

# **EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS**

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**The Struggle to Reunify the Fourth International (1954-63): Volume III**

## **How Healy and Pablo Blocked Reunification**

### **(Documents, 1956 - 58)**

**Plus Documents on Algeria and Ceylon**

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# Introduction

by Tim Wohlforth

This is one of a series of volumes devoted to documentary material related to the reunification of the Fourth International, spanning the period from 1954 up to the successful conclusion of the reunification effort in 1963. These volumes constitute *Part 7 of Towards a History of the Fourth International*, prepared by the National Education Department of the Socialist Workers Party.

Previous volumes in this series have included articles on the postwar history of the Trotskyist movement and a documentary history of the 1953 crisis and split in the Fourth International.

This new series deals with the aftermath of that split, the period of the independent existence of the two factions that took shape in the struggle (the International Committee and the International Secretariat), and the various efforts to mend the rift.

Included is material on the first parity commission of 1954; political documents produced by components of the International Committee; the response of both world factions to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, to the Polish and Hungarian upheavals in that year, and other events; the effort to reunify the international in 1957 and the causes of the breakdown of that effort; and the successful drive towards reunification beginning in 1961.

*The Struggle to Reunify the Fourth International* includes correspondence, documents, circulars, and many other items—much of it previously unpublished. Material for this collection was made available by Karolyn and Tom Kerry, Tim Wohlforth, the Library of Social History in New York City, the archives of the Socialist Workers Party, and the late James P. Cannon.

Thanks are due to David Keil, among others, for translating several items published in this series.

The materials were selected and the introductory note preceding each section was written by Fred Feldman. Views expressed in the introductory notes are his own.

For the sake of historical accuracy the material has been subjected to minimal editing. Where comrades used pen-names in their international activity, the real name is inserted in brackets. For instance Gerry Healy used the names Burns and Preston, Dobbs used the name Smith, and Sherry Mangan used the name Patrick O'Daniel.

The term "section" appears frequently in these documents. This word was used in two different senses within the world Trotskyist movement. On the one hand, it refers

to those groups which are affiliated to the Fourth International. Secondly, it is used in reference to organizations that are barred from membership in the Fourth International by reactionary legislation, such as the SWP, but are in full political solidarity with the world Trotskyist movement and represent the continuity of Trotskyism in their countries.

This collection includes relatively little material from the French section of the International Committee (now the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste) or from Latin America. This was due to the limited amount of such material now available in the United States. It is hoped that the publication of this documentary collection will encourage others who participated in these events to help fill in these and other gaps remaining in the historical record of the Fourth International for this period.

Gerry Healy has issued a multi-volumed documentary collection, *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism* (London: New Park, 1974) which purports to cover the period from 1951 to the 1970s. The bulk of the items in that collection dealing with the years 1954-63 will also be found in this series.

However, there is much in this series that is not to be found in Healy's collection. It is hoped that this series will help in establishing the honest historical record of this period.

Gerry Healy's *Problems of the Fourth International*, to be found in Volume Four of *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*, as well as Cliff Slaughter's introductory material to the various volumes, present a grossly distorted and tendentious account of this period. The need to uphold these distortions may help to explain why so much relevant material is left out of Healy's collection.

The introductory notes to a number of sections in this series refer to some of Healy's falsifications, pointing out how they are refuted by the actual documentary record of what took place, including letters written by Healy.

The factionally-motivated falsifications exposed in these pages were part of a process of degeneration that eventually led to Healy's current campaign to frame up Joseph Hansen, George Novack, James P. Cannon, and other SWP leaders on charges of complicity with or covering up for the Stalinist secret police.

Above all, however, this series demonstrates how principled revolutionaries approached the extremely difficult but vitally necessary task of reuniting the world Trotskyist forces. It will also help to deepen our understanding of how important this reunification was for the future development of the Fourth International.

## SECTION IV: GROWING INTEREST IN REUNIFICATION

The narrowing of the differences between the two factions inevitably raised the question of reunification. Peng continued to press for steps in this direction. After receiving a letter from Ernest Germain, George Breitman wrote a letter to the SWP Political Committee. Breitman held that while the struggle of the IC against Pabloism had been vindicated, the majority of the IS had evolved differently since its "Fourth World Congress" than the IC had expected. Cannon also took note of the convergence of views, while adding that difference of tone and emphasis might prove important.

An initial face-to-face discussion with Germain was not very fruitful. Germain argued that the IC (and particularly the SWP) had come over to the positions of the IS. This conclusion, which became a theme of some of Germain's subsequent writings on the unity issue, was based on noting the similarities between the IS's conjunctural analysis of conditions in the USSR in 1953 and the SWP's analysis of conditions in the USSR after 1956. In Germain's opinion, these similarities proved that the IS had been correct in 1953. As part of this reasoning, Germain dropped from consideration questions of analysis and

attitude toward Stalinism, Stalinist regimes, and Stalinist parties. In the view of the IC supporters, divergences over these questions had actually provoked the political dispute.

While Germain held that an evaluation of who was right in 1953 was not a prerequisite to reunification, he found it hard to consistently maintain this stance. Instead he argued (according to the report of this conversation) that the SWP would now be obliged to "come to its members and tell them something that was in contradiction to the slander we had heaped on the IS." On the other hand, the IS would repudiate none of its earlier characterizations of the IC and the SWP.

