

International Information Bulletin

**Discussion on Europe
(1968-1971)**

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DRAFT RESOLUTION ON OUR TACTICS IN EUROPE

[The following draft resolution was prepared by the United Secretariat as part of the discussion for the Ninth World Congress. Owing to lack of time, it was not taken up at the congress, but was held over for further discussion.]

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(1) The turn during the year 1968 first of all marked the end of the period of relative political stability that prevailed in Europe for the past twenty years. The first consequence of this is that from here on out the world revolution will advance not only in the areas of the colonial revolution as in the past period but also in the advanced capitalist countries and in the workers states.

(2) This turn, determined by the maturing of the contradictions of "neo-capitalism," was helped along by a new phenomenon of prime importance in the advanced capitalist states, particularly in Europe -- the appearance to the left of the old Socialist and Communist parties of a revolutionary vanguard composed by and large of youth (university and high-school students and workers) who reject the politics and leadership of the old formations. The causes of this phenomenon have been taken up by our movement, along with an analysis of the new vanguard, in a document on the radicalization of the youth prepared in particular for the World Congress.

This vanguard is still a small minority in comparison to the workers movement as a whole and its social composition is still not very proletarian. Nonetheless, it is larger than the old groups (the "splinter groups"), and because its particular base is in the universities and high schools, where the student bodies are rapidly expanding, it has become an appreciable factor in the poli-

tical arena in most of the countries of Europe. In this vanguard, to a degree varying from country to country, the Trotskyist movement already wields influence, or is able to intervene, or has possibilities of growth and action such as it never had before.

(3) These new conditions have thus created new problems in the field of building revolutionary parties. Since 1966, several sections, coming under the impact of this turn which first appeared among the movements opposed to the war in Vietnam, were led to alter their tactics in this field. The IEC plenum in January 1967 began to debate it. In practice the entryist tactic was given up more and more and the sections are now trying to redetermine their orientation in the building of a revolutionary party, taking into account the new circumstances and their current experiences.

It is thus necessary to again take up the question of building a revolutionary party, of drawing the lessons of the former entryist tactic, and of determining the main lines of our tactics in light of the general perspective of the struggles in Europe and the new relations among the political currents in the workers movement.

(4) It is necessary to examine the entryist tactic in retrospect, not only because it can provide us with lessons for the new tactic to be followed, but also because it is at present the main target of criticisms directed against our movement by all kinds of currents in the new vanguard. They avoid attacking our program, our analyses, our slogans; they single out essentially organizational questions in their criticisms, among them being the question of the Leninist-type party, the International, and, more

specifically, entryism at the very moment when, as everybody knows, we are giving up this tactic. Thus we must explain the reason for these attacks and the future implications they may have in building the party.

We will thus examine: (a) entryism, the reasons for it, how it was applied, and its results; (b) revolutionary perspectives in Europe and the problems they raise with regard to party building; (c) the main lines of the tactic to be followed in the coming period.

(5) In the question of building a revolutionary-Marxist mass party, we begin with the fundamental idea that if the party is an essential and, at a certain moment, decisive factor in the class struggle, this is above all because it itself is a product of the class struggle. The party is the political vanguard of the class, arising out of it not by a purely propagandistic and ideological development, but through its experiences. In other words, if a group, whether small or large, begins on the basis of a revolutionary-Marxist program, a party cannot be formed solely or mainly through individual recruitment to the revolutionary organization when it has not yet been recognized by the class. At all times the problem of individual recruitment is posed, but the formation of a party capable of leading mass struggles is almost inconceivable except through political operations -- fusions, splits, regroupments, etc., -- tied in with the big stages of the class struggle in a given country.

Entryism

(6) Let us summarize the history of entryism in our movement.

Before the war, when it was advocated for the first time in 1934 by Trotsky himself, entryism consisted of penetrating for a short time certain Social-

ist parties at a time when tendencies within them were evolving toward the left. To maintain at any cost, at all times, a single independent organization cannot thus be ascribed to Trotsky, who at the time referred to previous positions taken in the classics of Marxism.

The extension of entryism, converting it into a longer term tactic, took place after the war. From the end of the war, the International advocated it for the British Trotskyists, citing substantially in its favor the features characteristic of the British labor movement, among other things the link between the Labour party and the trade unions and the British working class. When this tactic was advocated, the Fourth International as a whole, especially its sections on the European continent, which had emerged from the war numerically strengthened, were oriented toward directly building mass Trotskyist parties through independent activity. It was following the Third World Congress (1951) that entryism was adopted as a more general tactic in Western Europe, owing to a new situation in which the European sections faced a period of stagnation and retreat for various reasons linked to the outbreak of the "cold war," etc.... In the debates of the time conjunctural factors were more particularly cited (a perspective of economic crisis and world war within a relatively short period, a crisis of Stalinism which for quite a long period would not take the form of explosions and splits within the parties, but of the decomposition of monolithism). During the period in which this tactic was applied, structural factors were emphasized. (See L. Maitan's pamphlet, "Rapports entre l'avant-garde communiste et le mouvement des masses" [Relationships between the Communist Vanguard and the Mass Movement].)

(7) The citing of conjunctural fac-

tors proved some time later to have been in error, the economic perspective turning out to be completely the reverse and giving way to a prolonged favorable cycle, the danger of war was postponed. On the other hand the crisis of Stalinism developed considerably faster than had been visualized and it developed in the main along the lines foreseen, that is, through the destruction of monolithism and the appearance of divergent currents within the Communist parties, with few or minimal splits.

The economic cycle that took place was as a whole unfavorable to the massive development of left currents in the old parties. Nonetheless in several countries such currents did form, but owing to the existing conditions on the one hand and the weakness of the revolutionary Marxists on the other hand, large splits were rare. Finally, the weight of the objective situation gained the upper hand and led to a very pronounced shift to the right among the traditional parties and also among the leaders of the left currents. Because of this, in several mass parties, instead of large splits we saw a marginal crumbling or limited splits.

(8) Taking everything into account, despite the error committed with respect to the conjuncture in 1952-53, it was not possible at the time to project any other tactic than entryism. This tactic was justified at the time. Those who stuck to strictly independent activity did not succeed at all in developing numerically during that period. If from the beginning, we had had a perspective of prolonged economic prosperity, with the enormous difficulties which that entailed for our movement, we would have still followed an entryist tactic. But it is certain that in applying the tactic, certain particular forms of work would have been conducted differently.

Finally, when entryist work, begin-

ning in 1963-64, proved unproductive, if our organizations -- while seeking an appropriate milieu of work -- did not raise the question of giving up this tactic, it was because practically no other general tactic was available to take its place.

(9) Despite the completely unexpected conditions, which were very unfavorable for revolutionary Marxism, the entryist tactic is far from having been a failure. On the numerical level, several sections were able to strengthen themselves through it (Belgium, Italy...). It favored propagating Trotskyist ideas within the official organizations, and thus forming young cadres within them. It was above all on the political level that considerable gains were made through entryism. Our members and our sections acquired, thanks to it, an extremely comprehensive understanding of the internal political life of the big working-class organizations, of the nature and the appearance of currents, of their possible development, of possibilities of acting on them. This is a gain extremely difficult to obtain outside of these organizations, and without it the road is opened wider to sectarianism toward the labor movement as it is. This danger threatened our movement for a long time owing to the conditions under which it was formed. It developed to a high degree in organizations like the OCI and the SLL as has been seen during the period of political upsurge.

(10) The first signs of radicalization affecting the youth appeared in the youth organizations of the traditional parties (particularly Germany, Italy, France); but the differentiations within these organizations rapidly led to splits. It was the flexible application of the entryist tactic in France in the UEC that enabled the French section to build the JCR at a given moment.

(11) We must defend the entryist tactic not only for the indicated reasons,

having to do with the past, but also for reasons related to the conditions of building the revolutionary party of the future.

The motives of most of those who criticize the entryist tactic today, and who without doubt exercise pressure even among those who have recently joined our movement, derive from a poor, and sometimes lack of, understanding of the labor movement as it is, of the roles the old organizations play in it, and of the problems of building a revolutionary party. They generally see this question in an ideologically abstract way and not in the light of the development of the class struggle. Such tendencies are nurtured by the social composition of the vanguard today in view of the ideological decomposition of the old organizations. This composition nurtures ultraleftism which is fed by the betrayal of the old parties, as was the case during the first years of the Communist International. These currents advance abstract concepts concerning the relationship between the vanguard, the members of mass parties and the unions, the leaderships of these organizations and the class as a whole. Explanation and defense of the entryist tactic are important not only for the past but for the future, which cannot consist of the indispensable work of recruitment alone to our organizations as they are at present, but will inevitably entail a whole series of political operations. One cannot foresee precisely what these operations will involve, but it is certain that they will be on the agenda, and it is necessary to teach our sections and our members that the future will demand of them an organizational flexibility at least equal to that displayed in the entryist tactic.

The inclination of some people today to condemn entryism will perhaps not prevent them from participating in the

big class struggles, but it will certainly render them incapable of constructing a mass revolutionary party.

The Perspectives for Europe

(12) With May 1968, a new period opened up, characterized among other things by a world crisis of the capitalist system and by a political awakening of the European working-class movement. Prerevolutionary situations have already appeared in certain countries, for example Italy, and a political and social crisis is ripening in Spain. European capitalism will undergo a succession of crises, one feeding another, jumping from one country to the next, and rebounding in the countries already affected. It will be in the course of these crises in particular and the "fallout" from them that the building of revolutionary parties can progress, not by gradual evolution, but by leaps corresponding to the advance of political consciousness among the masses and their vanguard.

In a general way, owing to the current state of political organization of the working-class movement, and in particular, the considerable weight of the treacherous leaderships, capitalism manages to get out of the end results of its political developments and crises. But capitalism today is less than ever a homogeneous entity; to the contrary, a tremendous crisis in leadership exists in most of the capitalist states which will not be easily resolved. For a period at least, it will deepen under the impact of large working-class thrusts. Thus in the coming years there will be a race between the building of revolutionary parties and the efforts of the bourgeoisie to find the forces and the leaderships capable of containing and defeating the revolutionary rise of the masses. We are witnessing only the first battles, including those of considerable scope as in France in May.

As a base, the perspective must be taken of relations between capital and labor becoming worse, of broad, hard-fought battles in the course of which the masses will undergo deeper and deeper experiences with the old leaderships whose policies will be subjected to growing criticism even within their own organizations. These criticisms will be all the stronger from now on since it is possible in practice to a certain degree to advance against reformist policies, policies that are revolutionary in method and objectives.

The contradictions of "neocapitalism" have ripened as yet in only a limited way in the economic field. In addition, political factors may provoke especially important developments for all of Europe. Among them, two should be noted in particular. First the development of the situation in Spain. The Franco regime is highly eroded and Spanish capitalism proved incapable in the preceding years, that is, while Europe was suffering the greatest political apathy, of replacing this worn-out regime with a new government that could associate Spanish capitalism in a better way with the rest of Western Europe. It will be much more difficult to carry out this operation under the new political conditions in Europe; Franco was already compelled to resort to a state of emergency as a preventive measure, immediately arousing powerful resistance among the workers.

The other factor is the international crisis of Stalinism, the ups and downs of which can be completely unexpected. The intervention of the Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia is an expression not of the strength but the fear of the governments of the workers states in face of the rising aspirations of the population. Up to now the international crisis of Stalinism has been of greater advantage to the rightist currents within the Communist parties, while the left-wing currents have

developed only outside of these formations among the youth. But when this deepening crisis reaches not only, or not mainly, the intellectual layers of these parties, or the members of the apparatus, but also and especially the working-class base, then much bigger opportunities will open for the left currents, and this is without going into the tendency of the developments that will occur in the workers states.

