." (Ibid., p. 79, emphasis in original.)

"Finally, I should like to refer to point 5, concerning Russia, as an incredible curiosity. It is asserted there that the Bolsheviks supported the slogan of a national assembly 'for a fairly short period, from the fall of czarism to the attempt at restoration of capitalist rule....' In reply, the social democracy put forward the slogan of a national assembly from the start of its existence, i.e., from 1883. This slogan played a gigantic role in the education of the proletariat and the party from the first years of this century. The 1905 revolution grew under this slogan. The whole work of the Bolsheviks between the two revolutions went under the slogans of: 1. a democratic republic; 2. the land to the peasants (democratic-agrarian reform); 3. the eight-hour day (demand for workers' democracy).

"The Bordigists will certainly explain that all this was a complete error, that it belongs to the dark period in which the truth of the proletarian dictatorship had not yet been discovered."

("Critical Remarks About Prometeo's Resolution on Democratic Demands," January 15, 1931, in Writings of Leon Trotsky 1930-31, pp. 135-36.)

"By ambiguous formulas, we can only serve Molinier, who himself serves Pivert, who in turn covers for Léon Blum. And the latter puts all his forces behind de la Rocque...and the King of Prussia.

"Under czarism, liberals and democrats treated us like fools because of our propaganda in support of the slogan for a republic. Why frighten the people? they would object. There is enough in

our propaganda to develop the content of a republic (various freedoms, universal suffrage, etc.) without actually saying that terrible word. We would reply: In order for the revolution to become possible, we must instill and maintain in the people an implacable hatred against the nobility, the bureaucracy, etc.... And every worker, every peasant, who learns to hate the czar will accept the slogan for a republic without difficulty.

"The people of the SAP only repeat in connection with the Fourth International the reasoning of our old 'democrats' in connection with the republic slogan. Such reasoning is characteristic of the mentality of a petty bourgeois--very 'daring' in abstract critique, but always halting before the efforts of revolutionary will." ("Against False Passports in Politics," December 16, 1935, in Crisis of the French Section, p. 120, emphasis in original.) [Pathfinder Press publication to be released August 1977.]

Also see, "Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution," Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-40), pp. 55-73.

TRANSLATION

Buenos Aires
March 19, 1977

To the United Secretariat
of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades:

The signers of this letter reaffirm that we are Trotskyist militants and members of the Fourth International. As you know all too well, there are differences among us that have dragged on for years. Many of them have their origin in differences on the international level. But these in no way keep us from being in complete agreement on one point, a request we have to make of you.

It deals with the exclusion of a discussion on the situation in Latin America and a balance sheet on Argentina from the agenda of the coming world congress.

In making this request, we don't fail to take into account the opportunities confronting the Fourth International in other arenas of the world revolution. Neither do we want to show a lack of appreciation for the time problems that arise in preparing an agenda for the congress. And we shouldn't be seen as imposing a nationalist criterion--trying to subordinate the progress of the international to our particular situation.

Quite to the contrary--there are other reasons that motivate us to formally request a balance sheet on the situation in Latin America and, particularly, in Argentina. In the first place, the Fourth International, through its various organizations, undoubtedly played a key role in the day-to-day revolutionary effort in this country during the last eight years. Counterposed lines were put to the test, and we passed through the most varied experiences. What is more, the involvement of the international in the debate around the lines of action in Argentina reached such a point that this became one of the principal themes of the internal discussion and a dividing line for the formation of tendencies.

At the same time, this involvement was not merely intellectual or divorced from the class struggle--Perón himself spoke explicitly of the Fourth International as the great enemy. A cabinet minister explained in a televised speech the scope of the political plans of the Fourth International in Argentina. In order to support his position, he held up to the cameras a copy of the magazine Cuarta Internacional that contained the decisions of the Tenth World Congress from which he read several paragraphs. For months, on all the TV and radio stations throughout the country, every fifteen minutes "the Trotskyists of the Fourth International" were attacked. Not a week

(over)

passed without the bureaucracy of some union publishing an "appeal" attacking the "Trotskyists." To this very day, official propaganda is oriented along the same lines--through radio, television, and wall posters the dictatorship repeats: "Citizens, don't turn your back on the country--don't play the game of the Trotskyists!" The daily La Opinión, which supports official policies, was shut down for publishing an article by a priest in defense of human rights. The main point of this article was to demonstrate that the government's repressive policy was throwing the masses into the arms of Marxism. But not just any old Marxism: "From the ideological point of view Trotskyist thought has become unusually widespread among youth in the first years of college and the later years of secondary school. While it seemed to have been buried in its own ruins in the 1920s, it has cunningly reappeared in recent years."

The enemy does not do such things by accident. Besides other considerations, this obviously results from the general way in which Trotskyism and the Fourth International as such are regarded, and not from a party that is clearly defined before the broad masses and is a permanent political factor.

We believe that this presents an enormous future responsibility for the Fourth International as a whole. Nevertheless, we can leave that responsibility aside for a moment, in order to make it clear that we aren't dealing with a "national" preoccupation.

For example, we think it is completely natural that the international and the United Secretariat center their attention and forces on Spain. But at the same time we are convinced that is indispensable for the international and its sympathizing organizations to assimilate the experience of Argentina so that our actions in Spain might be the most fruitful. It is not possible to advance without assimilating living experiences dialectically. And this can't be done without a thorough Marxist critique of every step. If conclusions are not clearly drawn from everything that has happened here (where, we emphasize, the international played a key role), not only will the sacrifice of thousands of comrades have been in vain--comrades who offered their lives, their liberty, their devotion to the ideas (of one or another line) of the Fourth International--but also and above all, such sterile sacrifices will be repeated over and over again.

In the second place, our preoccupation with the exclusion of this point from the agenda of the world congress should be seen in light of the intention of the United Secretariat to further unifications in those countries where there are two or more sympathizing organizations. At first sight, this can appear to be a narrow interest that in effect subordinates the world congress to the problems of the groups signing this letter. But that is not the case. The differences over Argentina have profound roots. Although we all want to overcome the present dispersion (and are firmly committed to work toward this), it is clear that any unification that does not result from a thorough balance sheet of experiences can be no more than a prologue to

disaster. And here again we are not speaking of a national disaster. What must comrades throughout the world think of the leadership of the international, if Comrades Hansen and Mandel, who have written and debated repeatedly on Argentina and the necessary course of action, after years in which the differences and calamities have multiplied, now allow their documents to be laid aside in order to push through a unification? Perhaps it isn't necessary for that old debate to arrive at a clear conclusion? Since its scope was the entire international and its protagonists the most distinguished leaders of our movement, how can we now minimize it and forget it, without such a lack of response dealing blow after blow to the international as a whole?

To what role will the international leadership be relegated in the eyes of rank-and-file militants all over the world, if after having outlined their positions and courses of action and having carried their debate to the point of splitting organizations the leadership now keeps silent precisely at the moment when the bourgeois hordes are destroying their organizations and militants; if that leadership that in the past carried out discussions down to the most minimal details today fails to offer an explanation of what happened, a balance sheet, and a general orientation for the future?

No attempt is being made to pass over our own responsibilities. Quite to the contrary, we want to assume them and expose them to the criticism of comrades all over the world. This letter is only one of the tasks that we confront in that respect.

This is a problem that concerns the political authority of the international leadership, not only before the Argentine Trotskyists but before comrades all over the world and before organizations that observe the course of the Fourth International from outside. We who aspire to an international that goes forward daily toward construction of the World Party can't permit the United Secretariat to lose its political authority.

Consequently from any point of view and particularly from the point of view of the Fourth International as a whole, we think that extending the agenda will not be a big obstacle to the Eleventh World Congress discussing and drawing clear conclusions from the experiences in Latin America and Argentina in recent years.

Revolutionary greetings,

MANIFIESTO OBRERO
LIGA COMUNISTA
LIGA SOCIALISTA REVOLUCIONARIA
ORGANIZACION COMUNISTA

A Statement on the Slanders Circulated by the Healy Group
Against Hansen, Novack, and the Socialist Workers Party

For almost a year the Workers Revolutionary party, the British group headed by Gerry Healy, has conducted a vicious slander campaign against the Socialist Workers party of the United States and two of its veteran leaders, Joseph Hansen and George Novack. Healy and his followers in various countries have published articles and pamphlets, held public meetings, and distributed leaflets and posters accusing both men of "criminal negligence" in Trotsky's assassination and of being "accomplices of the GPU," alleging that they have covered up crimes of the Soviet secret police and shielded its agents.

They also insinuate that Hansen colluded with the FBI. By implication their charges likewise dishonor James P. Cannon, founder of the American Trotskyist movement, as well as Trotsky himself and his son Sedov.

Healy and his associates have not brought forward the slightest probative evidence, documents, or testimony to substantiate their libelous accusations against Hansen and Novack, the nominal targets of the attacks. The script of their polemics is fabricated out of baseless innuendoes, gratuitous suppositions and outright lies that do not have any political content or foundation in fact. They constitute a shameless frame-up.

The specific allegations have been exposed and refuted point by point in articles by various organizations and individuals printed in Intercontinental Press which can be consulted for extensive information.

The records of Hansen and Novack as political figures, writers, and editors are well known to us and many others the world over. Both have been continuously active for more than forty years as prominent members of the American Trotskyist movement and supporters of the Fourth International. It is especially odious that they have been singled out and falsely accused of aiding Stalin's assassins, since they devoted themselves to protecting Trotsky's life during his last exile in Mexico.

The signers of this statement feel obliged to speak out in defense of Hansen and Novack and the Socialist Workers party against the smear campaign impugning their integrity.

But there is more to the matter than that. We are concerned about the practice of such disruptive methods in the workers movement. They are not new. The Mensheviks maintained that Lenin was a paid agent of the Kaiser. Later Stalin accused Trotsky of being an agent of the Gestapo. Marxists and civil libertarians have from the first repudiated these frame-up techniques employed by the Stalinists against their political opponents and critics. Anyone else who resorts to them must be opposed. Otherwise the struggle for socialism, which includes the honest presentation of conflicting views, becomes discredited.