Gerry Healy's letters stressed the continued factional activities of Pablo in England and pointed to the IS position on Algeria as evidence of continuing grave differences. Healy was troubled by the fact that "we have to answer the question of why we split in the first place, if unity can be achieved now."

Despite the continuing tensions reflected in the discussions and correspondence, interest in reunification continued to grow.

1. *“Essentially we are negligent of the centralized cooperative leadership”*: letter from Peng Shu-tse to Lee (translated by W. J. Whitney—February 1956)

Paris

Dear Lee,

In your letter of inquiry about the situation in the IC, as you do not state the purpose your American friend intends to utilize the information for, I am rather uncertain as to what is required. However, the following casual observations, without too much regard to serious assessment, will give you my opinion in a very brief form.

Since the establishment of the IC three years ago, not much has been accomplished except at the beginning in the fight against Pablo's revisionism. In this time several meetings have been held at irregular intervals, sometimes three months, sometimes six. All these meetings mainly dealt with reports from England, France, and Germany, rarely with political questions. That is, no political decisions were made on political matters. For example, on the question of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the IC gave no decision or direction.

In such a long period, the worst thing was that the IC occupied themselves with the exhausting discussion of the complicated problem of the French section. The loose, informal atmosphere of this discussion reduced the IC meetings to an unbusinesslike proceeding.

As for the sections concerned with CP work, England and Switzerland were able to realize important developments, but the French section, paralyzed by its sectarianism, was unable to take advantage of the favorable developments. For example, in the crises of the French CP, it could not even discover or evaluate what was going on, and thus had no influence.

The Italian section, although they have made more progress, have lost connection with the IC. This is because the French section which had the responsibility of corresponding with them, did not properly discharge these responsibilities. And for the same reason, in Latin America, the communications we had with individuals there have been severed for two years.

#### WHY DID THE SITUATION DEVELOP LIKE THIS?

1. The IC was not set up as a stable organization like the IS. That is, it did not have the responsibility of the political development of our movement and the task of preparing thereto the necessary documents and reports. Nor did it have the responsibility of contacting all the sections to help the weaker in solving their difficult problems. Nor did it assume the task of exchanging political opinions with the more highly developed sections.

2. The responsible IC comrades are dispersed and have no contact with each other apart from the irregular meetings. The most responsible comrades, the English, also concentrated on the activities of their own country and paid little attention to the work of the IC.

3. The French section, centrally located geographically, and able to communicate in Italian and Spanish, was logically appointed as the IC center, but unfortunately, due to the weaknesses previously enumerated, did not assume their responsibilities. On the contrary, they played a destructive role. . . .

Above all, the present IC does not correspond to Trotsky's idea of what the international revolutionary-socialist world party should be in its cooperation with the sections and in their centralized direction. The essence of Pablo's error was that he made the IS a bureaucratic centralized leadership, rather than the cooperative participation of all the sections. On the other hand the IC is the other extreme. Essentially we are negligent of the *centralized cooperative leadership*. The tendency may not do harm to the stronger sections, but it is very important to the weak who need help from the International.

Now to correct this is not easy. First of all, I think it would be best if we had a comrade sent from America, resident in Europe, to reorganize the IC and set up a stable organization according to the international regulations. . . . To take up the responsibilities of communication with all the sections especially the weakest, to help them solve their problems. . . . to prepare the necessary discussion materials for the IC meetings, etc. Paramount in importance, to assist the French section to clean up their sectarianism and to mend their split, i.e., the Lambert and Bleibtreu factions.

It is necessary to publish an international review as an instrument to present a centralized international position. Alongside this we should reevaluate our attitude towards those sections still with the IS. For not only is the Ceylonese political position the same as ours, but even in France, Germany, Italy, etc., the majority of the comrades that still belong to the IS are loyal to the Trotskyist program. Thus for the needs of the development of the international situation and especially in the interests and perspectives of our movement in Europe, we should take certain measures to reunify those comrades with us wherever possible, cutting them away from Pablo's revisionism and bureaucratism.

But with the IC as at present constituted, we are not only unable to attract those comrades who belong to the IS, but objectively we even help Pablo to control the IS and to consolidate his position.

[salutation missing]

2. *“They actually come very near to the documents of the 4th WC”*: letter from Ernest Germain to George Breitman (May 3, 1956)

Dear George,

Great events often have their grotesque shadows. At the very moment Stalinism entered its death crisis in Moscow, the International Committee decided to break up the parity

committee. The main reason given for suddenly reversing the process of reunification is really unique in the history of the Trotskyist movement. It is said that the “German Pabloites,” faced with a call for a solidarity strike in Bremerhaven at the time of the great London dock strike, instructed their contacts not to follow that call, because it was given by the Cannonites. Thereby they are said to have acted once again “as strikebreakers,” and of course with strikebreakers one doesn't unify oneself, does one?

Is it really necessary to add what follows?

1. The leadership of the German section did not receive and has not received till this very day any "call" for a solidarity movement with the British dock strike, launched by the International Committee.