These two factors, Spain and the international crisis of Stalinism, have all the more importance in view of the fact that the evolution of the European working-class movement following the first world war was profoundly affected precisely by what happened at the two extremities of Europe -- the degeneration of the Soviet Union and the defeat of the Spanish revolution.

(13) Nothing would be more dangerous than to extrapolate the resistance presented by the French CP in May 1968, for example, and thereby conclude that the Communist parties, including the French CP, will not undergo any grave crises in the future. To the contrary, everything within the French CP shows that now, particularly as a result of May 1968 and the Czechoslovak affair, conditions have appeared for the first time favorable to the eruption of serious crises. This party -- the most rigid of all the CPs -- reached the peak of its authority over the working class following the war; since then it has been affected by several crises that nevertheless only touched its peripheral layers (partisans, intellectuals, students), while its working-class base, although uneasy -- particularly over "de-Stalinization" -- remained profoundly attached not only to the party but also to the leadership and to the Soviet Union. But May 1968 and the Czechoslovak affair damaged the authority of both, including in the working-class base

of the French CP.

The example of the Italian CP likewise shows that the mass movement in the country, along with the Czechoslovak affair, gave rise if not to a serious crisis, then at least to differentiations.

The continued strength of the old leadership is due much less to any confidence felt in it by the rank-and-file militants than to the absence, under present conditions, of a promising alternative leadership. The leadership of the French CP, moreover, just recently (l'Humanité, February 5) displayed its fear over the formation to the left of a political organization enjoying a certain audience and having a certain capacity for action.

(14) Despite the fact that the extremely pronounced rightward shift of the Socialist parties has not provoked any serious crises in past years, it would be equally erroneous to conclude from this that the radicalization of the masses, where these parties are based in the working class, will not affect them.

In several countries already, a certain opposition to the policies of these Social Democratic parties has been expressed among the unions they control, including top bureaucrats, who for specific reasons of their own seek to defend their positions within given limits. But such a situation will not fail to find expression on a broad union level. In this connection, the case of the British Labour party is of exceptional importance both for the situation inside the country itself and for the possible repercussions it could have among the other socialist parties. At present the situation is the reverse of the one that traditionally existed in the British labor movement. In the past the leadership of the party based itself on right-wing union leaderships against the currents of the left whose strength was based in the local constitu-

encies of the party; at present the leadership of the party is running into opposition to its economic policies from the leaderships of the strongest union organizations. The present situation can have a positive outcome only if the opposition go beyond the purely economic and trade-union level and carry their struggle to a general level in order to bring about a change in policy and leaders.

(15) Our party-building tactic should be based on the perspective of big struggles, starting from the present reality, precisely in order to create to the left of the old organizations a political force capable of attracting toward it the revolutionary forces that will surge up in such struggles, more particularly within the old formations.

In general, the European sections in orienting themselves in the question of building mass revolutionary parties, should free themselves first of all of any routinist attitude, prepare themselves for sudden turns in the situation, the outbreak of crises passing from one country to another, crisis situations developing very rapidly, intermixed with periods of relative calm, during which new critical developments will mature.

Under these conditions, it is impossible to determine a general tactic for all countries, valid under all circumstances. It is evident that the case of the British Labour party, so strongly linked to the trade-union movement, cannot be compared to that of a mass Communist party which also bears the weight of the international crisis of Stalinism, or that of a Social Democratic party like the Socialist party of Germany. One can only determine the broad lines serving to guide our sections.

The Building of Revolutionary Parties in the New Situation in Europe

(16) It is necessary to openly re-

nounce the entryist tactic as it was established in the years 1952-53 and which was based on the two following elements, among other things, that are now outdated:

(a) The extreme weakness of the vanguard that stood to the left of the traditional parties, a weakness that prevented it from being a factor on the political scene.

(b) Because of this weakness, the main orientation aimed at preparing and aiding the formation of oppositional currents within the old parties that would develop toward the left.

In view of the fact that broad layers of the youth have developed to the left outside of the old working-class parties, it is imperative to orient ourselves, at least for the immediate future, on independent work which will enable us to win to the program of the Fourth International a considerable sector of this new vanguard and to organize it into sections or into revolutionary youth organizations. It would be literally criminal to ignore this vanguard and to let it become politically and organizationally dissipated while waiting for broader layers of the working class to start moving.

Our sections should thus take as their fundamental orientation in the immediate future the reinforcement of the organizations adhering to the program of the Fourth International, whether as sections as such, youth organizations, or more generally a combination of the two.

(17) In the document on the radicalization of the youth, we will return to the strengths and weaknesses of this new vanguard. It is evident that in this vanguard the main present danger, owing to its lack of experience and its social composition, is to be found in the ultra-left currents.

One of the first conditions for an effective struggle against such currents,

and more particularly against their reflection in our own ranks, is to turn very resolutely toward the broadest possible independent action to publicize the revolutionary-Marxist program, and to undertake public actions, within reach of the vanguard forces as they are now constituted, that can provide an example for the masses without isolating the vanguard from them as is so often the case with ultraleft currents. The struggle against these currents above all cannot be conducted on a purely propagandistic level, although this aspect must in no way be neglected.

The struggle against the ultraleft currents must be particularly vigorous in connection with the unions. It is necessary to conduct a merciless struggle against any tendency to withdraw from the unions and to substitute for them formations that at times can play a very important role in periods of very sharp crisis but which can never assume a permanent role of defending the daily interests of the working class.

(18) We particularly stress the need for political and organizational strengthening of the organizations based on the program of the Fourth International. In numerous cases it will specially involve cases of youth not formally affiliated to the Fourth International for reasons indicated in the document on the radicalization of the youth. On the other hand, we are opposed in principle to the creation of intermediary organizations, on incomplete or blurred programs, in a word, centrist. By their nature, such organizations tend to freeze the evolution of militants and to block their way to revolutionary Marxism and the Fourth International.

Under present conditions, such organizations can be neither large in size nor be preponderantly worker in composition. Also, we never take the initia-

tive in creating such organizations. When one is constituted, we must study with special care ways of intervening in order to avoid crystallizing a centrist formation that would only be detrimental to the further evolution of its members. Further on, we will take up the possibility of centrist formations appearing in consequence of the crisis in the old parties. In certain countries, local groups form for specific actions; these groups, which are not organized on a national scale, are generally centrist in character. An active attitude toward such groups is obviously necessary not only to carry out local objectives but to enable the members of these groups to develop politically toward revolutionary Marxism.

(19) The necessity to orient toward strengthening organizations that defend the program of the Fourth International in an independent way, does not at all signify abandoning work on and even in the traditional parties. As we have indicated above, revolutionary crises of society that do not affect the organizations containing the bulk of the working class are inconceivable, particularly the rank-and-file militants of those parties in the unions, who are behind the day-to-day struggle in the factories. It is impossible to think that the working class in its broad mass will become radicalized independently of these militants and that the latter are impervious to this radicalization.

One of the big differences between the present period and the one in which our movement adopted entryism is that it was legitimate to think at that time that the forces of the future revolutionary party would still be found in an overwhelming proportion inside the old parties. Today, because of the important possibilities of organizing youth, and with them militants who have left the old parties over the years, the proportion of

revolutionary forces that will emerge from these parties in the course of crises will be less. It is out of the question to establish the relative proportions today; moreover, they are not predetermined, but depend on the actions undertaken by the vanguard as it now stands.

In any case, this new fact, of primary importance, of a radicalization of the youth occurring largely outside the old parties and against them, must not lead to erroneous conclusions as to the possibility of building a revolutionary-Marxist mass party based essentially on the youth on the one hand, and on the other of unorganized workers lacking any experience as militants. The current features have not destroyed the continuity of the working-class movement.

(20) The tactic to be followed approximates, to a certain degree, that of a minority revolutionary formation seeking to conquer the majority of the working class to its revolutionary policies. In the old formations, it is no longer entryist work with a more or less long-term perspective, but rather fraction work. But numerous differences exist in comparison with the conditions that faced most of the Communist parties in the first years of the Communist International. Our movement is still very weak numerically; the Stalinists, and to a lesser, but not negligible, degree, the Social Democrats do not want to recognize our right to existence in the labor movement, especially in the form of tendency rights in mass organizations of the workers like the unions;* the composition of the vanguard from the standpoint of both age and sociology situates them at the periphery of the working-class movement as a whole,

* In many cases, the Social Democrats have the satisfaction of seeing the Stalinists do the dirty work against our movement and the revolutionary vanguard in general, which enables them to appear democratic on the cheap.

thereby facing them with considerable difficulties in penetrating and rooting themselves in it. They are not supported by any of the material forces at the base of the workers states.

Also, while placing the essential emphasis on our activities in the current period on considerably strengthening our organizations acting in an independent way, with considerably expanded means of expression, we must nevertheless pay attention to work in the mass organizations.

Among the main objectives of our organizations is to deepen the crisis in the Communist and Socialist parties. Under the new conditions, this criticism can be made from the outside, not solely on an ideological level as in the past, but also, in certain fields, having a certain mass dimension, in contrast to reformist actions or mere pressure. This difference began to emerge in some scope during the struggle for the defense of the Vietnamese revolution -- and made it possible to distinguish actions for "peace" and negotiations from actions for the victory of Vietnam. Such actions should be sought in a more systematic way from here on out in fields where it is possible to undertake them.

(21) The question of working within the old formations must likewise be completely reexamined. Under present conditions, it is not possible to elaborate a general orientation applicable to all countries, but it is possible to formulate several broad lines. In applying these, each of our sections must seek to determine with precision its particular tactics in this field.

First of all there is the case of militant workers performing union tasks on a shop-floor level where they work. Whether the union is controlled by the Stalinists or the Social Democrats, in general they cannot continue in such functions unless they hold formal membership

in the old parties. This is generally the case in France in the CGT (in certain cases a PSU card offers a certain immunity) and in Germany in the DGB. It would obviously be absurd to play into the hands of the treacherous leaders and abandon responsibilities resulting from the confidence of the workers, whether because they do not at this time understand the political attitude of our comrades, or because, while understanding it, they are not inclined or able to conduct a fight to defend them. In such cases possession of a membership card in one of the old parties is above all a formal matter. But such a situation must in no case be considered sacrosanct; we should try to change it in order to gain recognition of the right of tendencies in the unions. This is not only a struggle for a formal democratic right, but also a struggle for the transformation, in the workers movement in general, of certain factories into revolutionary strongholds. This could be of great importance in getting our trade-union policies known in opposition to those of the traitorous leaderships, and could become of capital importance in periods of very big struggles such as general strikes, etc. We should constantly examine the possibilities of making the union bureaucracy retreat and obtaining tendency rights in the unions. It would be altogether illusory to think that in the European countries our movement could develop in the working class without gaining recognition for this right inside the unions. It is particularly because of this that we must conduct a relentless struggle against the ultraleft tendencies which try to ignore the union organizations and who offer in their place organizations that are frequently improvised and that do not correspond to the daily needs of the workers, needs that do not disappear in a period like the one Europe has entered.

Being based on the development of

leftward moving currents inside the old organizations, the entryist tactic was viewed essentially as a long-term action. From this standpoint, our members sought to avoid being too much in the forefront, to avoid being expelled prematurely, and distinguished themselves relatively little from the more critical elements who genuinely belonged to these formations.

These left currents -- as was mentioned above -- did not undergo any real mass development. Their old-time leaders were caught up in the general shift to the right of these parties, so that the stage of radicalization we are experiencing at present -- and which naturally affected the youth -- did not pass through these parties. In the future stages when the radicalization reaches the broadest layers of the working class in an intense way, it will affect the old parties. Or will there be only a crumbling and limited breakaways? Will these split-offs move directly toward the revolutionary-Marxist groups or will they give birth to temporary centrist formations? It is not possible to give a reply at present to these questions -- the reply depends on different factors that will appear in the course of events and also as a result of the struggle that we put up. As to the question of relatively long-term perspectives, our organizations must be extremely attentive to the developments that occur and be ready, in case of openings, for tactical operations, taking into account the capacity and cohesion of the organization. But for the immediate future, the essential task within the old parties is to work to strengthen the organization acting directly for the revolutionary-Marxist program as quickly as possible, not only among the youth but also as much as possible among the older workers.