We call upon the leaders of the Workers Revolutionary party and their followers to cease their scurrilous attacks. They discredit the authors, not the accused. We further ask others who share our position that frame-ups have no place in the socialist movement to add their voice of protest and public condemnation to ours.



Workers Revolutionary Party

British Section of the International Committee of the Fourth International

General Secretary: M. Banda

21b Old Town,
Clapham, London SW40JT
Telephone: 01-622 7029

April 2, 1977

Mr Ken Coates,
Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation,
Bertrand Russell House,
Gamble Street,
Nottingham NG7 4ET.

Dear Mr Coates,

On March 15, 1977, I wrote an open letter to you about the latest evidence that Sylvia Franklin, nee Callen, party name Caldwell, personal secretary to the late James P. Cannon, was a GPU agent all along. In the years 1938 to 1947 she played a key role in the GPU murder network which carried out the assassination of Leon Trotsky in Mexico on August 20, 1940.

I asked you to reconsider your previous position in signing a petition in support of Joseph Hansen and George Novack of the Socialist Workers Party (USA) who both say to this day that Franklin was "an exemplary comrade".

Although proof of her GPU role has been published and Jean Van Heijenoort and Michel Pablo have acknowledged that she was in fact working for Stalin's secret police, I have not received a reply from you.

Hansen and Novack have lived with this lie about Franklin for the past 30 years since the SWP's rigged control commission "cleared" her. But can you live the same lie?

When you signed Hansen and Novack's petition you falsely accused the International Committee of the Fourth International of "a shameless frame-up" (Intercontinental Press, September 6, 1976). Because the facts demand it, this is a slander which you must withdraw.

All of you have reputations to protect. You have a responsibility to declare for historical truth and separate yourselves from Hansen and Novack who are desperately shielding a known GPU agent connected with the ring that organised Trotsky's murder.

Mrs Deutscher, your name has been associated with scrupulous historical scholarship. Is that to be irreparably tainted?

Mr Coates, you claim to be a champion of political morality. What possible moral justification is there in joining a conspiracy of silence with Hansen and Novack to cover up the crimes of a GPU agent?

Mr Anderson, you claim to be a serious thinker and historian. How can this be reconciled with your present position in declaring for Hansen, Novack and Franklin?

Your silence is damaging to you and all that you profess to stand for. There is one principled course to follow - - publicly withdraw your name from Hansen and Novack's petition.

If you genuinely want to know the truth about Trotsky's assassination and the GPU network which carried it out, then you will also join the call for an international Commission of Inquiry. Such a commission will sift through all the evidence compiled by the International Committee and call witnesses.

The purpose is to purge the Trotskyist movement of the crimes of Stalin's police and to bring to an end the decades-long conspiracy of silence about them. You have a duty to remove your names from the list of those who want to suppress these crimes and shield proven GPU agents.

We await your reply.

M Banda

Michael Banda
Workers Revolutionary Party
General Secretary

Hon. President of the Executive Council of the United Nations
Director, Non-Coates, Chris Farley

The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation Ltd.

BERTRAND RUSSELL HOUSE,
GAMBIE STREET,
NOTTINGHAM NG7 4LT,
ENGLAND (Reg. Office)
Reg. No. 881680 (England)
Telephone 0602 74504
Cables: Rusfound Nottingham

8th April, 1977.

Mr. Joe Hansen,
Intercontinental Press,
PO Box 116,
Village PO Station,
New York,
N. Y. 10014,
U.S.A.

Dear Joe,

Have you any suggestions about how the three of us ought to respond to this letter, if at all? I am writing to Tamara and to Perry Anderson in order to ascertain their views.

With all good wishes,

Fraternally,



Ken Coates

May 8, 1977

Mr. Ken Coates
The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation Ltd.
Gamble Street
Nottingham NG7 4ET
England

Dear Ken,

Your letter of April 8 was not delivered until yesterday. The post office stamped the envelope "insufficiently prepaid for transmission by air." So it came by sea-mail.

The Xeroxed copy of the April 2 letter to you, signed by Banda, is similar to the one dated February 7, 1977, sent by Slaughter to the United Secretariat, which replied March 26. We published both documents in the April 25 issue of Intercontinental Press. You have probably seen them by now.

The Healyites have approached various signers of the statement denouncing their frame-up. The objective in each case has been to persuade them to withdraw their names. This effort is quite revealing. It testifies to Healy's failure to put across the frame-up. Outside of his own followers, only a figure like Vereeken has supported the false charges; and even he felt compelled to issue a mild reproof of the methods used. In face of this failure to win any significant support, the Healyites turned to the tactic of trying to shake signers of the statement.

I don't know if they expect to make any real progress along this line. The letters are actually designed for publication in the News Line; and the real audience, of course, is the membership of the WRP and its followers in other countries, as is shown by the nature of the argumentation, and the rapidity with which it was published--the April 2 issue of the News Line, the same date that was placed on the letter.

Banda's letter cannot stand the least critical inspection. The main thread deals with the case of Sylvia Caldwell, which he now apparently believes to be the most vulnerable point of attack. Our position has been and still remains that she is presumed to be innocent until proved guilty. Without repeating what has already been said about Healy's advocacy of her guilt, a presumption based on the slanders set in motion by the FBI and the FBI's creature Budenz, the

following items in Banda's letter are worth noting:

1. "Latest evidence." Banda asserts that "proof of her GPU role has been published." No such thing. The News Line has only repeated the testimony of Budenz who collaborated with the FBI.

Banda also speaks of the "latest evidence." Is this an admission that the earlier "evidence" provided by Budenz was insufficient to convict her? But the "latest evidence," as featured in headlines in the News Line consists of opinions expressed by Van Heijenoort and Pablo.

2. Van Heijenoort and Pablo. "Jean Van Heijenoort and Michel Pablo have acknowledged that she was in fact working for Stalin's secret police..." Neither Van Heijenoort nor Pablo "acknowledged..." The implication of Banda's statement is that previously they were covering up for her.

However, they were quoted by the March 12 News Line as follows:

"Van Heijenoort, now a professor at Brandeis University, near Boston, said that "everything in my mind at the present time goes in the direction that Sylvia was an agent of the GPU."

"Asked if he also accepted that Franklin was a GPU agent, Pablo replied: "Oh, I think so. Definitely. I think she was, yes, an agent."

In the March 28 issue, the News Line quoted Pablo more extensively: "Oh, I think so. Definitely. I think she was, yes, an agent. I think so. And I think it is right that they must admit it. That's my position. The Socialist Workers Party must admit it."

Thus Van Heijenoort said he was inclined in his mind to believe that Sylvia was an agent; Pablo was inclined more definitely to think so. A belief of this kind, however, does not constitute evidence; and neither Van Heijenoort nor Pablo offered any evidence. Moreover, both of them have condemned Healy's frame-up methods.

3. "Rigged Control Commission." Banda includes another choice item:

"Hansen and Novack have lived with this lie about Franklin for the past 30 years since the SWP's rigged control commission 'cleared' her. But can you live the same lie?"

The slander, cooked up by Banda and his fellow frame-up artists, is directed against the entire top leadership

of the SWP, primarily James P. Cannon.

This new charge shows how the effort to bolster a frame-up inevitably leads to fresh lies that become more and more transparent. To give plausibility to their first false charges, the Healyites are now confronted with putting across the lie that all the leaders of the SWP, above all Cannon, were and are "accomplices of the GPU."

4. "Reputations to Protect." Banda's disinterested concern about protecting the reputations of Ken Coates, Tamara Deutscher, and Perry Anderson is laudable, if unexpected. It is to be hoped that you will respond in kind and help protect the reputation of the Healyite frame-up artists. As a sign of his sincerity, Banda will no doubt soon publicly rectify the bad mouthing given you in the columns of the News Line. I, for one, will be looking forward to an article by Banda criticizing an item in the February 25, 1977, issue of the Bulletin that denounced Isaac Deutscher. The Bulletin is the organ of the Central Committee of the Workers League, the American contingent of Healy's followers. The author is Frank Martin, one of their most authoritative writers:

"The weight of evidence proving Hansen and Novack's complicity with the GPU is so enormous that they have finally been forced into the pages of the Militant."

"But there they make the remarkable contention:

"'Healy's political reasons for conducting a campaign of slander against Hansen and Novack are quite obvious. He is seeking to prejudice his followers against reading Trotskyist publications, particularly those featuring articles by Hansen and Novack or by those who share their political views.'

"Need we point out that it was not the press of the International Committee but the Militant itself which blacked out totally any discussion of these issues, including Hansen and Novack's own articles on the subject, for the last 18 months?

"But the real core of this article is the statement that 'Healy claims to be acting out of concern for the "security of the Fourth International". But in fact his practices are directly contrary to those of Lenin and Trotsky.'

"Who does the Militant cite as their 'authority' to prove this? Lenin? Trotsky? Of course not. They turn, instead, to that middle class renegade Isaac Deutscher, who spent his entire political life opposing the construction of the Fourth International.

"'In the third volume of his biography of Trotsky,' writes

the Militant, 'Isaac Deutscher described Trotsky's reactions to unproved suspicions against a supporter in Paris (Mark Zborowski) who later proved to be a Stalinist agent provocateur.' (If it had been left to Hansen and Novack, those suspicions would still be unproved).

"According to Deutscher:

"'All too many accusations had already been bandied about in the small Trotskyist circle in Paris anyhow; and if all of these were to be taken seriously, there would be no end to the chasing of agents provocateurs.

"'He (Trotsky) knew all too well what a curse stool-pigeons were in any organization; but he also knew that constant suspicion, and witch-hunting could be even worse. He decided not to lend ear to any accusation unless it was unequivocally presented and substantiated.

"'He preferred to take the gravest risks and to expose himself to extreme danger rather than to infect and demoralize his followers with distrust and scares.'

"Is it true that Trotsky 'preferred to take the gravest risks and to expose himself to extreme danger'?"