2. The Bremerhaven comrades and contacts of our German section are without a single exception shipyard and metal workers, and not dockers. They could therefore not implement any call for solidarity with a dockers strike, even if they had received one.

3. Under the given circumstances, and whereas in Hamburg also our German section has no dock workers in its ranks, the only action of the section at the time of the London dock strike had to be a propaganda and literary one (as was the action of the SWP, the LSSP and most of the Trotskyist organizations around the world). It consisted of reports given to members and sympathizers, and an article in the German paper, lauding the strike and citing it as an example of working class militancy in the face of a conservative union bureaucracy playing the game of the bourgeoisie.

Don't you think it somewhat lightminded and irresponsible to have as serious a matter as the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement decided upon by some gossip and uncontrolled facts, which can only throw ridicule on the authors of the said resolution? Is your great love of truth, historical and factual, not somewhat perturbed by this childish attempt to decide political matters by means of gross falsifications and slanders? Some people in the Moscow Kremlin seem to have been forced to admit publicly that in the long run one cannot build any policy, even a reactionary one, on a pyramid of lies. Is this the moment for some so-called orthodox Trotskyists to enter upon such a road?

Cannon himself thought it necessary to write a 20-page letter on the subject of unification of the Trotskyist movement. Whatever one's ideas on the practical possibilities of the unification may be, it surely is a political issue which should be decided by political analysis and discussion, and political tests as well, and not by whims of irresponsible people, who are busy giving instructions to the whole world, and who get very angry when some sections of mankind don't even receive their instructions.

I can only repeat what has been my opinion ever since the split was precipitated. It is unprincipled politics to start in such vital an issue for the movement by empirical and pragmatic criteria like mutual distrust, considerations on "relationship of forces," arbitrary prejudices ("it won't work"), etc. The only principled basis for approaching the question of unity is a decision on the nature of the political differences. Evidence accumulated since the split points overwhelmingly in the direction of what I firmly held ever since that moment: the differences were of a tactical nature and did not involve issues of a programmatic character. They therefore did not tend to accumulate and increase, but rather led to periodic adjustments of tactics which cannot be said to have brought both tendencies farther apart. Careful study of the documents submitted to the international discussion by the International Committee showed this already clearly. Whatever may be the inconsistencies of these documents, by characterizing the nature of the Third Chinese Revolution and the People's

Republic of China in the way it is done in these documents; by clearly indicating the dynamics of the world relationship of forces between the classes, they actually come very near to the documents of the 4th WC which you so violently and unjustly criticized. Cannon's big article on the XXth Congress of the CP of Russia rounds out this analysis by an appreciation of the internal evolution of the Soviet Union in all points similar to that which the International has elaborated.

The comparison of what was written on both sides two years ago and what is written today could help many comrades to understand what was fundamental and what was accidental in the dispute. Surely no serious Trotskyist will continue to argue today that it was "capitulating to Stalinism" to point out that under the new and unfavorable relationship of forces in the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy could only hope to save its power and privileges for a short time by giving in to the pressure of the masses and making big concessions to them. The *Militant* is writing the very same thing now week after week, and I'm glad to read it there! At no time did we draw any other conclusions from this fact than to look upon it as a new phase in the crisis of Stalinism, i.e., a phase of rapid maturing of the objective and subjective conditions of the political revolution in the Soviet Union and of the overthrow of the bureaucratic dictatorship. Having come to express the same ideas, don't you think it is high time to make the most of the exceptionally favorable conditions for an upsurge of our movement on a worldwide scale, by uniting our forces and overcoming a useless and senseless split in several countries?

Needless to say, the liquidationist nature of the Cochranite grouping and its handful of international followers was recognized and condemned by us even before the 4th WC, and speaking for myself I find no difficulty for pointing out that you understood the true nature of that grouping earlier and better than we did.

In any case, this is no time to make a strengthening of our movement today dependent on a precondition of setting-the-record-straight with regard to the responsibilities for the split. We are living thrilling moments in the history of Trotskyism. Great causes for which we fought as a tiny minority are seized upon by millions of people and imposed by them first by pressure upon the bureaucrats, then by revolt and revolution against the bureaucrats. In this period, which must fill every revolutionist and every Trotskyist with utmost pride and confidence, the petty quarrels of yesterday look only as small but nonetheless real obstacles on our road to progress.

Do away with these obstacles!

Uphold the agreement on the parity commission!

Initiate the international discussion which, today, could lead to a rapid reunification congress of the world Trotskyist movement!

Concentrate your blows on imperialism and Stalinism which both are in the throes of their death agony, and don't waste your efforts in weakening for historically unimportant reasons the Trotskyist movement which needs the strength of every living Trotskyist to achieve the great task before it!

Fraternally yours,

E. Germain

3. "*Pabloism minus Cochran and Co. has proved somewhat different than it was or seemed to be*": letter from George Breitman to the SWP Political Committee (May 19, 1956)

Detroit, Mich.

Dear Comrades,

The enclosed letter to me from Germain was forwarded here and received two days ago. I have typed an exact copy for you.