In the former entryist tactic, we determined our activity in the first place in the light of the internal dynam-

ics of the old parties, which obviously reflected in an indirect way the political developments in the working class. At present, the activity which we can carry on in the old parties is determined in the first place by the dialectics of the class struggle, which, in given periods, can provoke processes of radicalization outside the old parties and capable of inducing internal differentiations in them from the outside.

This orientation is imperative where militants or groups of militants in the youth organizations of the traditional parties still exist; we must aim at reducing these formations to their most simple expression for the benefit of the revolutionary youth organizations. In these areas, the turn must be carried out rapidly and vigorously, the only considerations that can be taken into account being those pertaining to inducing the biggest split possible inside these organizations. Experience has shown in many instances that the difficulty consists in knowing where the dividing line will occur and of determining the correct time and size of the split. It must be understood that the maximum is not necessarily the optimum and that a noticeable strengthening of the organization of the revolutionary youth is an indispensable means for later exacerbating the crisis within the traditional organizations.

But will this give rise to important left currents and to massive splits from the old parties?

In the adult organizations, we must no longer orient ourselves according to the perspective of a slow and patient formation of a broad left current, but on the contrary seek to aggravate the crises, without being afraid of being expelled, the only consideration being to avoid isolated expulsions without any political benefit.

The Struggle in the Vanguard

(22) In building the revolutionary party, in addition to work in the direction of the mass organizations of the working class, problems are posed by the existence of other organizations and vanguard currents in certain countries, including organizations in certain countries that claim to be Trotskyist. In this field, too, it is impossible to determine a line that is valid for all countries in view of the very different conditions to be found from one country to the next. Moreover, these conditions can sometimes change very rapidly even in the same country.

With regard to organizations claiming to adhere to Trotskyism, the question of the unity of the movement within the framework of the International must be put to the fore by us but not in an abstract way. In some cases it seems almost completely impossible, while in other cases it seems very difficult under present conditions. We cannot maintain a frozen position in this field either, for events will contribute to assuring regroupments or, contrariwise, divisions leaving behind the generally disputed questions. The struggle for the unity of the Trotskyist movement should not be underestimated; around the movement there are many valuable militants, who have been attracted by the ideas of Trotskyism but who have drawn back because of the divisions in our movement, and who have reached negative conclusions concerning our organizational capacities.

With regard to vanguard organizations holding other concepts than those of our movement, in addition to an indispensable ideological struggle of the most rigorous kind, a struggle must be opened on the capacities of the vanguard to mobilize and engage in action.

The struggle within the vanguard must not be underestimated in relation to

action within the working class because of the numbers involved. The problem of penetrating broad layers of the working class begins with the winning of the narrower layers of the militants and we must win them in a struggle against the ultra-left or centrist currents. The more we can strengthen and extend our positions in the present vanguard, the easier this work will become.

* * *

(23) To sum up, as a result of a turn in the objective situation, we must proceed to a turn in tactics in building a mass revolutionary-Marxist party. We are moving, so to speak, from a war of position to a war of movement. We give up the entryist tactic as it was practiced, beginning in 1952-53. We are now engaged in a tactic aimed at strengthening as much as circumstances will permit, the independent revolutionary-Marxist organizations, adult or youth. This task has the highest priority by far. Nevertheless, we continue to pay attention to the traditional reformist and Stalinist organizations. We must be careful not to sacrifice uselessly, through a mechanical application of our new tactic, the positions won within the ranks of the trade-union organizations and the existing possibilities of fraction work. In the old parties -- whether it concerns the militants already there or who can be won there as the crisis develops -- we do not orient at present in accordance with the perspective of the formation of left currents but with the perspective of exacerbating the crisis. Nevertheless, we must carefully follow the developments that can occur in the old parties in consequence of transformations of the objective situation and be ready each time to reexamine what may be required in solving the party-building problem as a result of these transformations. Finally, the struggle for the supremacy of our ideas and our organizations within the vanguard must in no way be minimized.

REPORT ON TACTICS IN EUROPE

By Pierre Frank

[The following is the outline prepared by Comrade Frank for his report on the "Draft Resolution on our Tactics in Europe" at the Third World Congress Since the Reunification (Ninth World Congress). This resolution is contained in International Information Bulletin No. 7 (May 1969). The congress did not reach this point on the agenda and so it was agreed to continue the discussion on the resolution after the congress, with a conference of the European sections to be held later in the year empowered to act on the question.]

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The discussion we are now taking up on tactics in Europe opened more than two years ago in the European sections. In January 1968 the International Executive Committee also examined this question. This discussion was raised owing to changes in the objective and subjective situation. We have reached a point where this discussion has already cleared up not a few points, where it can be based on sufficiently complete experiences, where it can assume a more general character. The document which we are submitting reached the delegates late. For this reason, but also and above all because the discussion must deeply involve all the sections and especially those most concerned, the United Secretariat has decided to propose that this document not be adopted definitively but be voted on as a basis for discussion, a discussion that will last for several months more and be concluded at a future IEC plenum with expanded participation by the European sections.

I will review only a few points of the document submitted for discussion. I would add that it was inspired as much as possible by experiences we have already undergone and, especially by the experience in France. By the force of events, this experience went the furthest and was the richest in lessons, although of course there is no question of interpreting and applying it mechanically. First a word on the situation created by the new mass upsurge in Europe. It included a new key feature -- it is not only anti-capitalist but for the first time it has an antibureaucratic element as a result of a sufficiently massive antibureaucratic minority current existing within it. Secondly, not to repeat the previous debates at this congress, we will not counterpose building the party to the ways and means of struggle. Both must be developed. A party is necessary but also means for struggle. The present discussion centers on the question of building the party as the political leadership of

the class.

To begin, it is useful to recall our basic conception of the revolutionary party as the political vanguard of the class. What distinguishes us on this point from the sectarians and ultralefts -- who are proliferating now -- is that those among them who think in terms of a party regard it primarily as the product of an ideological weeding-out process. It is clear in our view that the party must have a theoretical foundation and we will not allow this to be compromised. We train our cadres on this basis. Everyone who joins the party must accept these basic principles, although they may have only a general familiarity with them at the start. But a revolutionary party cannot develop only or primarily through a process of gradual growth, through individual recruitment. The party is a collective product of the class struggle. In the last analysis, it can only select its members and gain authority in the class struggle. In countries where there are many organizations, large and small, which reflect the differentiations existing or developing in the class, this requires that the formation of the party be achieved through political operations. In our view, there is nothing perjorative in this term. We have entered into a new situation in Europe. The revival of the class struggle is going to produce uneven political development in the class, differing according to generation, job and social categories, long crystallized political currents, etc... This uneven development will result in political processes of breaks, splits, regroupments, etc. And we must intervene in these processes not simply through propagandistic activity.

Our organizations have been formed up until now essentially by ideological selection and this process will very largely continue for the immediate future. It is, in fact, a prime task to reinforce our sections strongly by this means in the coming months. But if we want to have a correct line on building the party, we must have a broader conception of the problems that are beginning to arise from the development of an extensive new vanguard in order to strengthen the revolutionary Marxist organizations in other ways than through a gradual process. The operations we may have to carry out at the present time are still minimal in scope by comparison with those we will have to map in the future. But it is precisely on the basis of the operations we carry out now that we will make our organizations and more particularly our leaderships more capable of handling the operations to come.

It is from this standpoint that we must consider what has just taken place in France. After May 1968, it was on the order of the day for our organization to change its form so that the revolutionary Marxist vanguard could encompass the most conscious sector of the new vanguard in its ranks, that section of the new vanguard that had drawn the lessons from the battles in which they had participated and which asked only to assimilate these lessons. It was impossible to think that we could construct a revolutionary party through some miracle but we had to get out of the old rut.

For twenty years in Europe we lived with a workers movement that was largely stagnant. It underwent only fluctuations and variations, which we did not neglect but which were extremely limited. We drew many more political lessons from these episodes than reinforcements. The present situation demands that we show our capacity to utilize these lessons to work boldly with currents that are broader than in the past and more radical in their views and actions. It is on this first point that we must rearm our sections and more especially the leaderships of our sections.

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The main factor in the present situation in the European workers movement is that after twenty years there is a considerable gap -- the like of which has never been seen -- between the traditional workers movement and the young generation, more particularly their vanguard currents in the broadest sense of the term. Although many developments are ripening now in the traditional organizations, the young generations condemn these organizations categorically. This has often led to sweeping conclusions. I am not thinking of conceptions in the style of Marcuse, Sweezy, Fanon, etc.... who have denied the historic mission of the proletariat. These tendencies seem to me on the decline today. I am referring to tendencies which claim to be Marxist but which deviate from Marxism either by sectarianism or ultraleftism -- without forgetting the spontanéists. Until a vanguard of some numerical and social substance emerges from the mass of workers, we will have considerable difficulties with sectarian manifestations. These manifestations will take the form primarily of ultraleftism but in this we will see strange combinations with opportunist, spontanéist, etc., features. We have had a rich experience in this field and it is not about to be concluded.

The most immediate task -- reinforcing our organizations either directly or in a combined way with the formation of a youth organization -- seems now to be accepted by our European sections. This

has occurred not without a certain hesitation but it is now generally accepted. This does not mean that there is a clear understanding everywhere of the new tactic and the steps to take. I will not go into a series of questions related to this task which were discussed in the youth report. I will only deal with more specific points. I will begin with entryism.

It might seem strange that we are still being attacked on this question after giving up this tactic as we practiced it from 1953-54 on. But it is not surprising. All the sectarian and ultra-left currents...who reject the old workers movement cannot use the arguments against us that they employ against the Social Democrats and the Stalinists. Since they subsist largely on bits and pieces of our criticism, they are led to look for what appear to them to be our weak points in order to combat us. In the realm of tactics, entryism was the expression of our search for a link with the workers movement as a whole and this concept is a stumbling block for them. It is also normal that a number of young comrades who have joined our ranks are not perfectly armed on this question. Let me note finally, that the application of this tactic -- which in the history of the workers movement was never applied as we applied it -- was not entirely above reproach. There are, therefore, sufficient reasons for reviewing it -- to say nothing of the fact that the lessons to be drawn from it will be useful for the future operations we will be faced with in the process of building the revolutionary party.

We have indicated the conditions in which we turned toward entryism in the fifties. We have also indicated that in spite of certain errors with regard to perspective which we made when we decided on entryism, this tactic was and proved itself to be the only one possible for a whole period. We indicated, finally, the gains from this tactic, gains primarily of a political nature. These gains represented a considerable achievement in a period when the possibilities of growth for the revolutionary Marxist current were clearly of the most limited sort.

We must also delineate the weaknesses which manifested themselves in the application of this tactic. There was to be sure at certain times and in certain sections a somewhat fatalistic waiting for the development of left tendencies in the old parties. This is what explains why, in certain sections of our movement, misunderstandings arose in regard to the youth movements when they began to appear. This was true more specifically in Germany when these movements broke with the traditional workers party. Sometimes a long period of political quiescence ended

by having a depressive effect and depriving sections of our movement of the necessary flexibility in thought and action. There was a certain slowness in discerning the signs of the development that was to result in the youth becoming radicalized politically outside the organized workers movement.

In this regard, the objective situation in France, combined with the ultra-conservative policy of the French Communist Party [PCF] leadership, made possible the appearance at the end of the fifties, at the time of the Algerian war, of signs of this phenomenon of youth departing from the rate and paths of development of the adults. We highlighted these signs in a pamphlet devoted to explaining the entryist policy, Construire le Parti Révolutionnaire [Build the Revolutionary Party] (see p. 15). We understood that what we considered to be "special" tasks resulted from this situation. We held back then from giving up the entryist policy as we had understood it since 1953. These special tasks that we undertook produced some results for us during the Algerian war, recruitment to the organization in a period when our work in the PCF was beginning to stagnate. The Vietnam war enabled us to make this turn without great difficulties. We did it quite pragmatically, of course, but it could hardly have been otherwise.