"Hansen and Novack are banking on Deutscher's so-called reputation to pull the wool over SWP members' eyes. Behind this quotation is Hansen's completely reactionary position, already exposed by the International Committee, that Trotsky himself was responsible for his own assassination!"

I don't know whether you decided to reply to Banda's letter. Its swift publication showed that Banda did not expect a reply. It might be useful to write a public rejoinder as part of further clarification of the record; but it is distasteful to deal with such crap--and time-consuming. If you do reply, please send a copy to Intercontinental Press. !

Meanwhile Gerry Foley has written an article taking up Banda's gross attack on political dissidents in the Soviet Union. It is in the current issue of Intercontinental Press. You should have received it by now. Just in case the Postal Service goofed, I am enclosing a copy.

Fraternally,

Enc.

Joe Hansen

London
April 6, 1977

Dear Joe and George,

I have just received the 4 April issue of ICP. I was somewhat amazed to see in it a statement by Jock Haston on Healy. I think printing this is a really cardinal blunder which gives big openings to Healy.

I am not sure if you are aware who Haston is now, although I thought I had mentioned it clearly to George when he was here, but you must be quite clear that this person is a most disgusting renegade in the real sense. He is one of the main organisers of anti-CP and anti-Trotskyist witch-hunts in the trade unions - in particular in the Electrical Trades union. He helped organise the banning of CP members from holding office in that union and, through his educational schools, he keeps up a continual witch hunt against all left wing members of the ETU - a campaign involving expulsions, dissolving of branch committees, replacing elective positions in the unions with appointees of the right wing bureaucracy etc. His position, within his more limited resources, is entirely analagous to that of say Jay Lovestone. He is one of the most hated men in the entire trade union movement for any militant in the ETU. To involve him in defending Trotskyists against slanders of Healy is rather like utilising Lovestone or Joseph McCarthy to defend Trotskyists against the Stalinists. It is completely out of the question that we should be associated with this individual in any shape or form. To utilise his name will give Healy a considerable opening. I think it very likely for example that a series of the signatories to the appeal against Healy would have had many second thoughts if they had known Haston would be involved in any way.

I am all the more surprised that this letter was printed as I briefly discussed Haston with George when he was here. He told me that Grant and Haston had asked to see him and what was the IMGs opinion? Brian and I both agreed that it was fine to see Grant but that on no account should George see Haston. I was therefore a bit stunned to see the piece in ICP.

I am not sure what to do about this now though. If Healy has got any sense at all we will see a big series in the Newsline on 'Who is Jock Haston' and he will use Haston's involvement with the campaign to try to obscure every issue. Given the emotive reaction which Haston's name has for not a few people in the trade union movement such a campaign would have a certain resonance.

I don't see that we can do anything at present, although you may have some ideas, except to wait for what Healy does. To write something now on Haston would have a somewhat confusing effect and in any case it would have to be done very carefully - Haston is an element for whom a resort to the bourgeois courts would be extremely likely and probably give him

Letter to Joe and George
Jones - 2 -

great pleasure. Incidentally his talk about 'retirement' is bullshit - he is just as much connected up with the 'anti-communist/anti-Trotskyist' network as ever.

Please let me have your ideas on how to deal with this mess. In future please check with us before printing any statements of people who you're not sure who they represent now - as you couldn't have been with Haston.

As to what Haston is up to by sending the letter I don't know but whatever it is the Fourth International and the SWP shouldn't have anything to do with it. I would like to hear from you as soon as possible on how to deal with what is only too likely to come from Healy now. I think that when Barry comes for the next USec we must have a discussion on policy for this campaign now.

fraternally,
s/Alan Jones

New York, N.Y.
April 22, 1977

Alan Jones
England

Dear Alan,

I did not receive your April 6 letter asking about Jock Haston's statement until after our plenum, hence the delay in replying.

First, on Haston's statement itself. I do not see anything wrong in its contents per se. The author makes clear that he is not a Trotskyist and has not been since "1950." His stand is the very elementary one of opposing frame-ups such as the one committed by the Healyites.

He includes a useful bit of information--that he was a former leader of the British Trotskyist movement and that the Trotskyism he knew then had nothing in common with what the Healyites are practicing today. In this respect, the statement offers testimony that adds to the growing mountain of evidence condemning the Healyites. This holds true no matter what Haston's current politics may be.

You are, of course, quite correct in noting that I was not aware of Haston's current activities and reputation, etc. In fact I don't think the Healyites have mentioned him since the period following the 1953-54 split. Perhaps other left publications have carried exposés, but no one has called my attention to them if they exist.

In your letter you liken him to a miniature Joseph McCarthy or to a Lovestone. But that is not very enlightening. McCarthy was a bourgeois politician, a right-wing Republican, who played the role of a protofascist. Lovestone was the foreign expert of the Stalinphobic AFL tops, who are part of the Democratic machine. From what you say Haston would appear to be a minor figure in the right wing of the British Social Democracy. However he was once in the Trotskyist movement. Can you completely exclude that he was moved by conscience? Or at least a twinge of conscience?

As to what the Healyites might try to do with Haston's statement, I see no cause for much concern. They will simply resort to argumentum ad hominem as they have with everyone else who has condemned their frame-up. So what will their Fleet Street poison-pen artist say? That Haston is a "real" renegade and Wohlforth, for instance, is only a fake renegade? And prove it with a series of ten articles that might well include libelous material?

The key problem centers on your view that it was a mistake to publish Haston's statement because of his politics. I would

readily agree that it would have been a mistake if we had followed a rule from the beginning of rejecting the support of all those with whom we disagree politically. But we never applied any such rule. If we had decided on such a rule we should have announced it from the start.

Our appeal, it is true, was directed mainly to socialists (of all kinds), members of the workers movement, and civil libertarians. But the basis of the appeal was not agreement with the political views of the victims; it was opposition to the frame-up techniques employed against them, which were in the tradition of the Stalinists.

Since the appeal did not exclude anyone holding political positions going beyond opposition to the use of frame-up techniques, it did not exclude Stalinophobes. Should we have made at least this political distinction? I do not think so. The issue still remained that of a frame-up against which all political tendencies upholding democratic rights were duty bound to take a stand.

If it were not a frame-up and Healy had proved that George and I were really "accomplices of the GPU," then the Stalinophobes would in all likelihood have felt inclined to move to the head of the pack demanding we be tarred and feathered. However, since we proved that Healy had cooked up a frame-up, all that remained was to note the fact and denounce such techniques. There was not much in this for the Stalinophobes and so they tended to stand aloof from what appeared to be a squabble among the Trotskyists, useful only in smearing Trotskyism as being identical to Stalinism.

As I see it, it would be a mistake to change the basic criteria we have been following in defending ourselves against the Healyite campaign. As the truth spreads, there will no doubt be quite a few who will voice an opinion. Some will have considerable impact because of their moral standing, others less, and some might be negative. All of them, however, should be made a matter of public record, in my opinion, so that those most interested can follow the developments.

By the way, we did not "involve" Haston in the case. His statement was not solicited and came as a surprise. He decided on his own to send it. As he says, it was Glotzer who called his attention to the Healyite campaign. Glotzer's connection is important in explaining Haston's motives. Glotzer, as you may have noted, was one of the signers of the statement that appeared in the September 6, 1975, IP. Evidently on a trip to Britain, he called the attention of people he knew to Healy's foul campaign. That one of these was Haston is quite natural. Glotzer is one of the leaders of the right-wing Social Democrats in the United States, and thus has much in common with Haston politically. And like Haston, he was a former Trotskyist leader (a follower of Shachtman).

I do not understand why you thought George should not see Haston. Was it only a tactical question? Our complete opposition to Haston's politics should not prevent us from talking with him on such questions as the history of the Trotskyist movement, for instance. He may have material that would be useful in that connection, or he might agree to a tape interview on a series of questions concerning the years he was in the movement.

This aspect occurred to me because of the fact that along with his statement he sent me a Xerox of an interesting document that I had not seen before. It may be familiar to you, but in case it isn't, I am enclosing a Xerox of it.

Fraternally yours,

Joe

Joe Hansen

Enc.

[TRANSLATION]

Paris
January 10, 1977

FROM: International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency
TO: The Leadership of the Socialist Workers Party

Dear Comrades,

We have already sent you a copy of the resolution adopted by the International Secretariat of our organization dated March 5, 1976, regarding the accusations made by G. Healy against Hansen and Novack. We have also sent you a copy of the letter we addressed at the time to our Belgian section.

We are astonished that, despite our taking such clear positions, you in your public press and internal bulletins have renewed your attacks on "Pabloism," on the basis of arguments that grossly distort our actual past and present positions, and even in the sphere of the present polemics between your organization and G. Healy. We find this attitude profoundly regrettable.

With this letter we would like more specifically to make the following suggestions. In view of the scope that the G. Healy's campaign has taken on and its harmful effects for the movement founded by Leon Trotsky, it would be extremely useful to form a commission made up of "neutral" elements, enjoying the respect of the different sides, that would examine the case and pass judgment. Such a verdict, accepted by the different sides, would make it possible to bring the controversy to a close.

A man like Van, for example, could take on the responsibility for forming such a commission, if he accepted.

We raise this suggestion as an example of what could be done in this realm.

With our revolutionary greetings,

s/ The Bureau of the International Secretariat of the
International Revolutionary Marxist Tendency



14 CHARLES LANE,
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10014
(212) 242-5530

March 15, 1977

Bureau du Secretariat International
Tendance Marxiste Revolutionnaire Internationale
Paris

Dear Comrades,

Please excuse our delay in answering your letter of January 10, which we received January 24th.

As we have written previously, we were grateful to receive copies of your March 5, 1976, resolution and the letter concerning the stand of your Belgian section. As you probably noticed, these were published in the September 6, 1976, issue of Intercontinental Press.

Likewise, we were glad to learn that your views were presented at the January 14 meeting in London in repudiation of Healy's slander campaign. The message sent by Comrade Pablo was read at the meeting and was also subsequently printed in Intercontinental Press in its February 7 issue.