I am not familiar with the Bremerhaven business or the latest developments around the parity committee, and am not especially interested in the details right now. Aside from them, I think it is time to take a new look at the whole question. I have been thinking about it on and off for some time, even before the receipt of the Chinese comrade's letter last fall recommending a changed orientation on the international discussion, but circumstances made it difficult for me to follow through.

Leaving aside questions of individuals, it is clear that we were correct to launch a struggle against what we called "Pabloism," and the greatest credit is due to those who first understood this (as you will recall, I was not among them). But an objective evaluation of what has happened since the launching of this struggle should convince almost everyone that no one clearly foresaw everything that has happened. The really die-hard "Pabloites" (in the sense in which we understood that term), the best representatives and spokesmen of the capitulatory tendency, proved to be the American, British and some French elements, while the IS group, for whatever reasons—and our conduct was unquestionably very important among those reasons—paused, held back and did not go all the

way down the road of the Cochrans, Lawrences and Mestres.

Has our orientation taken this *fact* sufficiently into consideration? I don't think so. Have we made a completely accurate assessment of the tactics pursued in the last two years, which were aimed in great part at dividing the genuinely revolutionary and the centrist elements away from the capitulatory tendency, or what remained of it after the Cochranites left? On the basis of what I know—about the Ceylonese, etc.—I am inclined to doubt it. Have we made an objective study of how the old IS and its followers have reacted to the latest events in the crisis of Stalinism—whether the tendency toward capitulation among them has grown stronger or been weakened, whether they look to the bureaucracy or to the workers as the motor force, etc.? On this point I have no knowledge, but I think it should provide important, perhaps even decisive, information as to the direction in which they are moving.

I'd like to get more information on this last point, but even without it I feel safe in saying that Pabloism minus Cochran and Co. has proved somewhat different than it was or seemed to be before the split (among other things, to speak now just from the viewpoint of tactics, it is *weaker*).

For these reasons, I urge that a review of the present situation be made, and consideration be given to adopting a more positive attitude toward continuing the international discussion up to and including the possibility of a reunification congress.

Comradely,  
(signed) George Breitman

P.S. Knowing of Comrade Cannon's interest in this matter, I am sending him a copy of Germain's and this letter.

4. "*I am more interested in what the Pabloites do than in what they say*": letter from James P. Cannon to George Breitman (May 24, 1956)

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear George:

I received the copy of your May 19 letter to the PC with the enclosure of a copy of Germain's letter to you. I had been expecting something like this and expect that there will be more to follow. I have been doing quite a little thinking about this whole question, especially since the new developments in Russia. It is true, as Germain says, that the reaction of the Pabloite paper in Paris and the line taken in my March 9 speech [reprinted in *Speeches for Socialism*, Pathfinder, 1971] were "in all points similar." The tone and the emphasis of the two articles, however, were different; and tone and emphasis always have a political significance. It goes without saying, also, that we reject out of hand Germain's sly pretense that we have finally come around to the position which "the International"—meaning the Pablo faction—"has elaborated" in the past. As we know, Cochran-Clarke, Lawrence and Mestre drew different conclusions from the previous "elaboration" of the Pabloites, and for good reason.

I particularly noted that the article in the Pabloite paper specifically repudiated the Deutscherite concept of the self-reform of the Stalinist bureaucracy. That is an important development. Previously, as you know, they had confined themselves to private assurances on this point in Germain's personal letters to you, while combining with the real Deutscherites in this country and in England and supporting them against us. In view of the costly experiences in the past, I think it would be the part of wisdom to watch developments for a while, with particular reference to the evolution of their policy *and their actions* on this most fundamental point.

Germain, who is in love with words, thinks agreement on a formula can settle all differences. That's something, of course, but not everything. I, for my part, am more interested in what the Pabloites do than in what they say. The words of the Third Congress documents obviously meant different things to different people, and the differences were not "tactical." Liquidationism is not a tactic. That, plus profoundly serious questions of organizational principle, caused the split. It will not be healed by a return to the old word-play and the old regime as if nothing had happened. "Unity maneuvers" around the trick formula of a "parity commission" for discussions won't do any good either. A parity commission makes



sense only as an executive body to arrange a formal unification already agreed upon.

Meantime our most important task on the international field is to help orient our own people on the new situation in the Soviet Union. We are now dealing with indisputable facts of a new stage in the development of the Russian Revolution, and not with suppositions and speculations about the good intentions of the Stalinist bureaucracy. We must help our comrades to understand this and to draw the necessary tactical conclusions. There is danger that they will fail to do this if they think or suspect that the analysis of the new developments contains or conceals the slightest taint of revisionism of basic Trotskyist theory and policy. Our method, so brilliantly exemplified in *The Militant*, week after week, of first drawing a clear line of principle, is the only way to prepare the movement for effective tactical action in the great new opportunity opening up, especially in those countries where the Stalinists control a workers' mass movement.

A reopening of unity discussions with the Pabloites at the present moment would be more apt to hinder than to help this work of orienting the international Trotskyist cadres in the new situation, because of their justified suspicions and hostility to Pabloite political conclusions, based solidly on past experiences. They have not forgotten—and should not forget—that Pabloism inspired and supported conciliators who became liquidators in one country after another, including our own. Let us wait and see what conclusions the Pabloites have drawn from the disastrous consequences of their policy, and especially what they do about it.