It must be emphasized for those who dispute the basis of entryism that even among the youth the radicalization first began to find expression in the youth organizations attached to the traditional parties (this holds true for France, Germany, Italy, and also for other countries).

Above and beyond these general observations, in which we should also stress a sometimes undue inertia in entryist work, we must draw the lesson that it is not sufficient to base ourselves on a general tactic which we consider to be correct for the workers movement as a whole. We must also be able to grasp the importance of turning toward certain sectors which, while of a special or marginal character, offer the potential for more immediate results.

Above and beyond these general considerations, there are other lessons to be drawn from the entryist period. For my part, this experience showed, among other things, the following: First of all, not all comrades are capable of fruitful work inside other organizations. Some persons, who understand the tactic very well theoretically, are not shaped politically to practice it. They lack the reflexes which this work demands day by day. Finally, I think that even for a relatively long-term tactic we should have limited the time in which any comrade was engaged in it and assured a turn-

over among those carrying it out. In the long run, this tactic has a very depressing effect on an individual practicing it.

In the draft resolution, it is mentioned that we must struggle for uniting the Trotskyist movement into the International. The question is far from being posed in the same terms for all countries and we must not carry this to a ridiculous extreme. Nor is this something which imposes a specific task with immediate objectives. When we made proposals to the Voix Ouvrière comrades in May 1968, which resulted in an agreement for unity in action, we did this with the perspective that someday something more than joint activity might come of it. But we did not think that situations which have very profound causes could be resolved in a few days. There is no question of eliminating the polemics that are necessary, especially with regard to the Healy and Lambert organizations, some of whose positions are scandalous. But the fact that organizations claim to be Trotskyist, that at least to some extent their thinking follows general Trotskyist criteria, must be taken into consideration in an epoch when events can provoke rapid modifications in the political thinking of some.

We insist also on the necessity of a political and practical struggle to win hegemony in the vanguard. For years we were faced with crystallized groups whose members were well up on the differences of the past, etc.... When we waged polemics on this or that occasion, they were partly ritualistic. At most we brought up to date arguments that were known to all those who followed them. Today, there is no country not marked by the greatest diversity in the vanguard. This situation reflects the fact that the youth have not found in action one pole of attraction sufficiently stronger than all the others. As it has already been said, this situation will not fade away rapidly. But this does not mean that it must be passively endured. Ideological struggle will not be decisive in itself but it is indispensable. Such struggle is a necessity first of all to consolidate our organizations and educate our militants, and, secondly, to prepare the way for the further stages in building the revolutionary party, when we will inevitably again be confronted with some of the currents now contending within the vanguard. In this struggle, ideological argument must be combined with action and not solely within a national framework.

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I come now to what I think is the most delicate part in our new tactic to formulate and put into practice. It is the part which concerns our activity aim-

ed at the old formations, at the organized workers movement. The turn toward the young vanguard is being made in more or less all the sections. Except for a few areas of resistance, this is primarily a question of clarification, of understanding, and adaptation to local conditions. If there are debates and even differences in certain sections, it would be useful to have the discussion bring these out. But in making a turn, above all the sort of turn we are making, where after long difficult years we see possibilities for reaping very significant gains with respect to our size, there is the danger of exaggerating the turn and losing sight of the overall picture.

Winning the most advanced strata of youth must not result in cutting us off from the working class. In that case, the present gains would threaten to prove sterile. We must not make this turn in an indiscriminate way; because tomorrow's convulsions will have an ever-increasing effect on the organized workers movement. It would be illusory to think that a revolutionary party could be formed without extremely profound crises occurring in the old mass organizations. If we might have doubts about the dangers that would be involved in a tactic discounting these organizations and holding that they could no longer contribute anything, I need only recall the speech Comrade Illario made at the last plenum and the political disarray into which he has fallen. His position in regard to the old movement does not by itself explain this disarray but it has contributed to it.

I will not insist here on the necessity of a strong campaign of open work under the banner of the Fourth International not only among the youth but also throughout the working class and in the factories. I want to deal with the work aimed at the old parties and also in the old parties, whose importance, far from diminishing, will tend to increase but with forms and with a perspective different from the past.

There is a first point which presents no difficulties. This concerns comrades, more or less numerous, depending on the country, who have won trade-union positions in their factories through their rank-and-file work. Most often they hold a membership card in the party which is in the majority in the working class of their countries. Without this card, under present conditions, it would be difficult for them to occupy trade-union posts. In these cases, membership in the old parties must be considered a formality. Of course, we must seek to transform the situation in the unions also and win recognition of tendencies in the unions, of the right of minorities, etc. This is, in fact, a problem of crucial importance which, in prac-

tice, was not resolved by the Communist parties and the Communist International even in their best period. In fact, they stumbled over this problem in the revolutionary upsurge following the first world war. No revolution up to now has triumphed in a country where the working class was strongly organized into unions over a long period. We cannot, in my opinion, hope to win the unions -- i.e., their apparatus -- by legal means any more than we can the bourgeois state. We must win bastions among the ranks and at certain levels in the unions, bastions which are indispensable bases for out-flanking the apparatuses in struggles. I will not go deeply in this discussion. I think that at least there is a wide measure of agreement among us on the importance of having positions in the unions at the rank-and-file level, in the factories. And we are also all agreed that however attractive the idea of counterposing "revolutionary" bodies (revolutionary unions, committees, action committees) to the reformist unions may be to young workers disgusted by the practices of the unions, we must not ever, no matter what the cost, make any concessions to such tendencies. In order to stay in the unions you must know how to "dissemble and lie." Only incorrigible ultraleftists can dispute this teaching of Lenin which referred explicitly to the unions.

Now, what is to be said about work in the old parties? First of all, no rule can be valid for all the parties. One cannot, for example, apply the same rule to the British Labour Party as to the PCF. Even if today the Labour Party is experiencing numerous defections and if scarcely any activity can be carried out within it, we can be sure that when a crisis breaks out it will take very different forms there than in the PCF -- if only because of the position the unions occupy in the Labour Party.

We make a strong distinction between entryist work and the work we are carrying on at present which might be more correctly called fraction work, or given some other designation to mark the difference clearly. In the past, for entryist work we oriented ourselves in accordance with the developments inside the parties, which of course reflected developments within the class but in an indirect way. We did so because we could not do a great deal of work on them from the outside, either through propaganda or, still less, through action. At the present time the dynamics of the class struggle is our primary criterion in this work. For the moment, this is broader than its direct repercussions in the old parties. It is tending to generate forces external to these parties which make it possible to bring pressure to bear on these parties and provoke differentiations within them. In the present conditions, nothing

would be more dangerous than to leave the field open to sectarian currents, to let them become a pole of attraction for the most advanced militants in the old parties. We must certainly not get ourselves expelled from these parties for no good reason. But we should not fear expulsions nor allow confused elements to polarize the inevitable crises in the old parties for their own benefit. There can be no question of giving recipes. It is up to the sections to be able to adapt their orientation concretely to the specific conditions of their countries.

For the moment, the apparatuses of the old parties are still holding up. And a problem which arises for us in certain countries is that of centrist formations, whether they already exist like the PSU in France, PSIUP in Italy, or tendencies in that direction. We have had a long experience with centrist formations on the margins of the big parties. We may have to carry on work within them. But experience has shown us that such organizations, whose size and social composition are not really promising, which are distinguished neither by the quantity of their activists nor the quality of their program, serve as bridges toward Marxism for very few militants. In general, they block the development of many militants. These organizations are most often led by pseudorevolutionary politicians who have no intention of transforming their organizations into revolutionary formations. We do not, then, encourage the formation of such organizations, which complicate the political scene.

We have spoken of the formation of revolutionary youth organizations. They must be considered a bridge toward us through the experiences undergone by these youth, only a small number of whom have been organized before. But we must also be conscious of the fact that without the proper intervention on our part, such organizations, too, can engender centrist formations which obstruct the struggle for a revolutionary party.

With regard to centrism, we must say a few words more concerning a problem which does not arise today but which we cannot exclude as a possibility in the future. We cannot predict the form that the crisis of the old parties will take and we cannot exclude the possibility that at a given moment centrist organizations will emerge from them which will be distinguished from the ones existing today by a working-class social composition and deeper roots in the working class. If that happened, we would have to face tactical problems much more complex than today's. We need not speculate on problems which have not yet arisen but we must be conscious of the manifold possibilities of a developing

situation which will produce problems without precedent or parallel in the past.

I will end this short report by dealing with what seems to me to be the fundamental question. One of the essential features of the new situation in Europe is that it will be marked more than ever in the past by abrupt turns. There are tasks which must be carried out from day to day but we must be ever more ready to adapt very rapidly to such turns. This has and will have consequences also for building the party. For the moment the immediate task is to reinforce our sections as appreciably as possible. At the moment no sections face a problem like that being experienced now in France. But the French situation is not destined to remain exceptional. We must be absolutely sure of what we have long said -- there are situations in which the role of the subjective factor is decisive over brief periods. This is true not only for the seizure of power by a revolutionary party. It is true also for making leaps forward to a revolutionary formation on the road to building the party.

No one dreams of encouraging adventurist maneuvers in this area. But our movement is weighed down by the weight of long years when only minimal gains could be envisaged. What is important to understand clearly is that from now on we can make gains the like of which we have never made before. And we must gird ourselves to make them. This is the fundamental aspect of the new situation in which for the first time in our history a new vanguard of mass dimensions is developing. While the conditions vary from country to country, they are moving in the same direction. For the first time, it depends primarily and above all on us to organize this vanguard under our banner. This will depend in a general way not on our ideas but on more specific interventions in the given circumstances. By such interventions we can make the first breakthroughs that will enable our movement to emerge as a major force. In Europe enormous contradictions have accumulated for the reformist and Stalinist leaderships. These contradictions are coming to a head. Our movement has great possibilities ahead of it through a succession of actions, opportunities for which circumstances will open up for us. It is not only for strong recruitment in the immediate future that we must rearm ourselves. We must clearly begin by carrying out what has been called a "primitive accumulation of cadres" in the immediate future. But we must do so with the perspective of broad political operations aimed at building a revolutionary party. It is in this perspective that we must rearm our movement.

OUR ORIENTATION TO THE NDP—
AS A STRATEGY—
AND ITS TACTICAL APPLICATION

by Ross Dowson, approved by the Political Committee
of the LSA/LSO for the 1970 Convention

The revolution that is coming—that will place the working women and men of this country in full command over its vast resources, that will link it to the worldwide struggles of the working class, and lay down the foundations of the new socialist order of peace and freedom—requires a party as its organizer and director.

That party must be built along the lines of a revolutionary vanguard. Not an elitist formation of self-appointed saviours, but a party of working women and men completely dedicated to the struggle of the workers, a party of leaders of the class—a combat party armed with a revolutionary program.

No other type of party will do. History has already recorded that without such a party the revolution in an advanced capitalist country such as Canada is an idle dream.

But to proclaim the need for such a party—to repeat it endlessly as some do—and to actually move effectively in the direction of building such a party are two totally different things.

Those forces that have already grasped the essential outlines of this idea are confronted with a working class movement which has already taken on a structured form.

These forms have a tremendous resilience because, however inadequate, they now serve the class interests—even when they no longer do so they remain a force because of the class' historic memory of when they did.

Ever since the end of World War II the most widespread and profound political experience of the class has been the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and its continuator, the New Democratic Party.

For some years now the Canadian workers have been organized as a class in trade unions. The war years saw the workers in basic industry unionized and today the ranks of organized labor stand over 2 million strong.