As to your proposal to initiate a commission of respected "'neutral' elements" to examine and pass judgment on Healy's charges, we do not see such a project as feasible at the present time. We do not think that such a commission would help to "bring the controversy to a close," as you envisage it could. This conclusion is indicated by Healy's response to the detailed refutations of his charges that have already been made publicly by Joseph Hansen, George Novack, and numerous others. Healy has absolutely disregarded these answers, and everything would point to his doing exactly the same thing in regard to the findings of an impartial commission.

We share your judgment of the capabilities and objectivity of Van. He has already stated his position on the slanders in two statements that have been published in Intercontinental Press (the September 6, 1976, and February 28, 1977, issues).

Finally, you refer in your letter to "attacks on 'Pabloism'" by SWP leaders in our public press and internal bulletin. We are not sure what you are referring to here. We have made no attacks on "Pabloism" in reference to your current positions. The fact is that your current positions remain obscure to us. We receive only Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme, and the last issue we have seen of that was dated June 1976. We would be

“Letter from John Benson concerning the next meeting of the LTF Steering Committee” is unavailable at this time.

Letter to the Bolshevik Tendency

Brussels,
December 21, 1976

To the Secretariat of the Bolshevik Tendency

Dear Comrades,

At the United Secretariat meeting of November 13-14, 1976, Comrade Ricardo, who informed us that he was secretary of the BT, said that the BT had held meetings at the end of August in Bogota and October 11-12 in Lisbon. He said that a platform had been adopted, as well as 10-12 organizational resolutions, which would be submitted for publication as appendices to the political documents.

Since then, we have received from the BT a printed copy of the platform of the BT in Spanish. It will be published in French and English as rapidly as possible.

The organizational resolutions were not attached to the Spanish edition of the platform that you sent to us. However, we received a copy of these resolutions that were published together with the platform of the BT that was voted upon by the Portuguese PRT. Enclosed is the Portuguese text.

The United Secretariat has considered the proposal made in resolution no. 1, calling "for the formation of a parity leadership of the Fourth International by the IMT, BT, and LTF" that would function "at most until the Twelfth World Congress." The United Secretariat disagrees with this proposal. This proposal, raised at the beginning of the discussion, questions the democratic right of the membership to elect a leadership of the International by majority vote, in conformity with its political judgment. The election of the United Secretariat is carried out by majority vote of the IEC, which, in turn, is elected by majority vote of the delegates at the World Congress. This is the normal practice of democratic centralism and is in conformity with the statutes of the Fourth International.

In resolution no. 4, points d and e say that the BT has resolved to send comrades to Mexico and Ecuador. Could you please inform us of the names of these comrades, the anticipated duration of their voyages, the nature of their assignments, and the organizations to which they belong.

Resolution no. 5 says that the BT "is composed of organizations, tendencies, and individual members." Can you please inform us which organizations and tendencies have affiliated to the BT.

Resolution no. 5 also says that the BT has decided upon a leadership of 65 members and also a secretariat. Could you please inform us of the names of these comrades and the organizations to which they belong.

Resolution no. 8 states that the "publication of the main reports adopted at the founding meeting of the BT is approved." Can you please send us the texts of these reports, and indicate when the founding meeting was held.

Resolution no. 12 lists several documents as having been adopted by the BT. The United Secretariat does not have copies of several of these documents. They are:

1. The "letter from Comrade Moreno to the Spanish LSR comrades."
2. The criticism of the "Key Issues..." document.
3. The "document on Angola discussed at the founding meeting of the Tendency."
4. "Contributions on the document by Barnes, 'Europe vs. America and the Crisis of World Stalinism.'"

Could you please send us copies of the above documents.

Please respond in time for the February 5-7 meeting of the United Secretariat, at which we will have a further discussion on this point.

Revolutionary Greetings,
The United Secretariat

Letter to Comrade Capa

December 21, 1976

Dear Comrade Capa,

Enclosed is a copy of Resolution no. 11 of the Bolshevik Tendency, as published by the Portuguese PRT.

The United Secretariat notes that "A Scandalous Document" is a discussion article published in the internal bulletin of the Fourth International. Before publishing it in public form, the United Secretariat instructs you to bring this question to the United Secretariat for a decision by this body.

Revolutionary Greetings,
The United Secretariat

Letter to the Editorial Board of Revista de America

Brussels
December 21, 1976

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a copy of Resolution no. 3 of the Bolshevik Tendency, as published by the Portuguese PRT.

Can you please inform us who is politically responsible for publishing Revista de America?

Revolutionary Greetings,
The United Secretariat

Letter to the Executive Committee of the PST

Brussels
December 21, 1976

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed is a copy of Resolution no. 6 of the Bolshevik Tendency, as published by the Portuguese PRT. The resolution states that "from the very beginning the PST leadership considered the particular

aspect of the IS (Mexico) electoral tactic which involved signing a joint platform with the CP to be an error." Was this position of the PST leadership ever expressed in written form? If so, would you please send us copies of the documents containing your position at that time.

Revolutionary Greetings,
The United Secretariat

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

Letter from Marcela

Logota, January 27, 1977

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat
of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

After a little delay, we received your letter of December 21, 1976. We are hastening to respond.

The electoral tactics of the comrades of the Liga Socialista of Mexico were thoroughly discussed at a Central Committee meeting in December 1975. Foreign comrades from four countries were present-- Colombia, Brazil, Uruguay, and Faraguay. A strong criticism of the tactics was made.

The Political Bureau of the PST, and later the Central Committee gave Comrade Mercedes the task of preparing a long article about the electoral problem in Mexico, to be published in Revista de America. The object was to explain exhaustively to the entire Latin American and world Trotskyist movement, and especially to the Latin American vanguard, our serious tactical differences with the policy of the Liga Socialista in Mexico. The editors of Revista de America felt it would be too much to publish Comrade Ricardo's article on electoral tactics in Mexico together with the response and analysis of Comrade Mercedes that the CC had decided on. So the editors decided to publish Ricardo's article in one number and Mercedes' in the next, along with an explanation voicing the opinion of the Editorial Board and the PST Executive Committee.

All these documents (the minutes of the CC meeting and the article by Comrade Mercedes) are in our archives, which are inaccessible at the time owing to our having to work under clandestine conditions. We are ready to give a full oral explanation of the case, so that the comrades can be totally satisfied. If necessary--if there is the least doubt about what we have said concerning the present situation of our archives--we are prepared to finance a trip to our country by some comrade from the United Secretariat to thoroughly corroborate everything we say in this letter, especially the fact that we are unable to use our archives at the present time. We believe that before long, in a few months, the situation will change radically. Then we will be able to append all the documents proving what we are telling you.

On the other hand, Comrade Moreno, on his return for the February 1976 Executive Committee meeting, reported that the official position of the PST was very similar to the one Comrade Mandel had maintained at the meeting of the Mexican Commission of the IEC. He had therefore supported Comrade Mandel's position at that meeting.

Although you didn't ask us about it, we want to point out that Comrade Greco--in letters that are also in our archives--systematically noted a slight pro-Stalinist deviation in Comrade Ricardo. He believed this deviation to be incipient, and, if memory serves

Marcela To USec, January 27, 1977/222

us right, considered its first manifestation to be the pact signed with the Stalinists. All this was said in the context of Comrade Greco's very enthusiastic defense of Comrade Ricardo's tactical audacity in favor of intervening in the elections--even though there were tactical errors or deviations that tomorrow could be transformed into truly revisionist deviations with respect to Stalinism. All the members of the EC and of the International Commission agreed with this position of Comrade Greco's in general terms, although with various differences about the nuances. As soon as we can use our archives, we will corroborate that this supplementary information we are fraternally providing to the comrades of the United Secretariat, conforms to the letters that Comrade Greco conscientiously sent us when he had the chance.

With Orthodox Trotskyist Greetings,

For the EC of the FST in exile,

s/Marcela

Letter from Capa

Bogota, January 27, 1977

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat
of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

With respect to resolution No. 11 of the Bolshevik Tendency, as published by the Portuguese PKT, I must note the following:

1. Any organization in the Fourth International, as well as any tendency or faction, in my opinion, has the right to publish, either internally or in public form, any internal discussion document dealing with questions no longer current. That is, they have the right to do this a few years after the documents in question have been published internally.

2. No article in the statutes prohibits the public issuance of documents such as described in point No. 1.

3. Issuing this document publicly is not a question for me to decide, nor do I think that resolution No. 11 talks about doing this. Therefore, this question should be addressed to the leadership of the tendency or the organizations considering publishing it. For example, the Cali organization of the Bloque Socialista decided to put it out in a run of 300 copies, and personally I am against prohibiting this organization or any other from publishing it.

4. Since the time it came out, various parties, comrades and publishing houses in the movement have considered printing it publicly. I have always opposed this, and refused to cooperate with any such attempt.

5. I think that this document is an important element in the history of the present tendency struggle, and therefore for the first time I am going to cooperate with such a project in order to improve the editing of this document and facilitate its publication.

6. Before saying that it is part of a discussion article published in the Internal Bulletin of the Fourth International, you have to be clear about the fact that only a section of it was published in English and Spanish, and not a line of it in French. Therefore, except in Spanish, its circulation was minimal. Thus, it is exaggerated and false to say that it was published in the Internal Bulletin.

7. Part of this document was published in a Spanish edition of several thousand copies, and as naturally occurs in such cases, no party could control its circulation. Likewise, the majority has the complete draft of this document, which also got out of the PST's control, even though only a few hundred copies of it were published.

8. We made a proposal to Comrade Mandel to establish a means of supervising the public work of the various movement publishing houses throughout the Hispanic-speaking world--to set up a parity committee representing the various publishers linked to the Hispano-

Capa to USec, January 27, 1977/222

American Trotskyist movement. This parity commission should decide on a publishing plan that all the publishing houses would have to follow. It has to be an honest agreement in good faith. We do not know why you are looking for organizational procedures to accomplish what can be decided fraternally among comrades and among the publishing houses of the movement.