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I think the first rule in political action, as in military action, is to put one's own ranks in order for effective combat. In elaborating tactics in a new situation, it is necessary to begin by sharply re-drawing principled lines, to make sure that the tactical actions serve the principle and do not dilute it. Otherwise, tactical approaches to other movements tend to take the form of adaptation to politically hostile currents, and can end in capitulation to them. The capitulatory course of the Cochranites, who were inspired in the first place by the Pabloite policy of adaptation, is a shining example of this overeager attempt to get something for nothing by tactical maneuvers. I use the word "shining" here in the sense that an American congressman once compared a flashy opponent to "a rotten mackerel by moonlight, it shines and stinks."

My March 9 speech at Los Angeles was an attempt to apply the above-mentioned principle of politico-military strategy in a preparatory period for a great new campaign. This campaign will be continuing for a long time. It opens up immeasurable opportunities for our movement on the international field, and to a lesser, more limited, but still important extent, even in this country.

My speech combined the recognition of the new reality—manifest facts this time, not suppositions and speculations—with credit to the Soviet workers as the motor force in the new events leading up to a political revolution. I combined reaffirmation of our principled line of unconditional hostility to the Soviet bureaucracy with a denunciation of the theory of its self-reform as treason. And I tried to get this all-sided analysis in the same paragraph and even sometimes in the same sentence, so

that there could be no possibility of encouraging our comrades in this country, and especially abroad, to enter the new campaign with mere tactical prescriptions which might lead to adaptation and conciliation.

I think the line of the *Militant* after the first couple of weeks, and the resolution adopted by the Plenum, has admirably served our purpose, both of awakening the ranks of our movement to the new developments and the new opportunities and of hardening them in principle and outlawing any trace of conciliation with a modified Stalinism.

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But that's not enough. All the *Militant* has done and is doing in the new situation up to now, which is really beyond praise, cannot be considered as the whole campaign. It represents rather the work of *preparation*, the work of putting the ranks in order. Next comes the *tactical* approach to Stalinist workers, sympathizers, and half-sympathizers. This has scarcely been touched yet. But I think we can now begin it in earnest without running any danger of our cadres losing themselves in the Stalinist milieu.

Up to now our line has been one of analysis, exposition and denunciation of Stalinism and Stalinists in general. This was correct and necessary in the first stage of the campaign. It served the necessary purpose of demonstrating that we are still Trotskyists, 100 percent, and not advisors to the Stalinist bureaucrats. Now, having once again drawn the principled lines sharp and clear, we must begin to differentiate between the Stalinist bureaucrats and the Stalinist workers. Now we must begin the work of *persuasion*, with the deliberate aim of drawing Stalinist workers and peripheral elements into friendly discussion, of winning some of them over to an understanding of what Leninism really means, and of recruiting some of them into our ranks.

Here tone and manner become important, as always, for tone and manner always have to be suited to a political aim. The harsh tone and belligerent manner, which are indispensable implements in our unceasing war against the bureaucratic fakers, must be combined with an approach to the Stalinist workers in a friendly tone and patient manner, which are no less necessary implements in a recruiting campaign.

Smart-aleck, know-it-all attitudes, offensive wise-acreism, etc., can be left to the Shachtmanites. Such an approach only repels the shocked and bewildered Stalinist workers and sympathizers, and prevents any real communication with them. In our articles, and in our approach to individual contacts, we should begin to proceed *as if* we regarded the disoriented and demoralized rank and file Stalinists as people who are somehow or other devoted to the socialist ideal, and to the Soviet Union as the embodiment of a great revolution; as people with whom we hope to come to agreement for the construction of a genuine Leninist party.

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It will be difficult to orient our own people psychologically to this necessary turn, after so many years of physical separation from the Stalinist workers by a line of blood.

But this turn must be made if we are to follow up the preliminary work of our press with tangible results in the recruitment of new members and sympathizers. The prospects of this recruitment are poorer in this country than anywhere, due to the especially degenerate character of the American CP and to the additional circumstance—probably unique in the entire world—that both we and the Stalinists are isolated from the actual movement of the workers. But even so, the Stalinists are 20 times bigger than we are and we can get some recruits if we really try.

Even more important than that, we must remember that the Militant circulates all over the world and that Trotskyists everywhere read it. The prospects of the Trotskyists in most other countries, provided they combine a correct line of principled firmness with a flexible tactical approach, are beyond calculation. The Stalinist parties in many countries represent the real mass movement of the workers. The Trotskyist cadres in these countries now have the greatest possibilities they've ever had for rapid expansion in this mass movement.

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I am under the impression that a good many of our comrades have passively resisted the preoccupation of the Militant with the Russian question and Stalinism, and that there will be even greater resistance to a psychological readjustment to concentration on actual proselytizing work among Stalinists and Stalinist sympathizers. Some comrades see in this a contradiction with the basic line we elaborated many years ago—and which still holds good—that the main troops of the revolutionary party of the future will come out of the mass unions and not from the Stalinist milieu.