From combating individual capitalists or alliances of capitalists over immediate economic issues such as hours, wages, and conditions, the workers have been compelled to move out onto the political arena as an independent class force against the capitalists organized as a class and through their political parties in control of the state apparatus.

The CCF, from the period 1943-48 on and now the NDP from the day of its founding in 1961, is the political party of the English-Canadian working class. It is the form that the labor party has taken in English-speaking Canada.

In Quebec, the CCF-NDP has not developed strong organic links with the trade union movement or gained a mass base among working class militants. It would appear for the whole next period at least that the nationalist upsurge has passed it by.

However, even here, to this day, the CCF-NDP has been the only political structure to pose across Quebec, however embryonically, the question of independent working class political action.

The NDP is a reformist party—not a revolutionary party. While in its ranks there are forces that will come to the revolution, this party will never make the revolution nor can it be reformed to serve this purpose. It is encrusted with a leadership and a program permeated with the concepts of class peace and class collaboration, although, at the critical juncture of its formation in 1961 and for a short period after, it was what Leon Trotsky described in 1938 to us Americans as "not a party but an amorphous political mass movement" with a revolutionary dynamic. It is nationalist, identifying the fate of the Canadian working class with the fate of the central bourgeois state—and not internationalist. Its leadership has made parliamentarianism not a tactic in the struggle but the supreme principle through which change alone can come.

This party has been characterized at various times as the primary expression of the politics of the working class, as expressing the present level of consciousness of the workers, or as being in advance of the level of consciousness of the working class as a whole.

In this period of extreme national and international crises, when class antagonisms recurringly take on the most explosive character—how can one estimate with any degree of accuracy, even over a very limited period of time, where the working class is at, at what stage is its consciousness, and how firm is its adherence to various structures and to various forms of struggle.

To be sure, there are hundreds of thousands of working class men and women who do not think in terms of politics at all or continue to support one or another party of the capitalist class. They have yet to take the simplest act of a working class political character by voting NDP. There are tens of thousands of workers who have over the past years formed a firm commitment to the NDP and its leadership and will not be easily shaken from it, and to be sure there are many workers both inside and outside of the NDP who are to the left of it, who have already some understanding of the inadequacy of its program and an even clearer idea of the opportunist and class collaborationist character of its leadership. But insofar as the revolutionary socialists have been able to confront them, there are few in number who are yet prepared to move out and beyond the NDP.

Thus the NDP represents both an opening to and a barrier against; stands both on the way and athwart the way to the building of the revolutionary vanguard. For the class as a whole over the entire past period it represents a progressive and important step forward in their political development and it will continue to do so for some period.

The NDP cannot be ignored and it cannot be bypassed. It is the touchstone of class politics. All working class politics revolve around it and an incorrect position on it is fatal. It is not yet its association and support for the criminal record of the Soviet bureaucracy that is the albatross around the neck of the Communist Party of Canada so much as its known record of opposition to the CCF and the NDP, to independent working class political action. The CP's opposition to the NDP has not remained in their class collaborationist theories expressed in convention but has been exposed to workers by its consistent running of blocks of candidates against the NDP and in particular against the most left candidates.

The position of the Canadian Trotskyists vis-a-vis the CCF from the time that it could be said to have become the Canadian labor party is expressed organizationally in the formation of the Revolutionary Workers Party in 1946—an attempt to pull the necessary cadre together for a future entry; the dissolution of its public face and the entry of our forces as a disciplined democratic centralist revolutionary socialist formation into the CCF in 1952; the formation of the Toronto Socialist Educational League in 1955 (and later the Vancouver Socialist Information Centre) at a time when the CCF was static and there were new possibilities of cadre building through regroupment of diverse socialist forces; and the formation of the League for Socialist Action in 1961 to intervene in the birth processes of the New Democratic Party.

The orientation to the CCF-NDP has been the fundamental orientation of Canadian Trotskyism since World War II. In general our position in relation to the CCF-NDP labor party formation has been one of unconditional support and, but for the period of entry from 1952 to 1956, intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective.

We say unconditional in the sense that our defense of the USSR is unconditional—that we lay down no terms or conditions to the Soviet regime to warrant our defense of the USSR itself. We defend the USSR as a workers state—should a series of transformations take place as to *qualitatively* alter its class character we would cease to defend it. But suppose the NDP violates some of the

most basic interests of the working class. The Labour Party of Great Britain through Wilson completely underwrote the U.S. genocidal war against the people of Vietnam and imposed a wage freeze on the British unions. This caused some to reject electoral support of the Labour Party and even to cease to characterize it as the labor party—the mass political expression of the British working class—but to define it as a bourgeois party.

It is not at all excluded that the NDP could move to such positions. We would not support such positions. But at what point would we say that we no longer support the party—at what point is it no longer the labor party? Only when it ceases to represent in the eyes of the class the alternative to the parties of the bourgeoisie. In our opinion the betrayals of the British Labor Party leadership have not had such an impact as to result in a qualitative change in the party's relation to the class.

On another occasion we commented this way: the NDP not only betrays the basic principles of socialism, which it does not even claim to ascribe to, but even from time to time the most elementary interests of the workers. But it has not betrayed the level of consciousness of any substantial and viable layer of the working class.

Our CCF-NDP orientation and its effective application has been the hardest fought position in the history of the movement, established against trends of centrist conciliationism and liquidationism into the NDP, sectarian opposition to, and in more recent years, spontaneist and adventurist hostility to it, leading to defection from the revolutionary vanguard itself.

This rejection of the labor party flows from the same basic illusion touched on by *The New Rise of the World Revolution* adopted by the Third World Congress since Reunification. It explained: "The sudden development of the new youth vanguard into a mass movement has caused the resurgence of the worship of spontaneity. This is another new obstacle to a breakthrough by revolutionary Marxists." Earlier the document referred to an incorrect interpretation of united action as follows: "The success of such actions is indispensable to victory in specific episodes in the class struggle. But our historic task is not just to achieve episodic victories; it is to lead the working class to victory by overthrowing the international capitalist system and capitalism in each individual country. If we limited ourselves solely to united actions, we would run the risk of a general defeat in the wake of episodic and ephemeral successes. This would more and more sap the potential for further successes, because what is most necessary to achieve such successes is a correct theoretical and practical grasp of reality, which is unattainable without the incomparable instrument of a revolutionary party.

"Such conceptions," the document continues, "are based implicitly or explicitly on the illusion that thousands of students or young workers fighting shoulder to shoulder against the Vietnam war, for a 'confrontation' with the bourgeois university or even capitalist society as a whole, have already reached the same ideological level as the revolutionary Marxists and that therefore a revolutionary Marxist party and International are no longer necessary."

This spontaneist tendency arising with the worldwide youth radicalization has rejected the NDP out of the same logic. Because the youth radicalization has as yet developed apart from the NDP, because its massive united actions do not look to the NDP for leadership, they conclude that the NDP has been definitely bypassed, not

merely by the thousands of students and young worker participants in mass demonstrations, but by the class as a whole.

This tendency which Engler-Sloccock gave expression to in our movement, saw our fundamental orientation, the identification of the LSA/LSO with the NDP, as a barrier to our effective identification with and full involvement in the new wave of radically developing youth. They saw our identification with the NDP as giving us a conservative image and as an impediment that had to be got rid of, while we see it as increasing our political effectiveness. We see such slogans as "Win the NDP to Socialism," through which we express our NDP orientation, as giving depth and direction to the radicalization, as a means to direct the youth militants to a comprehension of what class it must link its struggle to—the working class—in order to render it more effective, as a means to raise and educate youth militants in class politics. Our spontaneists saw the struggle continuing to move outside of the NDP, and the revolutionary wave completely bypassing the NDP.

Interestingly enough, this view did not find them more vigorously proclaiming the "pure" Trotskyist program and seeking on every occasion to more dramatically present the independent banner of the LSA/LSO or the Fourth International, but on the contrary adapting to spontaneist elements, taking a completely opportunist course, and rejecting the revolutionary vanguard party first in the concrete, insofar as it existed in the LSA/LSO, and then in theory.

Sloccock cautioned us about not imposing an artificial and abstract mass perspective on the spontaneous development of the majority of antiwar militants, and advised us that our attitudes to such new formations as tenant organizations, COPE (Vancouver electoral popular front) should not be determined by our NDP orientation, but each case must be decided on its own merits (page B, Bulletin 1). It was just two years ago, with great erudition and endless analogies, he predicted that the radicalization of the working class will not be reflected into the NDP through the constituency organizations, but through the trade union movement. Work in the constituencies and through artificially erected "Socialist caucuses" is of little value, he declared.

Needless to say the new radicalization has by no means bypassed the NDP but has been reflected within it, not only in constituency organizations and union locals but in the federal convention and even the parliamentary caucus.

While the NDP leadership has taken no real initiatives to involve the party in the anti-Vietnam war movement and for a whole period savagely attacked those who did, its top leaders now grace the platforms of the mass rallies, head the demonstrations, and through their actions identify the NDP with them, and carry the NDP into the antiwar movement. While the Canadian Party of Labor (Maoists) came to the VMC-sponsored march on Ottawa this spring all geared to boo and heckle the major speaker, the notorious right-wing NDP leader David Lewis—they had to keep their silence. Lewis forthrightly attacked U. S. aggression against the Vietnamese revolution as imperialist, condemned the Canadian government for its abject material and political complicity and demanded the cessation of arms sales and the withdrawal of U. S. troops from Vietnam now.

What about women's liberation—the most ongoing

struggle involving new layers of radicals with the most explosive potential? When the abortion caravan hit Ottawa it found immediate support from the NDP parliamentary caucus. MP Grace McInnis firmly identified the NDP with the caravan by addressing the rally that welcomed its arrival. Liberationists chained themselves to the parliamentary gallery and so interrupted the session with their demands for immediate action that the government was forced to adjourn this sacred institution of bourgeois democracy. Some of the party leaders dissociated themselves from this action but others appeared amongst the Liberationists in a gesture of support. The Morgenthaler case around which the fight for Free Abortions Now is developing has firm support from the NDP.

The NDP leadership have proven sufficiently flexible in meeting the challenge of the new wave of radicalization to preserve the image of the party as a party of the left.

It is difficult to prove the effect of much of our work at any given moment and sometimes for a whole period on the course of events. Often, when it would seem that it had little or none whatsoever, later developments prove quite the opposite. For an extended period, we concentrated considerable effort in the NDP across Canada, in B. C., Alberta, Ontario, etc., to build socialist caucuses. Sloccock characterized them as being "artificially erected" and "of little political value." But scarcely were the words written than there appeared in the NDP right across the country the so-called Waffle—a broad left-wing formation composed largely of radical anti-imperialist youth with 1/3 of the votes at last year's federal convention and which has since become a stable left-wing force across the country.

Spontaneists and confrontationists see the NDP as taking steam out of and tending to divert the militancy of the struggle into parliamentary and reformist channels. But isn't this really just another expression of their lack of understanding of or unwillingness to face up to the fundamental problems of making the revolution? The revolution cannot come out of the confrontation-escalation politics of the spontaneists no matter how dramatically or how brilliantly their actions are planned. The youth radicalism has to link up with the working class with their vast numbers strategically inmeshed in the working gears of society. In the United States it is difficult for student radicals to see the working class as a class, let alone as a potentially radical force—hence there has been considerable dissipation of their forces in ultraleftist adventurism.

In the United States where there is no labor party this by no means indicates a lack of reformist illusions—quite the contrary. They are not on the plane of whether socialism can be won by parliamentary means, but on a much lower plane—whether one or another capitalist party can be an instrument for social change. By that token alone, they tend to be parliamentarist. Whereas the NDP is a minority, often hamstrung by electoral trickery and parliamentary procedures, actions identifying with it often take on an antiparliamentary character and pose revolutionary challenges.