For all the reasons I have explained above, for statutory reasons as well as principled political and organizational reasons, and for personal ones, I inform the United Secretariat that if the tendency or any of the groups or publishing houses linked to the international want to put out "A Scandalous Document" in public form, I will not lift a finger to prevent it, because I think that to do so would go against every principle of the Trotskyist and revolutionary movement.

None of the foregoing remarks means that as of today I have firmly decided to issue this document publicly. This is a question that will be discussed and decided by our tendency. In the event that the Publishing House Parity Committee is formed, it will be decided in connection with it.

With Orthodox Trotskyist Greetings,

s/Capa

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

LETTER FROM MARCELA, CAMILO, EDUARDO TO THE UNITED SECRETARIAT

Bogotá, January 27, 1977

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International
Dear Comrades,

As we told you in our other letter, in which we criticized your resolutions and proceedings against the Bolshevik Tendency, we are going to respond to the various points and questions that you raised with us in your letter of December 21, 1976.

1. We take note of your "dissatisfaction" with our resolution No. 1, that refers to "the formation of a parity leadership of the Fourth International." We regret profoundly and reject as pedantic and professorial your argument about the "normal practices of democratic centralism." We already know that our proposition is exceptional and completely abnormal, but this is precisely because the situation in our international is also absolutely abnormal. Instead of responding politically, telling us that that situation does not exist except in our imagination, you tell us that our proposal is not in accordance with the norms. We already know that. But we are discussing what must be discussed: the normality or abnormality of the situation in the International.

Hard facts have demonstrated in an immediate way that we are right. These hard facts are the scandalous statements made by Comrade Mandel to the Barcelona magazine Viejo Topo. Acting in an official or semiofficial capacity, he compromised the United Secretariat and practically the entire International. These statements denied the entire analysis, characterization, and policy of Trotskyism and the Fourth International concerning Stalinism. The possibility was left open -- especially for France and Spain -- that the Stalinists might transform themselves into revolutionary parties.

This has nothing to do with the tradition, the policy, the analysis, or the history of Trotskyism. It has been said -- we emphasize again -- in a semiofficial capacity in the name of our entire International. This is totally abnormal. That one of the foremost leaders of Trotskyism makes totally and absolutely anti-Trotskyist statements is not -- for us -- a normal situation. Our organizational proposal justifiably tries to avoid situations such as this. If it were accepted, no member of the International could make public statements like those of Comrade Mandel, without reaching an agreement beforehand. Thus these statements would not have been made -- statements that require our tendency to publicly dissociate itself from them in the clearest way. Neither would a crisis in our International have become evident -- in public.

2. The tasks of resolution No. 4, points d and e, were not carried out, since Revista de América did not come out and the congress of the PST was postponed indefinitely.

If our attitude were not fraternal, our response would be limited to what we have already told you. But we want to go far beyond formal and statutory requirements. We want to have a fraternal relationship with the United Secretariat and with the other tendencies, one of mutual respect. For this reason we will tell you of the movement of

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

LETTER FROM MARCELA, CAMILO, EDUARDO TO THE UNITED SECRETARIAT

Bogotá, January 27, 1977

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International
Dear Comrades,

As we told you in our other letter, in which we criticized your resolutions and proceedings against the Bolshevik Tendency, we are going to respond to the various points and questions that you raised with us in your letter of December 21, 1976.

1. We take note of your "dissatisfaction" with our resolution No. 1, that refers to "the formation of a parity leadership of the Fourth International." We regret profoundly and reject as pedantic and professorial your argument about the "normal practices of democratic centralism." We already know that our proposition is exceptional and completely abnormal, but this is precisely because the situation in our international is also absolutely abnormal. Instead of responding politically, telling us that that situation does not exist except in our imagination, you tell us that our proposal is not in accordance with the norms. We already know that. But we are discussing what must be discussed: the normality or abnormality of the situation in the International.

Hard facts have demonstrated in an immediate way that we are right. These hard facts are the scandalous statements made by Comrade Mandel to the Barcelona magazine Viejo Topo. Acting in an official or semiofficial capacity, he compromised the United Secretariat and practically the entire International. These statements denied the entire analysis, characterization, and policy of Trotskyism and the Fourth International concerning Stalinism. The possibility was left open -- especially for France and Spain -- that the Stalinists might transform themselves into revolutionary parties.

This has nothing to do with the tradition, the policy, the analysis, or the history of Trotskyism. It has been said -- we emphasize again -- in a semiofficial capacity in the name of our entire International. This is totally abnormal. That one of the foremost leaders of Trotskyism makes totally and absolutely anti-Trotskyist statements is not -- for us -- a normal situation. Our organizational proposal justifiably tries to avoid situations such as this. If it were accepted, no member of the International could make public statements like those of Comrade Mandel, without reaching an agreement beforehand. Thus these statements would not have been made -- statements that require our tendency to publicly dissociate itself from them in the clearest way. Neither would a crisis in our International have become evident -- in public.

2. The tasks of resolution No. 4, points d and e, were not carried out, since Revista de América did not come out and the congress of the PST was postponed indefinitely.

If our attitude were not fraternal, our response would be limited to what we have already told you. But we want to go far beyond formal and statutory requirements. We want to have a fraternal relationship with the United Secretariat and with the other tendencies, one of mutual respect. For this reason we will tell you of the movement of

comrades in the two countries you asked us about. At the request of Comrade Manuel, we exerted as much moral pressure as possible to get Comrade Greco to leave Mexico. He offered no resistance -- on the contrary, for some time he had been indicating a desire to leave there for personal reasons. A comrade from the Bloque Socialista (Socialist Bloc), Comrade Dario, was asked to replace him in his editorial work. Dario was given the responsibility of representing the Socialist Bloc and the tendency at the unification congress of the Mexican Trotskyists. At the end of the year, Comrade Greco returned to Mexico, and Comrade Manuel again asked our tendency that, "given the factional characteristics of the comrade," we do everything possible to get him to leave Mexico right away. The request was carried out immediately. The comrade was asked to leave Mexico without delay and to try not to stay in the country past January 15. Comrade Greco had no difficulty leaving by the date that was suggested to him.

The following comrades have gone to Ecuador on various occasions for about a week's time: Socorro (from the Socialist Bloc) and Lidia and Mercedes (from the Argentine PST, who are living in Colombia).

3. With reference to resolution No. 5 and your question about the organizations and tendencies affiliated to the Bolshevik Tendency, we must point out that we don't really know the object of your question. But we are responding without delay:

We know that many comrades have criticized us, pointing out that (national) tendencies or organizations can't affiliate to an (international) tendency. We disagree with this conception because of the situation in our International, in which there are public organizations that are -- in fact -- factions or tendencies. To say otherwise would be to fail to recognize the reality. For example, in Colombia all of the IMT is organized into three groups. All of the LTF is in another group, and all of the BT is in yet another. In other words, they are public factions. We think it would be quite hypocritical to deny this fact. In Spain the LTF has one organization and the IMT has another, so it would be a farce for these organizations, that are actually public factions, not to belong to the international faction of which they are the national expression.

It is good to recognize this situation for another reason: It means that all of these groupings are part of the same international, and should behave that way toward one another. Our Bolshevik Tendency would think it anomalous if all the official sections that make up the world Trotskyist movement, the Fourth International, adhered to a single tendency. However, this is also a relative situation. Where there is a majority of 95 percent, they can also join, but in general we are against this. That is why the Venezuelan section, which is the only organization belonging to the International in Venezuela, is not part of the Bolshevik Tendency. Instead, its militants join as individuals. But in the countries where there are a number of Trotskyist organizations we accept the membership of whole tendencies. While this is an abnormal situation, it is what exists. In other words, concretely, we don't see anything in the statutes preventing an international tendency from accepting the membership of national tendencies. We have read the statutes from cover to cover and we have found nothing that corresponds to what some comrades are saying. When there are national factions and tendencies in one organization, why can't they join an international tendency? And if that national tendency or faction has split and has become a public faction, why can't it join an international tendency?

4. Also with reference to resolution No. 5, and your question about the names of the comrades and organizations to which they belong: We see a repetition here of the question about organizations. We can't give you a list of the sixty-five members (of the leadership) because the places have not all been filled yet. So we are only going to give you a list of the comrades that already form part of the leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency, and the organizations to which they belong.

5. Publication of the main reports adopted at the founding meeting of the BT hasn't been implemented, because these texts haven't been transcribed from the tapes. As soon as they are, we will have no problem sending them to you comrades. That will show you why it may not be possible for us to carry out resolution No. 8, owing to the time and effort the length of the reports would require. Publishing them would mean in effect putting out a book and that was not taken into account when the resolution was adopted.

With respect to the founding meeting, it took place in Bogotá, but definitive approval of the documents was postponed for a meeting to be held in Europe. In other words, there have been two founding congresses, connected to each other. This is due to our functioning in clandestine conditions, to our connections with the PST, and to difficulties within the organization. The meetings took place in Bogotá August 24-30, 1976, and in Lisbon in October of the same year.

For the reasons previously noted, it was actually in these two meetings that the definitive document was elaborated. Since most of the BT leadership was unfamiliar with the official United Secretariat document on Europe, the Bogotá leadership completed work on the document during October and November.

6. Of the four documents you requested we are sending the following:

* The letter from Comrade Moreno to the Spanish comrades of the LSR.

* The criticisms of the "Key Issues" document that were published in a PST bulletin, and that are quite well known among Trotskyists in Latin America. We are surprised that the comrades of the United Secretariat -- or at least the LTF comrades on the Secretariat -- don't have it. We are also surprised that one of those critical reports on the "Key Issues" document, the oral criticism by Comrade Moreno, was not published by the SWP leadership, despite its publication in a PST internal bulletin, as the SWP leaders well know.