I think this idea is absolutely unassailable, but we should not be trapped in our own formula at every twist and turn of the road. *At the present moment* of dormant class struggle, when the workers generally are dominated by a mood of conservative passivity, a veritable explosion

of political interest has broken out in the Stalinist milieu. This opens up possibilities for us, not for big mass activities and rapid, wide-scale expansion of our influence in this country, but for numerous contacts, animated political discussions and possible recruitment of individuals by ones, twos, and tens. Such recruits can strengthen our cadres and put us in better shape to exploit new opportunities in a new period of mass radicalization.

\* \* \*

We expect to build the revolutionary party out of new forces from the mass movement. The American Stalinist party is probably the most discredited, and proportionally the weakest, of all the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries. But for all that, we must not permit ourselves to forget that the Stalinist party is and will be our chief rival in the struggle for the allegiance of new strata of workers and youth turning to radicalism. Every blow we can deal to the Stalinists, by exposure and denunciation of the bureaucrats on one side, and by recruitment from its ranks on the other, helps to knock the main obstacle out of our road. Our campaign in the Stalinist milieu should not be considered as a contradiction to our main orientation toward the actual mass movement of the workers, but as part of the preparation to make it more effective.

Our work among the Stalinists should not be limited to the literary campaign in the Militant; and participation in the campaign in the various localities should not be restricted to those comrades who distribute the Militant at Stalinist meetings. Our *leading comrades* everywhere—including New York, and especially New York, which is the main political center—should be on top of this task, directly intervening at all Stalinist meetings and spending all the time necessary in patient, friendly discussion with contacts among the Stalinist workers.

Fraternally,  
James P. Cannon

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5. "A tendency in the direction of a similar political orientation": letter from James P. Cannon to George Breitman (excerpt—May 25, 1956)

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear George:

I enclose herewith some comments on your letter of May 19 with some amplifications which, as you will recognize, are intended for wider circulation among the leading comrades. I wish you would let me know how my exposition strikes you. As I see it, the most important thing in dealing with a tendency in the direction of a similar political orientation between us and the Pabloites is to do it right; that is, to take the process in stages, one stage at a time, and above all not to jump from the beginning to the possible concluding stage until the premises are firmly established. We are a long way from that.

We not only have to wait for further developments in the Pabloite camp, we also have to wait a while to see how the policy of the comrades allied with us in other countries evolves in the new situation. We have the strongest position and the strongest press and are in the best position to shape the course and pace of developments. But for the best results we have to know what we want and where we are going. First of all we want to hold the principled line clear and firm and we want to avoid any shotgun proceedings which would leave basic causes of the split unresolved to prepare new explosions.

We have no unity problem in this country, and as far as I know there is no problem in England. There is nothing to get hasty about here or there. There appears to be a real problem in France; but it is a complicated problem which is more apt to be worsened, rather than solved, by hasty action. France is the heart of the problem in Europe and we cannot let the Pabloites set the pace of development there. In the past they bungled everything in France, and

to judge from their latest maneuvers they are trying their best to make another mess of things. In spite of everything the La Verité group (PCI) clearly appears to have the best and most active cadres. Unity would have no value unless they are convinced and brought along. A unification

without them would probably make the situation worse than ever, and deprive us of any possibility of influencing their course in the future. . . .

Faternally,  
James P. Cannon

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6. *"Messali is a splendid supporter of our movement": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (June 1, 1956)*

Dear Jim:

We must be extremely careful with the Pabloites. Germain, who as usual waffles around in the center whilst contriving at all critical times to endorse the crimes of Pablo, plays a treacherous role in this whole business. As you say, actions speak louder than words.

This is especially true in relation to the civil war in Algeria. As you know, there are two forces involved in the national struggle in that country; the forces of Messali Hadj, which include the vast majority of Algerian workers living in France, as well as extensive support in Algeria (over 15,000 of its militants were in prison up to last November, i.e., before the recent wave of hostilities began); then there are the forces of the "Liberation Front" armed, financed and equipped from Cairo. This consists of some former Messalists, which include several Army officers trained by the French together with a sprinkling of corrupt politicians of a type like Ferhat Abbas. Bringing up the rear of this ragged crew are the Algerian Stalinists and the Pabloites.

The class issues involved in this struggle are quite pronounced. Messali is a splendid supporter of our movement and as you will see from his pamphlet which we have just shipped, reasons things out as a socialist. The "Front" represents a typical petty-bourgeois formation who desires "a deal" with the French (they accept the Nehru proposals).

A copy of an illegal paper put out by the "Front" made an attack on our people and Messali. This was prompted by the Pabloites who used the same language in their journal "La Vérité des Travailleurs." It was for circulating this journal that Pierre Frank and two others have recently been arrested.

Apart from the important political issues involved, it is perfectly clear that in the atmosphere prevailing, "unity" in France is not exactly a thriving proposition. If there is one thing that our people have done a good job on in France, it is on the Algerian issue. When I saw Messali last November, he was full of praise for them. Whatever may be their shortcomings, they were foursquare with the

Algerian revolution, and this to me is more decisive than the word-spinning of Germain.