In Canada the revolutionary potential of the working class is much easier to grasp. Not only are the workers organized in unions but their unions are much more socially oriented; they are heavily involved in the NDP with its broad social outlook. In fact, the unions are the dominant force in the NDP. The NDP constantly poses

the need for working class power. Since it is a minority party and must continually seek to widen its support, it is necessary for it to move out in protest demonstrations and rallies to continually sharpen the discontent of the workers and organize them along political, even if reformist, lines.

And history records more than one occasion when the struggle has transcended from one for reforms to revolution.

Insofar as we Trotskyists recognize the NDP as a progressive step forward for the working class, in that sense, indirectly, it can be said we help to establish it. But the fact is that the NDP is there, is a tremendous reality and it plays that role completely outside of our support and even our existence. And revolutionists who do not have an orientation to it cannot get anywhere.

This has been clearly brought home recently by the demise of the Saskatchewan-based Committee for a Socialist Movement—a broad catchall organization at its peak of some 200 revolutionaries outside the NDP. In the short year and a half of its existence it has known nothing but crises over its direction. What blew it up were differences that developed around its orientation to the New Democratic Party and its left-wing Waffle caucus. The first split was when some 20 key leaders largely in Regina pulled out to work exclusively in the NDP and Waffle. The next split was the leadership of the Saskatoon group who opposed attacks on the Waffle appearing in the CSM paper. They viewed the NDP as a labor party and were for working within it for a socialist program—although they consider it necessary to go beyond the NDP and Waffle. They have joined the Young Socialists. What remained split again, the first group, named by its advisor and our erstwhile comrades Engler and Rands "The Middle Way," seeks a way outside the NDP and the policy outlined by Trotskyists. The second talks of armed struggle and rejects the NDP on completely sectarian grounds. Both are by now quite probably scattered to the winds.

In no way does our orientation to the NDP distort or inhibit the full responsible functioning of the LSA/LSO as the nucleus of the revolutionary vanguard. Not only does it link it up to the most significant expression of the class conscious development of the Canadian working class, permitting it to go through the experiences of the class with the class, testing our ideas, allowing us to take every advantage of every developing possibility but it makes our movement and our aim, the Canadian socialist revolution, take on a much more comprehensible character.

Our orientation to the NDP has nothing but good results for us. We described it this way in our 1963 convention resolution:

"The LSA's orientation to the NDP makes it much more attractive a force than it would otherwise be. Our orientation places our whole program in a realistic framework. Regardless of all its shortcomings, in its overall significance the NDP projects the need for working-class power. The fairly extensive layer of workers who in advance of their class, have already a generally correct assessment of reformism find a small revolutionary socialist group unattractive—even though they may concede that it is theoretically correct—for it can offer little immediate possibilities of struggle. Their understanding therefore becomes largely passive, without perspective. Our orientation to the NDP, our projection as a socialist caucus,

with the aim of winning the NDP to a socialist policy makes us much more attractive and more capable of winning such forces to our side. The merits of our orientation from this viewpoint, which stand completely outside of what forces we may or may not actually have in the NDP at any given moment, must not be overlooked. Our NDP orientation places our forces, small and involved as they are in what is largely education work of an even academic character, in their proper perspective. It projects in broad lines the direction and possibilities of the struggle in the whole next period, thus heightening immensely our attractiveness."

That orientation to the CCF-NDP which has been our strategical line since the end of World War II, has been mistakenly characterized by some as entrism. In reality, while within the framework of the orientation the Canadian Trotskyists have implemented a wide range of tactics, only on two occasions has the Canadian movement carried out entry.

What is the entry tactic? Entrism, in general, means the revolutionary vanguard dissolving itself as an open independent organization under its own banner into another non-Trotskyist organization for a period. While it is normal that Trotskyists should have their own open movement propagating their full program, under certain circumstances (in order of course to add forces to the revolutionary vanguard) it is a justifiable tactic to take down the independent banner to permit a full entry into another organization.

In Canada a group that had earlier split away from our movement to form the League for a Revolutionary Workers Party, associated with a U. S. group around a B. J. Field, added this to their bag of differences with our movement claiming that, contrary to us, the public independent party had to be sustained at all times and under all circumstances as a matter of principle.

There are of course many dangers facing Trotskyists who have entered another centrist or reformist movement. The internal cohesion of Trotskyists who enter, must, if anything, be even greater than it is as an independent public force. In essence Trotskyists become a hardened cadre caucus fighting to win new recruits to the full program of Trotskyism in order later to reestablish themselves as the independent public vanguard organization.

Our first experience in applying this tactic was the entry into the CCF during 1936 which was sharply and decisively ended in 1938. It was of the classic type devised by Leon Trotsky, sometimes called the French turn, and most successfully applied by the U. S. Trotskyists. In the mid-thirties a leftward-moving current developed in the Socialist Party of the U. S. The American Trotskyists dissolved their public face, gave up their own public press (soon to be replaced by another press), fused with the main forces in this current and then after a sharp struggle reconstituted their independent movement on a considerably expanded basis, at the same time dealing a political opponent a blow from which it never recovered.

The other entry was carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists over a period of three and a half years commencing in 1952 at approximately the same time as the International Executive Committee of the FI headed by Michel Pablo projected a concept of entry *sui generis* (of a unique type) on an international scale and of an extended duration. This entrism, which was practiced by almost all

the European sections of the movement either into Stalinist or social democratic labor parties, was only terminated after almost two decades by the new wave of radicalism that broke over the movement in the late sixties and was the subject of a resolution prepared by the majority of the United Secretariat that appeared in International Bulletin No. 7, May 1969.

The second entry conducted by the Canadian Trotskyists had little or nothing in common with entry *sui generis*, certainly as Pablo, through his Canadian supporters, came to interpret it. The Canadian entry was terminated after a relatively short span of three and a half years after an incisive split carried out by a minority. Commencing the entry apparently in agreement with the majority as to its nature, this minority came to give a totally different interpretation of it which they claimed was Pablo's. Pablo subsequently recognized them as the Canadian section prior to their complete liquidation into the reformist milieu and disappearance from the political scene.

The second entry was ended with the expulsion of the main Trotskyist forces in the East from the CCF, the formation of the Socialist Educational League and the publication of *Workers Vanguard*. Ever since then, the Canadian Trotskyists have maintained an open Trotskyist organization with public organs—today four—and have carried a wide range of independent activities—also within the framework of our CCF-NDP orientation—unconditional support of the NDP with an extensive fraction within it.

In the resolution dealing with our work in the NDP, which was adopted by our 1966 convention, we described the implementation of our orientation as follows: "It means that the NDP remains the focus of all our politics—but not the center of our activities"—that center was the new wave of youth radicalization.

How to establish the hegemony of the revolutionary socialists over the left? An initial tactic devised to achieve this was the united front. Lenin devised this tactic following the failure of the Communist International to win important sectors of the workers within social democracy to the banner of the Communist parties. The united front was designed to effect unity in action of Communist Party and Social Democratic Party workers on issues of common concern. The parties would march together while retaining their separate identity. Through such a device the greatest possible striking power would be brought into play against a common enemy. At the same time it was anticipated that the Communist Parties would effectively demonstrate the superiority of their ideas and their party, win the best workers from the social democracy, and thus establish their hegemony over the entire left. The tactic of the united front remains one of the most precious tools in the arsenal of revolutionary politics.

The tactic of entry was first carried out by our French comrades in 1934. It was predicated on the fact that our own forces were weak and isolated, and that an important and viable left wing in the social democracy was developing in our direction. They joined the social democratic party as a body, in order to work within it as a fraction to come in contact with its left wing, to influence it, and to fuse with it, and thereby broaden the basis for the subsequent construction of a new revolutionary party—a Trotskyist party—in France.

The first entry carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists was in 1937 into the CCF which we characterized even as late as 1946 as "predominantly an agrarian social

democratic party, with its primary base in the prairie radicalism of the western farmers . . . its membership in the major industrial cities of the East primarily middle class with a small sprinkling of highly skilled workers." The forces of Canadian Trotskyism were limited almost entirely to Vancouver and Toronto. The Vancouver comrades had earlier proposed entry into the BC section of the CCF to the executive committee. The matter was not discussed through the movement and they took that action independently. Then in the summer of 1937 the executive committee majority submitted a one line resolution to the party—resolve that the executive committee endorse immediate entry into the CCF. A minority replied that the CCF was stagnant and declining and that there was no left wing that could be won to our ideas. After a long and extremely bitter conflict, the organization in convention, by a very small majority, voted to enter the CCF. No sooner had the motion been carried than almost the entire top leadership headed by Jack MacDonald, apparently exhausted by the years of isolation and gruelling struggle, stood aside. Maurice Spector, the other leading figure in the movement, had already left Canada to work in the U.S. party where he lined up with A.J. Muste against entry into the Socialist Party. The entry was thrown into the laps of young and quite inexperienced comrades and its conduct was further complicated by the failure of much of the minority (who were actually a majority of the movement's activists) to participate. Just these circumstances alone guaranteed that entry would threaten the movement with liquidation.

Not only did this entry prove fruitless in so far as bringing new blood into our movement, but the conditions and atmosphere in the CCF infected our own forces. Many comrades became demoralized and dropped away, some even became completely acclimatized to the reformist milieu.

It was not until late in 1938 that the remnants of the entrists and non-entrists with the aid of the International, became reconciled and the entry was terminated. Our weakened forces reconstituted themselves as the Socialist Workers League, but before they could consolidate and renew their national connections the Second World War broke out and the movement was driven underground. The Canadian movement, unlike our co-thinkers in Britain and the U.S. who were able to function openly with only modest adjustments, was driven underground by sweeping repressive legislation.

In November 1944 a Canada-wide conference was held in Montreal that pulled together our forces and prepared the organization of the Revolutionary Workers Party two years later. Even as we reconstituted this nucleus of the vanguard as a public independent party, we did not by any means reject the possibility of being faced again with the necessity of reentering the CCF in our struggle to build the mass revolutionary party. On the day of its formal organization the RWP took a CCF orientation—fraction work in the CCF but with major emphasis on building the independent party. Without this necessary preliminary pulling together of cadres, a subsequent entry into the CCF was inconceivable.

In 1943 the delegates to the convention of the Canadian Congress of Labor, formed in 1940 through unification of the All Canadian Congress of Labor and the Canadian section of the CIO, voted to endorse the CCF as the political arm of organized labor. By 1948 it became obvious that the CCF had not only taken on important

strength but had sunk real roots in the working class areas in all the major metropolitan centers and had become—in effect—the labor party.

With that the movement made CCF fraction work a more serious part of party work and raised the question of the advisability of carrying out an entry into the CCF. Commencing in 1948, the leadership began to prepare the movement for possible entry. Thus we come to the second entry carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists. At that time the IEC headed by Pablo was projecting entry *sui generis* in the major sectors of the globe.

How did the Canadian Trotskyists see their entry? Unlike many other periods in the history of the Canadian movement, this one is fairly well documented. The major document unanimously adopted by the 1951 convention is entitled "The CCF—Our Tasks and Perspectives" and that is exactly what it is: a detailed analysis of the CCF, and the challenge it poses for the Trotskyists in their struggle to build the revolutionary vanguard.

This document differentiates the entry that it projected from the type of entry known as the "French turn." Its premise was "not the existence of left formations—nor an increase in internal democracy in the party or a wave of growth." Its premise was that the CCF has now all the skeletal forms of the labor party, and that while we have gathered some precious cadre—we are small. We projected that in this period of extreme national and international tension, of McCarthyism and the cold war that "the CCF under the next upsurge," we projected, "will embrace the class. The class will go there and nowhere else; there it will undergo the experience of reformism—and there, given the perspective of world and Canadian capitalism will move forward to the revolutionary solution of its problems." And we said: "The struggle for a program that will express the opposition of the masses to the oppressive burden of the war and the encroachment of the Bonapartist state will thrust up a new leadership that will do battle with the Coldwell-Douglas-Millard leadership. The program, we stated very clearly, "will be the transitional program of the Fourth International; the leadership," we underscored, "will be the Trotskyist leadership of the Canadian revolution." That is, the only alternative to the reformist leadership was Trotskyism.