Regarding the other two documents, the following is to be said:

* The document on Angola is an article Comrade Moreno wrote last April. Due to our functioning under clandestine conditions and other well-known difficulties, it was not published in a separate issue of Revista de América, which had by then ceased publication temporarily. This article will be published as a book, along with the SWP resolutions on Angola and the revolution in southern Africa. It is fundamentally a criticism of the SWP's positions on Angola and especially their official resolution on this theme adopted in January 1976. We will send it to you comrades as soon as it is published. We don't think there is any point in making a lot of photocopies when you will be receiving the book in a few weeks.

* Regarding the contribution on the Barnes document "Europe vs. America and the Erosion of World Stalinism," we inform you that it was suggested to the comrade charged with preparing it that the rough draft be extended so that it could be incorporated as a basic document of the tendency. It is of secondary importance in the present debate, since our tendency agrees with Barnes and the SWP that the European CPs continue to be Stalinist. The criticism focuses on questions of methods and form, clarifying our basic agreement.

If the explanations we have given don't satisfy you, amplify your questions and requests so that we can respond as rapidly as possible and thus satisfy your curiosity.

With orthodox Trotskyist greetings, for the leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency,

s/ Marcela, Camilo, Eduardo

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

JANUARY 27, 1977, LETTER TO THE UNITED SECRETARIAT FROM THE LEADERSHIP OF THE BOLSHEVIK TENDENCY

Bogotá, January 27, 1977

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International
Dear Comrades,

We received your letter of December 21, 1976, which puts a series of questions to us. Along with other letters, resolutions, and draft resolutions concerning our tendency or its components, these questions are part of an aggressive campaign against our tendency in violation of the statutes.

The objective of this letter is to expose the majority's campaign against our tendency, our leaders, and some of our organizations. It is time for these comrades to begin to treat our tendency in a fraternal way and to stop these sly threats and low maneuvers, to promote a fraternal atmosphere that would make it possible to hold a serious political debate within our International.

Such a turn is all the more necessary since while the United Secretariat spent November and December creating this situation, one of its most prominent members, Comrade Mandel, was making public statements to a Spanish magazine (see the November and December 1976 issues of Viejo Topo) that are among the most serious errors ever made by the Fourth International, since they were in fact semiofficial statements.

I. The Resolutions and Questions Aimed Against the Bolshevik Tendency

1. The November Meeting of the United Secretariat.

In the November United Secretariat meeting, a resolution was adopted criticizing the Bolshevik Tendency. It was written and supported by the most prominent leaders of the IMT. This resolution was nothing more than a stupid attack on our tendency. It showed a total lack of a sense of Trotskyist proletarian solidarity and responsibility toward the PST, the Trotskyist party that at present is suffering the worst persecution at the hands of the reactionaries. This criticism insinuates that the BT is refusing to present a tendency platform and constitutes an unprincipled grouping. But let us look at the facts: The comrades of the majority who proposed this motion are well aware of the difficult circumstances the PST is going through, as well as those experienced by some of the parties that make up the BT. These comrades know about the difficulties with files and documents and realize that the conditions we have faced are totally different from those enjoyed by the comrades of the LTF and the European comrades of the IMT in drawing up their documents.

There is the concrete fact (which the IMT leadership is well aware of) that the document on Europe adopted in May and published in June 1976 by the United Secretariat was not sent to any tendency in Colombia. The result of this was that the tendency document approved by the BT at the Bogotá conference was improperly documented as regards the IMT's definitive position on Europe. Thus, as we were preparing to deliver our tendency document to the United Secretariat, we became aware, purely by chance, that the authors of the resolution

(along with everybody else in Colombia and in Latin America, to the best of our knowledge) knew nothing about the document approved by the United Secretariat in May. This forced us -- out of a sense of responsibility toward the IMT and all the rank and file of our world party -- to redraft our document and make a study of the material we did not know about before, because as we saw it this was to be the axis of the tendency debate.

It was because of this organizational default of the United Secretariat majority that we decided to postpone delivering the document for a month or two.

Despite all these problems, a resolution was passed trying to paint the BT as a maneuverist, unprincipled tendency based on organizational questions alone, when precisely the opposite is true. We broke with the LTF on very clearly defined questions having to do with the Portuguese question. We called for the formation of a tendency based on key questions in the Portuguese revolution, such as our position on the embryos of dual power. Subsequently, despite all these vicissitudes, despite the persecution the PST had to face, the final programmatic documents were drawn up, definitively establishing our tendency.

2. The United Secretariat resolution and Comrade Mandel's letter referring to public publication of "A Scandalous Document."

Two letters arrived, one from Comrade Mandel and another from the United Secretariat (dated respectively, November 27, 1976, and December 21, 1976). Both were addressed to Comrade Moreno. In these letters -- despite a fraternal tone -- a question was raised about whether, according to the statutes, minorities and leaders of the International have the right to publish old polemical documents that have appeared in internal bulletins.

These two letters touch on the question of possible public publication of "A Scandalous Document" (possible, since the tendency has not adopted any resolution calling for this; there was only a proposal to Comrade Moreno that this be done, without specifying whether this should be public or not). They flagrantly contradict one another. Comrade Mandel, showing his knowledgeableness and sense of responsibility, points out that we have the right to publish this document publicly. At the same time, he points out the grave political problems that exercising this abstract right could raise at the present time in Spain. However, the United Secretariat resolution insinuates exactly the opposite of what Mandel says: that the authors have no right to publish old documents if these have been partially published in internal bulletins of the Fourth. We ask: Where in the statutes does it say this? Where does it say that old polemical documents published in the internal bulletins cannot be published unless the leadership of the Fourth authorizes this?

We think that Comrade Mandel is right: Such documents can be published. Those parts that might endanger the internal security of the Fourth can be censored, but not the rest, because it is already becoming part of the history of the International. We think that as soon as a congress is over, all the documents become part of history. The comrades may have some other criterion, but they cannot impose it, because in order to do this they would have to have a statute to back up their view. Comrade Mandel has understood this very well, and therefore, he recognizes our right to publish this document. We hope that he will be consistent and vote in the United Secretariat in support of our right to do this. We will not allow any restriction

of statutory rights or any limitations of our tendency rights or the intellectual rights of leaders and members of the Fourth International.

3. The editorship of "Revista de América" and the PST's position on the Mexican elections.

Both with regard to the question of the editorship of Revista de América and the PST's position on the Mexican elections, some of you already have all the answers to these questions. You ask us this question in order to lay a trap for us. If you don't know the answers, it is only because you do not want to. All you have to do to get the answers would be to ask some fraternal questions in the United Secretariat and take it down in the minutes, or else ask the leaders of our tendency directly, to their faces. Why are you asking for a written answer? What crimes are tied up with these questions that you need an answer in writing?

For example, you have been informed orally in detail that the editor of Revista de América is Comrade Moreno, and that it is only for legal reasons that he cannot be listed as such. Aren't you satisfied with that? Do you have some doubts about the answer? If not, why are you asking again? What kind of trap do you want to lay for our tendency?

Your question about the PST's position on the Mexican elections is another example of this approach. Several comrades on the United Secretariat are fully informed about this question. Our entire tendency knows about this, as well as a large part of the IMT and the LTF. Why don't you ask this question orally in a United Secretariat meeting, and Comrade Mario will answer it with supersonic speed. Why do you put this question in writing? What kind of organizational maneuver are you carrying out against the BT to avoid political debate?

There was a meeting of the Central Committee of the PST in December 1975, at which the comrades of the Colombian Bloque Socialista were present, among others, where a resolution was adopted on this question. Comrade Mercedes of the editorial board of Revista de América and the PST International Commission was assigned to write an article that was to be published in the final issue that appeared of Revista de América. It was because of the length of the article needed to deal with the Mexican question that it was decided to put off publishing this piece until the next issue, which did not come out. Moreover, during the IEC meeting last February, in the sessions of the Mexican Commission (including Comrades Hansen, Mandel, and Moreno) it was explicitly reported in the name of our party that the official stand of the PST coincided with that of Comrade Mandel and not with that of Comrade Hansen, who thought that the position of the Mexican comrades was completely revisionist. In general, we agreed with Comrade Mandel that their position constituted an error but not a betrayal, nor was it a policy of total revisionism. Thus, it represented a tactical error within the context of a correct attempt to intervene in the electoral process and not abstain from it. This is common knowledge.

II. The Acceptance of Ricardo H.'s Letter by the United Secretariat.

In Mexico, a maneuver was plotted, and skillfully orchestrated by a leading member of the Mexican IMT, to whip up a witch-hunt against the PST and two of its members. In response to the letter the United Secretariat sent him (included here as an appendix), Comrade Moreno

took up the launching of this witch-hunt in some detail. We are not going to repeat Comrade Moreno's arguments. Instead, we will stress the formal, statutory aspect.

In the letter he sent to the United Secretariat raising charges against the PST and Comrade Moreno, Comrade Ricardo indicated that he thought his accusations were proven by a so-called letter from Capa to Greco. But this so-called letter says in so many words: "The other day, when I talked with Ricardo by telephone, I was really thrown for a loop, because they had worked out the same tactic as ours right down to the details." That is, Ricardo's tactic was exactly the same "right down to the details" as that worked out by the PST leadership or by the PST's International Commission, or by Comrade Moreno.

In accordance with the statutes, why does Comrade Moreno have to give any explanations? If there is any provision in the statutes that requires him to give an accounting, this point applies as well to Comrade Ricardo. What's wrong with this letter? You cannot raise irrelevant questions. A Bolshevik organization cannot waste any of the time needed for revolutionary work and building the party. If some irresponsible persons spend their time getting hold of correspondence between leading comrades or taping telephone conversations and sending transcripts to the United Secretariat, these persons must be selective and say whether what is involved is against the statutes, whether it goes against proletarian morality. Concretely, what is there about this letter that violates the statutes? Only once this is clarified can any relevant questions be put to Comrade Moreno, and the same questions must be put to Comrade Ricardo. Moreover, Comrade Ricardo must prove that the letter in question actually describes an intervention by the PST and actions on its part that contravene the statutes, instead of whipping up a whole witch-hunt atmosphere.