We had a visit from Pablo last February. The man was arrogant and threatened to start a faction in our ranks if we didn't come to heel and join his "international." We told him to go to hell and the meeting terminated after 20 minutes. He behaved throughout in a hostile way. Since then he has attempted to start a duplicated magazine and has sent Santen from Holland to build a section here. To do this he has endeavored to regroup the most demoralized and unreliable people to fight us—hardly the sort of thing one would do if genuine unity were being sought.

The approach of Pablo is conditioned by the fact that a number of people who want to be orthodox Trotskyists are imprisoned, as it were, in his set-up. For a time the "Parity Commission" maneuver served to keep them quiet. Now this prop has gone, Germain pops up with a line of talk which behind the scenes contains blackmail threats such as he used here. We must hold a very firm course when dealing with such tricksters—otherwise nothing but confusion will result.

Our most important task is to prepare a world Congress around the draft international resolution which you have been discussing. Added to this would be the recent developments inside the CP. We are in complete agreement with what you say on this matter. I intend adding to your remarks in a few days by citing some of our experiences here.

When we have hammered out an international political line and clarified our own forces, then it will be up to all those who desire serious unification to take a stand on our decisions. I do not think George Breitman should have any truck with Germain. Let him stew as he is for the time being. Any communication with him could be the subject of factional use later and would almost certainly cause confusion in France, where the comrades have got good reason to be touchy about Pablo.

The urgent thing is for our International Committee to adopt a clear political line. The sooner we speed up this aspect the sooner we will clear up the international problems.

Warmest wishes,  
Burns [Healy]

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7. *"No grounds for believing Pabloism is compatible with orthodox Trotskyism": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (September 28, 1956)*

Dear Jim,

Yesterday I made a special trip to Paris for a discussion

with Comrade Peng. He is very much isolated and under all sorts of pressure from the Pabloites. This takes the form of a "unity" drive.

The theme goes like this. In 1953 the IS was right against Cannon and Co., but events have forced us, the orthodox Trotskyists, to change and now we take the line of the Pabloite IS. This they say is disclosed by the Militant and Pablo goes around declaring his support for the article on the 20th

Congress. They then top all this off with declarations about "our wonderful future" if only we were "united."

For those of us who have been through all this type of maneuver before, of course, there is no problem. In fact it very much reminds me of the old days in the Haston outfit when the Shachtman-Morrow "unity" feelers were around. During this period we were constantly bombarded with arguments that "the past was not the important thing," and did we or did we not think that the two tendencies could live side by side in one organization. Against this we had to patiently point out that in the past, life had shown that they could not, so it was difficult to answer a concrete yes and no to such a question. At that time, as you know, Germain was peddling his "conception" of unity and did in fact contact at one time Shachtman direct.

The Pabloite leaders today approach the unity issue superficially and it is always easy on this plane to trap isolated people who tend to forget the past. Comrade Peng, of course, has no illusions about Pabloism politically, but he is naive on the organisational issues. I stressed with him that we have to answer the question of why we split in the first place, if unity can be achieved now. To those of us who were in the leadership of the struggle at that time, there was no misunderstanding about Pablo's role. The one time we slipped up was when we gave him the benefit of the doubt for so long. Today there is in my view absolutely no grounds for believing that Pabloism is compatible with orthodox Trotskyism.

There is much in this tendency to remind us of past experience. The old WIL [Workers International League] was never tired of repeating its loyalty to the program of the FI and on occasions its spokesmen wrote with apparent conviction around this or that aspect of it. Superficial people, I well remember then, used to emphasize such things as positive proof that Haston and Co.,

despite their past errors on the 1938 Founding Conference split of the WIL, were now good Trotskyists. Of course, this was not so at all—the whole history of this tendency was wrong from way back to its organizational origin early in 1938, and these things, despite episodic proclamations supporting the program persisted right through the RCP [Revolutionary Communist Party] to the day when they practically took off for Social Democracy.

All these tendencies from time to time used this "agreement" argument as a sort of trick mechanism for unwary people. Pablo wrote 95% of the 3rd-World Congress resolution in a way that won our applause, but it was the 5% which had the sting in the tail and this was, as history has shown, decisive during the 1953 split.

What we have primarily to contend with today, as we have recognized for some time, is that a number of people are trapped in Pablo's groupings—but we cannot help them much if we do not adopt a principled position on all the issues.

I feel that we should prepare a statement on this "unity" issue which would help steady any people who may be sucked in by it and at the same time raise the political level. There is still a lot of inexperience around and we are always having to warn people against impressionistic reasoning. Unless this is done some smart aleck will always be found on the make trying to fool people with short memories. Comrade Peng is OK and we are bringing him to England for some time where we can let him see an organisation working. I am expecting a full report any day from one of our leading comrades who has been in Ceylon for several weeks. As soon as it is to hand I will mail it on. I would like your opinions on this Pablo issue. I will write you later on other aspects of international problems.

Warmest regards,  
s/Gerry

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#### 8. Summary of a conversation with Ernest Germain and Gerry Healy (author undetermined—October 18, 1956)

Germain, who had asked to see me, was more friendly this time. Obviously he was anxious to please, and this facilitated a clear and relatively calm definition of our respective positions.