This discussion brought to a close, at least on the surface, a longstanding, wearing struggle that had developed in the Toronto branch with an unprincipled personal clique formation headed by Joe Rose. This clique had only in June 1951 finally put its political views down on paper—they then denied that the CCF was the mass political party of labor and formally counterposed the concept that the genuine left would only develop through the trade unions. At the convention they suddenly switched, voted for the entry, and Rose was put on the Central and Political Committees.

By March 1952 our B.C. forces publicly announced their entry without prior consultation with the P.C. In the East as we began to implement the entry, the Rose clique began to develop widening differences. Veering wildly from their previous sectarian evaluation of the CCF they moved, not to the majority position of long-term entry, but toward liquidation into the CCF milieu. They became super-security-conscious, refusing to support the application for membership of a comrade in a CCF club in which they held membership. Finally, using as an excuse the readmission of a former member in the movement, who they claimed was a security problem and whose

case went before the Control Commission where it was cleared, they walked out apparently in order to protect their own security in the CCF.

The Rose group, and those who later joined it, postulating the need to remain in the CCF "at all costs," were unable to undertake any serious left-wing initiatives, fearing that challenges to the party's right-wing establishment might provoke disciplinary reprisals. The majority, on the contrary, moved out in aggressive actions to build the CCF left and expand the Trotskyist forces. While it was felt necessary to drop our public press, we made a big effort to stimulate the BC leftists to launch with us a journal for the broad left, we were instrumental in the publication of a rash of constituency bulletins popularizing transitional demands, and our American co-thinkers allocated space in their press which we commenced to promote. We developed bookstores that carried all the publications of the Trotskyist movement, we held public forums in Toronto which utilized our comrades who had been refused membership in the CCF—and we ran candidates for public office. We made every effort to carry on with the key work of recruiting and developing Trotskyist cadre.

Suddenly the dispute which resulted in the split of world Trotskyism into two tendencies grouped around the International Secretariat and the International Committee which was healed only in 1963, broke over our heads. The Canadian leadership was totally unacquainted with these developments until it read Comrade Cannon's "Open Letter to Trotskyists" published in *The Militant*. It was an appeal to the worldwide movement to unite in a struggle against Pablo's revisionism. The Vancouver comrades immediately identified themselves with the "Open Letter." The leadership in Toronto equivocated in the belief that the issues at dispute could be discussed and decided upon at the next world congress.

It was then that a minority in the leadership and in the Toronto branch headed by Fitzgerald and McAlpine commenced to give a new interpretation to our entry—one that had never figured in any of the discussions and documentation that had decided the entry. Their arguments developed the need for entry along the following lines; 1) that the Third World War was thundering down upon us, 2) that we would enter into this war with the present alignment of forces on the left—the Communist parties, Social Democratic and labor parties, substantially as they are now, 3) that the Trotskyist forces woefully small must at all costs enter as rapidly as possible the Communist Party or Social Democratic/labor party, whichever was the effective movement of the working class in their respective countries, 4) that we could be confident that out of the impact of the world holocaust on these parties the revolutionary instrument would be forged, with our forces playing a contributory role.

To question these broad and sweeping generalizations, to suggest that the timetable might be inaccurate, that events could take place that might drastically alter it, that the traditional parties of labor might well go through some crises that would open up new roads for Trotskyism, was dismissed or ridiculed as holding on to old concepts, as not facing up to the new reality. We were even violating the position of the Third World Congress, we were told, which we had voted for without any criticism but which we were only now informed had such concepts unknown to us and not brought out to our attention at the time but firmly imbedded in them.

Suddenly on Jan. 25/54, to the embarrassment of the minority, the Rose clique bounced back into the arena with a Committee for a Socialist Regroupment. They appeared as 100% opponents of the Cannonite majority and 100% supporters of Pablo and called for a split in the Canadian section. The minority and Pablo himself in a letter to the leadership dissociated themselves from the split.

But among the resolutions and documents of the 14th plenum held by the IS headed by Pablo was one decreeing the suspension from membership in the International all members of the IEC who support the "Open Letter," who approve it and who are trying to rally on this basis the sections of the International. It ordered the suspension from their posts of leadership in the sections all those who signed these appeals or approved them.

This ukase handed to the leadership of the Canadian Trotskyist movement to enforce was immediately operative against Ross Dowson, a member of the IEC, executive secretary and member of the CC-PC, and against Reg Bullock of the CC. Dowson had come to identify himself with the "Open Letter." If taken seriously as intended, it would have decapitated the movement at one blow—placing the minority in control. The minority abstained, but not before stating their complete agreement with it and expressing regret that due to the nature of our party, because of its political level, this instruction was inoperative.

While it was clear where the Canadian Trotskyists stood, preparations were made for a convention. Suddenly on April 7, the Rose clique, along with a few other drop-outs, applied for restoration of their membership in the section. The Toronto branch voted to table the matter until after the convention called for April 10 and 11. The minority, demanding immediate acceptance, stormed out of the meeting. A day or so later a letter dated April 8 appeared entitled "The Canadian Section of the Fourth International to Carry On." It was signed by Fitzgerald, McAlpine and Grenier and announced an emergency conference for April 11 "to continue the Canadian party with all those who support the International" and to "name a temporary executive committee and a delegate to the 4th World Congress."

This rump "Conference of the Canadian Section" publicized the fusion of the Fitzgerald-McAlpine splitters with the Rose clique. Their interim NC among other strange flowers numbered in its circle one Comrade Houston, whose readmission into the section had earlier served as the pretext for the Rose clique desertion from the movement.

Fitzgerald attended the "Fourth World Congress" as the recognized delegate of "the Canadian section of the Fourth International." Before completely disappearing from the scene this assortment of splitters and deserters gave a further lesson in their interpretation of entry *sui generis*.

Suddenly almost every Trotskyist who had managed to enter the Ontario CCF found himself charged by the CCF brass with being a member of an opponent political party. As it turned out, having once started out on a liquidationist course, the rump section's alternate NC member Houston carried it further by turning informer to the CCF brass. A little later, full NC member Rose carried their entry to its ultimate. When appearing before the investigators Rose went state's evidence for a promise

that his membership might later win favorable consideration.

Was the liquidationist course to be explained away as the aberrations of disoriented individuals? When the Rose clique's call for split characterized the schism in the world movement as being between those who "are still applying the formulas of the thirties which because of the new world realities have become empty cliches" when it said: "In the words of the IS 'let the dead bury its own,' only the living can make an effective contribution to the victory of Canadian socialism," and its previous position of carrying out the entry "at all costs," it was only echoing Fitzgerald and McAlpine's words about facing the new world realities, about grasping the new Trotskyism. But what role did Trotskyists have to play at all in Pablo's war-revolution concept which was automatic and irreversible?

For its major forces which were concentrated in the East the second Canadian entry was terminated by the expulsion of almost its entire entered forces in the CCF. The Socialist Educational League was launched publicly in December 1955 with new elements who had been won in the course of the anti-expulsion fight who constituted an effective fraction in the CCF with a no-split perspective.

However, it is apparent that regardless of the expulsions, the forces of Canadian Trotskyism, in order to meet the challenge of events that were already developing, would have ended the entry in the next year or two. This is clear from the character of their activities over the next five years, the struggle along with the Vancouver comrades against a liquidationist current that developed in their branch, and the formation there of the Socialist Forum in February 1959, later the Socialist Information Center, and finally its fusion with the Toronto-based SEL under a common name—the League for Socialist Action.

In its evaluation of the entry *sui generis* held over from the Third World Congress Since Reunification in the International Information Bulletin May 1969, the United Secretariat referred to the "conjunctural factors" that were particularly cited in the debates at the time it was first projected in the early fifties, and to "the structural factors" that were emphasized when the tactic was being applied.

The resolution states:

"(7) The citing of conjunctural factors proved some time later to have been in error, the economic perspective turning out to be completely the reverse and giving way to a prolonged favourable cycle, the danger of war was postponed. On the other hand the crisis of Stalinism developed considerably faster than had been visualized." Nonetheless this entry as practiced by several sections ended only as the impact of a turn marked as being around 1966 (as the new wave of youth radicalism broke over them) led them to alter their tactics in this field. According to Comrade Pierre Frank in his report on entrism "this tactic was and proved itself to be the only one possible for a whole period."

Even today, 19 years after, the 1951 convention document's broad projection for the CCF-NDP entry remains accurate. The workers as a class are going through an NDP experience—it is only taking longer than we expected. For Bolsheviks that time is precious time indeed as it gives us new opportunities to accumulate and develop cadre which is absolutely essential if we are to take advantage of the favorable turn of events to make

a revolution.

And already by December 1955, when they had been expelled from the CCF and had set up the independent Socialist Educational League with its press the *Workers Vanguard*, the Canadian Trotskyists were feeling the pressure, the need to free themselves from the restraint that long-term entry tended to impose.

Two months after the public appearance of the SEL came the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its revelations of the crimes of Stalin, followed shortly by the uprising in Poznan and then the Hungarian revolution. The Communist parties throughout the world underwent a profound crisis. In Canada the entire Quebec leadership split away, followed shortly by the defection of nearly all its public figures save Tim Buck. How could the Trotskyists, entered in the CCF, meet this challenge?

The CCF leadership began to shuck off every last remnant of socialism symbolized by the Regina Manifesto as they cleared the way for the launching of the NDP with the newly united CLC. The dumping of the Manifesto set off centrifugal forces throughout the CCF. Prominent BC left-winger Rod Young announced the formation of a new socialist party. How could entered Trotskyists block this dissipation of forces? Regroupment becomes a matter of great interest in socialist circles—how could Trotskyists, entered in a movement from which many of these forces were decamping, participate? Not only did the war not come, but a powerful antiwar movement commenced to develop, particularly among student youth, the first expression of the student radicalization that was to gather momentum through the '60s. The Cuban masses under Fidel and Che took power and offered a new pole of attraction on the left.

Obviously entry was becoming increasingly insufferable. The SEL moved out, within the framework of its CCF orientation, but quite prepared to risk the security of its CCF fraction, for it needed every force at its disposal. We moved right in on the CP, circulating literature discussing and challenging their line. In front of a mass membership meeting we forced CP leader Tim Buck himself to agree to a public debate (which of course never came off). We initiated a series of regroupment forums with the ex-CPers in Montreal. We launched an independent Toronto Socialist Youth Forum. As the CCF was being played down prior to the launching of the NDP we entered a candidate in a Toronto federal riding in 1958 where a token CCF candidate was in the running. When the CCF made a no-contest deal we went into the Hastings-Frontenac by-election to challenge the Minister of External Affairs for his seat. We consolidated youth contacts gained in the antiwar and labor party youth movements by launching in 1960 an open and independent Trotskyist youth organization, the Young Socialists. We moved out to popularise the Cuban cause and launched the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

These initiatives were not taken without meeting some resistance within our own forces. In the Vancouver branch an opposition clique developed around Bill Whitney. Only for a short period had the Vancouver comrades had the opportunity and the responsibility of defending the full program of Trotskyism particularly in its highest form of expression, the building of a vanguard, in contest with all other political tendencies. They had been deprived over an extended period of time of that condition that is

normal and healthy for the full development of revolutionary socialists. Like the prisoners in the cages of Vietnam's Thieu they had been long cramped up and some such as Whitney lost the use of vital faculties. To this day Whitney is an able articulator of many of the basic theoretical concepts of Trotskyism but he is hopelessly crippled with liquidationism.