When this letter was sent on December 15, 1975, the PST's break with the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction was already public in the Fourth International. As a result, a realignment of forces was taking place, in which the tendency including Comrades Ricardo and Orestes lined up with the PST. That is, there had been a whole process in which a current of opinion had formed along tendency lines. These are the facts. Where in the statutes does it say that every step in the development of tendency or pre-tendency relationships, every step in the formation of a tendency, must be reported in detail and at the very moment it occurs to the United Secretariat and the section leadership? And in Mexico, there was no section. We want the comrades to tell us: What is wrong with what happened?

But there is a factor that makes the attitude of the United Secretariat still worse. The SWP and LTF were informed in detail by the PST, as was the leadership of the LTF comrades in Mexico, because this has been a tradition of the PST and is going to become one in the Bolshevik Tendency to maintain open and fraternal relationships, based on communist morality and good will, with all tendencies and all comrades in the Fourth International and its leadership. There are many who can testify to this, but two are particularly well qualified to do so, Comrades Ed Shaw and Horacio of the leadership of the LTF in Mexico. Nothing was hidden from these comrades. However, what is gravest about all this is that the IEC and the United Secretariat were fully informed of the general lines of what happened. Comrade Moreno pointed out openly in the United Secretariat that his party's position, as well as his own, was to fight right from the start to separate Comrade Josefina from the ranks of the Fourth International,

and that they would not rest until she was expelled. He made clear that what had happened was supported by Comrades Livio and Jean Pierre. So, why does the United Secretariat have to ask about what it already knows? Was not the United Secretariat informed that as soon as the PST and Comrade Moreno found out that Comrade Josefina had contacted the police, that is, one of our most terrible class enemies, to make inquiries about a leader of her own organization, we took the stand of fighting by any means necessary for separating her from the Fourth International. And in meetings with our pre-tendency during the International Executive Committee Plenum in February 1976, Comrade Mandel asked us to postpone the discussion on the case of Comrade Josefina, saying that we were perfectly right but that such a postponement was necessary because if this comrade was expelled, the SWP would split the International. While this might be a question of principle, that did not mean that it was pressing. We agreed that the International Executive Committee did not have to discuss it right then.

III. What Is the Objective of All This?

Your own statement in November, your letter in December, as well as your acceptance of Ricardo Hernández's maneuver, have one obvious objective -- to try to show that we are breaking away on our own, that we are factionalists and that we are violating democratic centralism, when exactly the opposite is true. Of the three tendencies existing in our International at present, the one the other tendencies know most about, the one whose internal moves, resolutions, and steps are most well known, is the Bolshevik Tendency. And this is not the result of any naiveté on our part. It is the result of a clear policy, one of maintaining an attitude of good will to the end toward the other two tendencies, toward the membership of the Fourth International, as well as toward our international leadership. We may make mistakes, but we hide nothing, we do not maneuver, we do not make secret telephone calls. We publish resolutions and letters on everything we do because we are not ashamed to show it to the entire International. There are no maneuvers, no questionable operations, no Machiavellian methods. What we want is a full political discussion and fraternal relations among all the comrades until we come to a conclusion that it is impossible to live and work together any longer inside the same organization. And it is because of this, precisely because of our good will toward the other two tendencies and toward our International leadership, because everyone is being fully informed about what we are doing -- it is because of this that the IMT (with the support or not of the LTF, we do not know) wants to take advantage of our apparent naiveté to wage a whole smear campaign against our tendency. All of this -- as we have already said -- has one clear objective -- to avoid political debate and divert the attention of the ranks. Your letter fits into this context.

IV. And If Any Doubts Remain About This, Let's Take a Look at the Actions of the United Secretariat and Comrade Mandel With Regard to the Unification in Colombia

All your resolutions are of the same type. But what gives away these factionalist maneuvers, what reveals the lack of seriousness of the United Secretariat and of the majority, are their actions in Colombia.

On October 18, 1976, the United Secretariat adopted a resolution calling for the unification of the three organizations that claim to represent the IMT and the Bloque Socialista (BS). It says: "Accord-

ingly, to aid in this process, the Bureau assigns its members, Comrades Mandel and Riel, who will soon go to Colombia, and Comrade Moreno, who is living in Colombia, to participate in the discussions and negotiations in order to facilitate them and help them along." This was signed for the United Secretariat Bureau by Riel and Julio.

In the November 13-14 meeting, the majority of the secretariat adopted the following motion, which is an obvious maneuver and drastically alters the October resolution: "Comrades Walter and Domingo, in consultation with the members of the IEC resident in Colombia, can represent the United Secretariat in discussions with the organizations in Colombia adhering to the Fourth International. The aim of these discussions is to help facilitate the process of unification under way between Espartaco, the Liga Obrera Comunista, and the Comandos Camilistas. Overall, this may involve extending the process of unification to include the Bloque Socialista and the other organizations in Colombia that support the Fourth International." Despite the hedging in its formulations, this resolution is diametrically opposite to the one adopted in October. The objective of the first resolution was to unify the four organizations. The present one has as its immediate objective the unification of Espartaco, the Liga Obrera Comunista, and the Comandos Camilistas. The October resolution says that it is the members of the United Secretariat Bureau who are to apply this line. In the November resolution, a member of the United Secretariat disappears from the picture, precisely the one who lives in Colombia, Comrade Moreno. The resolution refers to "the members of the International Executive Committee resident in Colombia" only as consultants and not as members of the commission.

This factional maneuver, as dirty as all the rest, the elimination of a member of the United Secretariat from a commission of this body, was carried through. Comrade Moreno was not consulted nor did he play any part whatever in the process of unification. The official leaderships of the three organizations adhering to the IMT consistently refused to talk to this member of the United Secretariat. For months after the resolution was adopted, Comrade Moreno continued being put off by the leaderships of the Liga Obrera Comunista, the Comandos Camilistas, and Espartaco (the official section). Graver still is the fact that he was put off by Comrade Mandel, who had meetings with these three organizations without taking Comrade Moreno along, without consulting him, without discussing the tactics of any of his actions. That is, belonging to a minority, to the BT, clearly makes you a fifth-rate activist in Comrade Mandel's eyes, and being a leader of the BT as well as of the United Secretariat makes you a tenth-rate leader, as far as he is concerned.

This is the sad truth of what happened in Colombia. None of Comrade Mandel's actions was discussed. There was never any discussion among the members of the United Secretariat to see what steps would be taken, nor was Comrade Moreno ever invited to any of the meetings in the process of unification among the three organizations of the IMT. He was only invited to the meetings that had to do with the BT or with the Bloque Socialista.

The most distressing thing is Comrade Mandel's factional cynicism. He assured the BS that they were going to demand that Comrade Moreno go to the plenums of the three IMT organizations as he had gone to the plenum of the Bloque. In front of the leadership of the BS, he said that he would not allow the other organizations not to talk to Comrade Moreno. But everything continued as before.

V. Conclusion

This attitude on the part of Comrade Mandel, these changes in the resolutions on the unification in Colombia, have the same meaning as your letters, resolutions, questions, and proposals. The intention was to smear our tendency, to maneuver against it, and to attack it. We hope, comrades of the United Secretariat, that both with respect to the negotiations in the Colombian case and your dealings with the Bolshevik Tendency that you will return to normal relations, to relations among comrades in which the majority respects the rights of a minority.

None of the foregoing remarks will be an obstacle to our answering all your questions in separate letters, in the same spirit we have always observed in our relations with leaders of the International and with the members of the other tendencies. However, one point should be made clear. We want a discussion around fundamental political points, and we will not let anyone tie us down and prevent us from exercising our rights as a tendency by byzantine discussions around petty organizational questions that can be solved fraternally by a ten-minute discussion among comrades in the same organization and the same leading body.

With orthodox Trotskyist greetings,

The leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

Letter from Capa

Egota, February 2, 1977

To the Comrades of the United Secretariat
of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

This is in response to your letter of November 21, 1976, in which you asked me several questions.

First of all, you asked me if I could confirm the authenticity of the letter from Capa to Greco dated December 15, 1975. I have no reason to doubt that it is a letter from me. In general terms, the form and style are mine. However, I cannot confirm that I actually wrote it. The precise phrasing and full authenticity of this letter could only be confirmed by consulting my files in Buenos Aires. For obvious reasons, they are not accessible. Moreover, when I received your letter, Comrade Greco had already left Columbia and I could not consult with him before his next trip here.

You also ask me if I could send you the memorandum mentioned in the letter. I cannot comply with this request because this document is also in my files in Buenos Aires. Thus, I cannot confirm its authenticity either, for the same reasons I could not do this for the letter. If the letter is authentic, the memo exists. I think that the PST leadership will soon be able to send it to you.

Furthermore, we are prepared to help the comrades obtain all the information necessary to confirm that what we said about the situation of our files is true.

Finally, you ask us if we have any comment to make about Comrade Ricardo's letter. In fact, we have some comments to make.

1. The so-called letter from Comrade Capa and the charges and contradictions in the letter from Comrade Ricardo

Underlying Comrade Ricardo's letter are a series of big lies. The comrade charges us with creating divisions, with recommending several times the expulsion of comrades from the leadership, and with recommending the expulsion of Cristina from the organization. However, his whole story is highly contradictory. Let's take a look: Who drew up the draft resolution liquidating Cristina? Capa or Ricardo? This is the nub of the question. This draft resolution is the one Ricardo chose to consult Capa about by telephone. It calls for Cristina's liquidation from the leadership, not from the party. According to the letter, the only thing Capa did was send a memorandum supporting this draft resolution. The confusion that Comrade Ricardo wants to create is this: he wants to present the draft resolution as if it was Capa's and to use the expression "liquidate Cristina" as if this meant liquidating her from the party and not from the leadership.

February 2, 1977 Capa to USec/222

There is still another grave contradiction. Does or does not Comrade Ricardo maintain that there was agreement on the draft resolution? We note that he says, no, that "This step was rejected by the majority of those in the leadership of the Tendencia Militante." According to the so-called Capa letter, there was complete agreement, "down to the details."

As can be seen, comrades, contradictions abound in what Comrade Ricardo says. My account on the other hand is perfectly consistent.

2. A clarification that explains the contradictions between Ricardo's letter and the so-called Capa letter

We would like to make another clarification, one that explains the contradictions between Ricardo's letter and the so-called Capa letter. It is the following: When Comrades Ed Shaw and Horacio of the Mexican LTF came through Buenos Aires at the beginning of 1976 before the IEC plenum, a meeting was held including foreign comrades, as well as the International Commission and the Secretariat of the PST, to discuss the whole Mexican problem. In this meeting, Comrade Capa gave a very lengthy report to the two comrades. The following clarifications are only a very brief resume of the documented explanations that were given to these comrades. The clarifications revolve around three fundamental points.

a. When Comrade Capa passed through Mexico in August or September 1975, he was put up for two days in the home of Comrade Ricardo. The first day he was there, Comrade Ricardo told him that he differed with the SWP and the PST on four fundamental points. One was that he thought the Fourth International was a mess and that we should get out of it as soon as possible. He went so far as to say that he was considering the possibility of forming a faction to break from the Fourth International, denouncing it for bureaucracy and betrayal.

Ricardo also pointed to other fundamental differences with the PST but he stressed one: The PST had overestimated the SWP. It was really a racist sect or something like that. He told a story about a so-called maneuver by which the SWP leadership and its agent Cristina had gotten him to go to New York. There, a lot of friction developed between him and these comrades because of their racist methods. They persecuted him and did not treat him fraternally. As a result of this situation, Cristina, who was an agent of the SWP, took a series of measures against him that involved removing him from the leadership and taking him off the party staff on his return from the U.S. Comrade Ricardo said that he was going to put up a fight against Cristina's bureaucratic methods, and that if the comrades who sympathized with the PST came to an agreement with him, he thought it would be possible to get a comfortable majority and liquidate Cristina.

Confronted with these proposals, I told him that we did not make any unprincipled agreements and that we disagreed totally with his violent attacks on the SWP and the Fourth International, and with chauvinistic methods, which we thought could not lead anywhere.

February 2, 1977 Capa to USec/333

We told him that the only point we could agree with him on was the one about one of the so-called bureaucratic measures by Comrade Cristina. This, was, concretely, that by taking advantage of his absence from the country on a party assignment she had removed him from the party staff, condemning him to perish from hunger. We told him that except for this one point of agreement, we would wage a fierce fight against him on everything else.

We rejected the four points he raised, especially the one concerning the international. We told him that there might be serious differences between the SWP and us as regards the orientation of work and organizational forms. We said that we were more and more strongly opposed to generalizing the branch form of organization for the entire Trotskyist movement. We thought that the proper organizational form was cells and that there were profound reasons for this. We told him that in fact we had quotations from Trotsky giving a political explanation of the need for this form of organization. We also mentioned the question of going to the workers movement and the need for leaderships that have gone through real experience in struggle, and not propagandist, intellectual leaderships. We also told him that we had raised these criticisms of the SWP in a fraternal way in the first meeting we had with the SWP National Committee.

The next day, Comrade Ricardo told me that he had been thinking over the sharp criticisms I had made of him, and that he was convinced on three of the points in question but that he had reservations about--or more concretely, did not agree--on one. In contrast to my view, he thought that the SWP was a party hopelessly lost to the revolution. He agreed that there was no other solution than to be part of the Fourth, and that he had been wrong to take the chauvinist and nationalistic standpoint he did, provoked by the mess made by the other tendencies. He agreed with the PST on the organizational question and proposed forming a tendency against the SWP based on the differences over Portugal and the organizational question. He called a meeting for that night with a group of comrades from the leadership to declare this publicly. He said that if we accepted this principled agreement, he would win the majority. I told him that I myself could not agree to anything, that they could hold this meeting and I would go to listen and offer my fraternal opinion. The only thing I told him was that I was going to be blamed for his fight against Cristina, that this was long since predetermined because there was a mania for blaming us for all the struggles that arose, and that I would leave Mexico the night before the big brawl got underway, since I did not want to have anything to do with it, and I would only give my opinion.

At noon that day I had a meeting with Comrade Cristina. Her attitude was impeccable. She did not make any violent or factional attack on Comrade Ricardo. She explained to me the political problems she thought there were with him. She pointed out that she thought he might be showing an increasing tendency to opportunism.

That night I had a meeting, which was also attended by Comrade Greco, with a group of five or six major leaders of the Liga. The meeting was called by Comrade Ricardo. He said that he agreed with

February 2, 1977 Capa to USec/444

us on three points, although he did not agree with the very high estimation we had of the SWF and Comrade Cristina. And this was what led him to invite the PST to enter into a principled agreement that would go beyond the fight for his reinstatement on the party staff. He also said that he thought that if such a principled agreement could be reached on the question of the leadership and all the problems, he could easily win the majority in the Liga Socialista. I told him that the PST had not defined an international orientation and that therefore, for the moment, I was not accepting his invitation.

The Mexican comrades were coming to an agreement, after an intense discussion. Ricardo said then that he was absolutely sure of winning the majority and that he was going to liquidate that "bitch," as he called Comrade Cristina.

In response to this statement, I told him (and I was strongly supported by Comrade Greco and the other comrades present) that we were not engaging in any maneuvers against anybody. I said that we thought that Comrade Cristina was the most capable person in the Mexican leadership (including Ricardo), despite the friction there had been between us. Comrade Greco said, moreover, that she was a very loyal comrade who acted very correctly, and that she had not persecuted him in any way. Quite the contrary. She was the most capable person in Mexico, and should certainly continue in the leadership. This point of view was shared by all the comrades and they told him that they disagreed completely with his intention of persecuting the comrade. In fact, she should be pushed forward, since she was the best leader in Mexico.

In the face of this universal opinion, Comrade Ricardo kept silent. He did not even say anything when Comrade Greco sharply attacked the bureaucratic and factionalist methods Comrade Ricardo might use against Cristina, pointing out in contrast, the fraternal methods she used.

b. Later we got information--I think it was a brief telephone report, followed up by a letter from Comrade Greco--that the big brawl had started after my departure, when it was learned from confidential reports of a comrade that Comrade Cristina was waging a campaign against Comrade Ricardo, claiming that he was a police agent. Cristina said that a high SWF leader had told her this in New York, and that she had been able to confirm it through contact with the police themselves. These are the general lines of the report we received. Needless to say, it left us devastated. In his report, Comrade Greco stressed that he had broken off all relations with Cristina because of these methods, that he had been educated in our party and that there such an attitude was not permitted, not even at a rank-and-file level.

As soon as we found out about this, both the PST leadership and I personally began a fierce campaign to get the comrade out of the Liga Socialista. We raised a hue and cry that she should be expelled immediately and publicly, that she could not remain a moment longer in the ranks of the international. In our view, Cristina had crossed the class line on a moral question, because that is what it amounts to when a leader contacts the police without informing

February 2, 1977 Capa to USec/555

the party leadership and acting against a member of the party.

We told this emphatically to Comrades Ed Shaw and Horacio. We also told them that the Mexican comrades acted in a way that was completely and absolutely out of line with what we advised them to do, which was to inform the entire party from the beginning, to hide nothing from the party, and to expel her immediately, of course, without saying that the comrade was an informer or a traitor.

Nonetheless, everything about what we did was always clear. We told Ricardo, when he consulted us, that as soon as the opportunity presented itself, we would make public our disagreement with him on this point. For this reason, we informed Ed Shaw and Horacio in detail about our position and our differences with Ricardo. We expressed our differences again in the February 1976 United Secretariat meeting, where we pointed out that we would not rest until we got Cristina expelled, because this is a question of principle for us. And we were supported in this by Comrades Jean Pierre and Livio.

The tactic followed by Ricardo and the other Mexican comrades was different. They thought nothing should be said to the ranks of the party because this would obstruct the political and organizational discussion. They thought this question should be used to remove her from the leadership and from the International Executive Committee but not to expel her from the party and the international.

There was one point on which we did agree. There was a final agreement after all the disagreements already mentioned. This was that at some point on the agenda of the congress, the "lid had to be taken off," the ranks had to be informed of this problem. We agreed on proposing that the international form a control commission to try the comrade. I repeat, this was a final agreement we reached, after we failed in repeated attempts to get the comrades to adopt a more principled policy on this question--that is to inform the party immediately and expel her without any "ifs," "ands," or "buts."

c. Finally, there was another point on which we disagreed with the Mexican comrades, and we explained this to Comrades Ed Shaw and Horacio. We expressed our opposition to removing Comrade Cristina from the IEC, even though the statutes permit such a measure. We thought that the statute in question should be changed, and we were going to vote in accordance with our standpoint on this. We believed that a comrade elected as an individual to a position in a region, section, or in the IEC itself could not be removed from this post except for overriding reasons such as death, imprisonment, etc., and for no other cause. That is, if the comrade remained in the international, she could not be removed from the IEC, since she was elected to this position as an individual. The proper procedure, therefore, was not to expel her from the IEC, as the Mexican comrades proposed. As we saw it, the way to proceed was to expel her from the Mexican organization of the international, and then she would automatically be expelled from the IEC. As long as she had not been expelled and the Mexican comrades continued to think she should not be expelled, she should remain a member of the IEC.

February 2, Capa to USec/666

Another point we made clear to Comrades Shaw and Horacio was that if she was expelled tomorrow, we would not let her be anathematized. Our characterization would still be the same: she was a very capable comrade, but she had a problem with her nerves, and that was dangerous. Because of the threat posed by her nervous problem, she could not be a member or leader. So, she should be separated from the international for two or three years. But ties should be maintained with her that would facilitate her rejoining on a new basis, with the objective of bringing her back into the movement on a serious Bolshevick basis.

To the best of my recollection, this is all I have to report. The files and time will determine who is right.

In closing, I would like to caution the comrades. Having a majority does not mean that they have a clear field for arbitrary action. I will not keep on giving reports unless I know why I am being asked to do so.

Orthodox Trotskyist greetings,

s/Capa