After many long and tortuous discussions where agreement was made to terminate the BC entry, which never seemed to get implemented, Whitney became isolated, the branch moved out and he broke. In February 1959, the Vancouver Socialist Forum was launched through Malcolm Bruce and Fred McNeil, former top leaders of the CP who had come to our side.

It was in this period that we gathered the key cadre for the next big opportunity that the CCF, to become the New Democratic Party, faced us with. The situation was without precedent. The Canadian Trotskyists were confronted with the challenge of being in on the birth of a new mass labor party formation. The next turn proved that through the hectic and trying struggles of the previous decades we had laid true and sound foundations under ourselves, that we had developed valuable cadre.

No revolutionary opportunity, no matter how profound, produces its own cadre. At best it only provides the culture where its elements can begin to flourish and coalesce as cadre for the next upsurge; or the opportunity for cadre that has already been formed in a previous struggle to intervene and transform itself and move forward to victory. We proved in the crucial period of 1957-63 that we had gathered together invaluable forces, that we had assimilated the program of the revolution, and that we had learned how to implement it—its politics. But we had not had time to accumulate sufficient cadre. It is this that is the ongoing and supreme challenge before the Canadian and world Trotskyist movement.

In 1955 with the merger of the Trades and Labor Congress—American Federation of Labor to the Canadian Congress of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations which had endorsed the CCF as labor's political arm since 1943, new opportunities opened up to widen the bases of support for independent labor political action. The CCF brass saw it as a chance to broaden their apparatus and to rid themselves of a broad left wing concentrated largely in the Prairie provinces and B. C. This left-reformist to centrist wing had crystallized in opposition to the rightward course of the CCF top brass largely around the party's founding programmatic statement known as the Regina Manifesto. This statement, essentially Christian pacifist, nonetheless committed the movement to public ownership of the basic means of production and to irreconcilable opposition against "Wars designed to make the world safe for capitalism."

While the Manifesto had long ceased to have any relationship at all to the completely opportunist positions to which the parliamentary caucus consistently committed the party, the CCF leadership formally decided to get rid of it. As the Ontario leadership expressed it in their provincial council minutes "the CCF should endeavor to make its appeal more pragmatic, more empirical," and should publish some new basic literature "which would restate the application of democratic socialism in today's world and in today's terms." That turned out to be the Winnipeg Declaration of Principles which dumped pub-

lic ownership for public control, and replaced abolition of private profit and corporate power with the concept of social planning. This statement was jammed through the 1956 CCF Convention in Winnipeg.

The dumping of the Regina Manifesto was of course also highly agreeable to the trade union brass. The *United Autoworker* applauded the new look: "Many in organized labor will welcome the Winnipeg Declaration . . . with the tag 'Socialism-Will-Cure-Everything' off its back the CCF should be . . . much more acceptable to union voters."

Early in 1957 the CCF leadership, through a series of formal and informal secret discussions with the CLC brass, laid the basis for a Joint Political Action Committee, subsequently set up by the CLC 1958 convention and renamed the National Committee for the New Party. It projected a series of seminars, conferences and forums throughout the country at which CCFers, unionists, farmers' organizations, "professional people and other liberally minded persons" could prepare for the launching of a new party to be founded in July-August 1961.

These developments had a shattering effect on the old CCF left, which we had concluded after many experiences was exhausted as a viable force. Many of them walked away, others talked in terms of splits, on the West Coast of tearing the BC CCF out of the federal movement, or of setting up a new socialist party.

We Trotskyists, however, saw a tremendous new opportunity opening up for us and decided to throw every ounce of energy into the debates, seminars and discussions, into every process leading to the formation of the new party, the new labor party striving to assure its being launched as a revolutionary party.

Of course, we knew that it could not be a vanguard party. But we decided to do everything possible to project our ideas into the situation, to give it a revolutionary program, to permeate it with the spirit of our transitional program.

We saw the situation confronting us as similar to that speculated upon by Trotsky around the possible developments of a labor party on this continent back in 1932.

"It is evident that the possibility of participating in and of utilizing a 'labor party' movement would be greater in the period of its inception; that is, in the period when the party is not a party but an amorphous political mass movement. That we must participate in it at that time and with the greatest energy is without question, but not to help form a 'labor party' which will exclude us and fight against us but to push the progressive elements of the movement more and more to the left by our activity and propaganda. I know this seems too simple for the new great school which searches in every way for a method to jump over its feeble head."

At that juncture the Communist Party was staggering from crisis to crisis—set off by the 20th Congress revelations of the crimes of Stalin. The anti-nuclear arms struggle, the Cuban Revolution and the Black struggle in the US were stimulating new elements and moving them to the left. There was a feeling of protest developing in the ranks of organized labor against the crushing of the IWA's organizing drive in Newfoundland and the rash of union-busting legislation.

The old alignments were breaking up—there was significant sentiment for the regroupment of socialist forces—the most notable expression the Council of Socialist Clubs

in Montreal. The seminars and conferences on the new party were attracting new forces. We were actively involved in all these processes.

We threw the pages of our press, the *Workers Vanguard*, wide open to discussion on all the issues. We explained the need for the new party to commit itself to public ownership, why it must take a clear and unequivocal stand against the war drive. We took on every opposition, from the Stalinists who tried to scuttle its development as a class party by advocating a "democratic national coalition of patriotic forces for peace," to the sectarian critics on the sidelines who were unable to distinguish the unions from the bureaucrats, to the Galbraithians, to the would-be liquidators into the bourgeois Liberal Party. We urged all socialists, no matter their tendency, to come in and fight for a class struggle policy and a militant leadership.

At the same time we projected the Trotskyist movement even more vigorously to the fore through fusing the Toronto-based Socialist Educational League to the Vancouver-based Socialist Information Center and launching out as the League for Socialist Action—a cross-Canada movement. We published and circulated on a big scale a simple programmatic pamphlet popularizing our transitional program and presenting ourselves as a socialist tendency whose relationship would be best expressed as an affiliate of a federated labor party.

The New Democratic Party was launched as a labor party by some 1800 voting delegates who made it the most representative working class assembly that has yet taken place in this country. The tumultuous policy debates showed the radical potential of the Canadian working class.

Our understanding of the processes at work, the implementation of our orientation, was overwhelmingly vindicated by this founding convention. The old leadership of the CCF, allied with the trade-union bureaucracy, prevailed but not without a head-on collision with a core of delegates who won such widespread support that it could only be defeated by the just elected national leader, T. C. Douglas, blackmailing the delegates into submission by announcing his resignation should they adopt an anti-NATO NORAD resolution.

For the next two or three years the tempo of NDP development continued forward at a high pitch. In Quebec in the 1965 federal elections, with practically no provincial organization and heavily marked as an English and federalist party, its vote shot up 60% to 18% in Montreal and 12% of the total vote. But increasingly it tended to move to the right, to become more structured, more bureaucratized. In 1963, a large proportion of comrades, who were our most important connection with the NDP through its youth movement, were expelled.

Without doubt our greatest successes in the earlier, formative years of the NDP were in the youth arena. In 1961, while the League firmed up as an open and pan-Canadian movement, the Young Socialists dissolved their public face and entered the NDY in order to integrate their forces fully in the building of the NDP's youth movement, the New Democratic Youth, to build its left wing and to consolidate out of it a revolutionary youth cadre. In key areas of the country—Ontario and British Columbia—they provided some of the main leadership forces in the NDY.

The Young Socialists recruited their first substantial forces out of the NDY and trained them in the fires of

its internal struggles. Our forces faced repeated and sweeping expulsions which we met with vigorous public defense campaigns through which we were able each time to reconstitute our fraction—with an increased number of new recruits who, if less experienced, were nonetheless completely immersed in the process of gaining invaluable experiences.

During this process the YS launched a Trotskyist youth newspaper, and through it expanded its open activities. In 1966-67, as the ascending youth radicalization began to move past an NDY paralyzed by its right-wing leadership, we withdrew from it and launched an independent Trotskyist youth organization which, from an effective point of view of intervening in the struggle, can be said to have replaced the NDY in the youth arena. At the same time as the YS carries our orientation to support the NDP propagandistically, without doing fraction in the NDP, it is able to operate in many ways as the pro-NDP student organization.

At our 1963 convention we concluded that the formative period of the party was then ending and at the same time new opportunities to widen the base of our league not finding reflection in the NDP were opening up. We therefore decided to pay more attention to our NDP work in the trade unions and to direct more time and energy to our independent work, to build the antiwar movement, to increase the circulation of our literature, to develop our forums. One of the most significant decisions of this new stage was to step up our commitment to participation in the developing struggles in Quebec.

We began to develop the increasingly apparent possibilities for coalescing widely diverse forces behind an anti-Vietnam war movement in 1965. The work of our US co-thinkers was of tremendous value for its scope, for the movement was more limited here, its course of development in many ways has paralleled that of the US. Our "single issue" "End Canadian Complicity" strategy, fought out with all currents and tendencies in conferences across the country, has firmly established a movement that has been capable of a whole series of actions, ever renewing itself as new waves of youth enter into the struggle. While our opponents have labelled the anti-Vietnam war movement "Trotskyist," the imperialist aggression in Vietnam has evoked such response, has proven to be such a key factor in the radicalization process, that all forces, like it or not, have had to participate in its mass actions.

The anti-Vietnam war movement has been the broadest ongoing movement in decades. Only the rising women's liberation movement, with which there is an inevitable interaction, would appear to be approaching it.

Whereas the NDP and trade-union brass first repulsed all approaches of the antiwar movement, then took a cautious, passive attitude, they have been compelled to make identity with it. We gave them no peace. We buffeted them from both inside and outside and thus have helped to raise the level of an entire mass in key sectors of the Canadian working class. In the process of this ongoing and vital

activity which we have carried, we have established right across the country a whole layer of comrades who are widely respected as leaders in their communities and whom the NDP and trade-union leadership have had to recognize.

At the same time as we moved out freely and independently of the NDP milieu, in keeping with the dynamic concept of our NDP orientation, our fraction reached out of its localized, contracting work areas to play a key role in the formation of province-wide socialist caucuses in the Ontario, Alberta and BC sections.

These caucuses, well under way by 1966, continued to expand on a modest basis for a couple of years until the rise of Waffle for which they prepared valuable groundwork. They played a pioneer role through their struggle against the reformist leadership in legitimizing caucus formations in the NDP. Through their projection of a rounded alternative socialist program and in the struggle to promote it, they trained cadre and established leading figures on the left.

Our last convention prepared our movement to meet developing Canadian national sentiments which we interpreted as anti-US imperialist, leading to anti-Canadian capitalist and to class consciousness. When this burst into the NDP with the formation of Waffle we were ready to integrate ourselves into it. With the rise and firming up of Waffle as an English-Canadian-wide force, the area of revolutionary propaganda in the NDP has been widened and the NDP has become more attractive to radicalizing youth. But Waffle is as yet to some considerable degree still outside the movement. It has not yet directed itself into the constituency organizations or towards the established union movement and so does not cause us, at this time at any rate, to make any substantial tactical adjustments in our orientation.

Our orientation to the NDP, to the labor party, is an orientation to the working class in its process of developing political consciousness. We have been firm and consistent in maintaining this orientation because we have no intention of being cut off or cutting ourselves off from the force that is destined to settle accounts with capitalist rule and establish workers power. For the period that is foreseeable ahead the working class is going to go through that experience. We intend to participate in that experience—fully. No one, nothing is going to stop us. Neither sectarians, nor opportunists—nor the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class nor their direct agents. We intend to be right in there—to expedite that experience and to assure that it moves forward to the forging of the type of instrument necessary to realize the Canadian revolution.

We are flexible in its application because the tempo of the class struggle and the maturing of the workers is vastly uneven; and it is possible—even necessary to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself right now—to turn the relationship of forces between ourselves and the reformist leadership of the NDP to our advantage. It is necessary to build the cadre now.