He claimed there was practically no difference now between our positions and theirs since, he contended, we had finally come around to their position on the Soviet Union and the crisis of Stalinism. Therefore, the reunification of the International was entirely possible, and it was becoming a very urgent matter. Without reunification, he insisted, the unique opportunities offered by the crisis of Stalinism would be lost. He insisted on the urgency of the matter and added that if we made no move in that direction, they would have to call another world congress of their own, for it was about time to have another one, and this would then inevitably deepen the split.

Of course, I made our views as clear as possible, rejecting the view that *we* had finally come around to *their* position. He said they had been right in their evaluation of the USSR and the crisis of Stalinism, while we had seen the true nature of the U.S. minority before the IS realized it. This did not warrant our expulsion of the minority which he considered wrong; for, he said, we should have

waited until they openly proclaimed their revisionist theses. We expelled them, he said, because we suspected them to possibly develop into a revisionist group, and that was not yet a sufficient reason to expel them. He did not consider our discussion with the minority before the split a serious political discussion; and their alleged acts of indiscipline, he asserted, were within their rights as a faction and no ground for an expulsion either.

No political discussion with the IS had taken place before the SWP split from them, Germain said. The SWP, he said, had engineered the split because its leaders did not want the IS to eventually interfere in their sphere of interest. As long as they could do as they pleased in the U.S., he added, they had abstained from intervention in Europe. Even if we felt the IS was wrong or had become revisionist, he concluded, we would not have needed a public declaration of war against it and could have denounced it in an internal bulletin or declaration for members only, thus starting a thorough discussion of the question and avoiding a split.

He "sympathized with our difficulty now" to come to our members with something that was in contradiction to the slander we had heaped upon the IS; but that was our problem and had to be faced by us if we wanted reunification. They had never really slandered the SWP, he claimed. As to my suggestion that they try to seriously

analyze their own policies of the past few years, their political and other mistakes, he indignantly replied that this was out of the question. Never would they consent to a public admission of guilt. They might as well ask us to do the same; and it would make any reunification impossible.

He defended the entire policy of the IS since the Third Congress; it had always been correct and respected democratic centralism. I challenged this affirmation. He told me that party democracy did not depend on respecting the forms of English parliamentarism (which as I pointed out, Lenin recommended to the Bolshevik Party) but much more on the level of political education of the rank and file. He did not think that level was so very high in the SWP, while it was quite satisfactory in most of their sections.

He attacked Burns' [Healy] attitude at the IS and claimed Peng had always been given ample opportunity to express his views. Their complaints were unjustified, according to him. When I asked him why—if he was so intent on reunification—they had tried to set up a new section in England and had threatened Burns, he replied that we had organized splits in many countries and they were only rallying their friends too. Just now, he said, Lora was splitting the Bolivian section at a very unfortunate moment, claiming to represent Cannon.

In France, they had not approved of Lambert's proposal for united action of all Trotskyist groups, since the Trotskyists did not represent a force able to engage in any important mass action of their own. Moreover, they were in favor of some kind of a framework establishing a greater amount of unity among the French Trotskyist groups. He was not against trying everything possible to unite the French Trotskyists, but for the present he was somewhat skeptical in this respect. The French situation, he contended, was very complicated and unsatisfactory; the policies of Lambert in the Algerian and all the other questions were disastrous and irresponsible. It was a big mistake, he insisted, to only support Messali Hadj against the Liberation Movement, to which most of the active fighters in Algeria belonged, which made Lambert appear to the Algerians as an agent of the Messalists whose money he was accepting. It was extremely tactless, he added, to slander the Liberation Movement and its heroic partisans, and Lambert's activities in the Algerian question had no positive result whatever.

To start reunification in France, he said, would hardly lead to a good result; it should be started by the most responsible elements of the movement; the SWP leaders and the IS: and it should be started soon. It was not right, he complained, to send our resolutions, etc., to the various sections, ignoring the IS. We could not have reunification without passing through the IS. Any exchange of texts would have to go through the IS and the International Committee or through a special parity commission. The SWP should declare where it stood on reunification and what its suggestions and conditions are. We should express our opinion as to how we think reunification should be achieved.

At a certain moment, when Manuel [Novack] left

Europe, he said, Pablo had even offered his resignation in case this was wanted; but Manuel had assured him it was not wanted at all and that we had confidence in him. According to Germain, Pablo's thesis of the centuries of transition had been misinterpreted. He did not really approve of it; yet he did not consider it a revisionist or unreasonable theory at all. (He explained his view on this in detail.) As for the theses of the Third Congress, he (Germain) still thought the danger of a third world war probably had not been eliminated; he was not sure at all this danger had disappeared for the time being.

I made it clear to him that we considered the question of reunification a political one, not a question of diplomatic arrangements or maneuvers. He seemed to minimize the political differences and the organizational ones. He replied that, of course, we could have a serious political discussion if we wanted one, but there should not be any unnecessary delays. He seemed to consider the discussion of respective positions a secondary matter, since he claims there are no sufficient differences left to warrant a continuation of the split. But he did not oppose a discussion. I assured Germain I would correctly present his views and suggestions to the SWP leaders.

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Burns said he was glad I had seen Germain. Germain's declarations exactly confirmed his (Burns') views on the Pabloites. Their support of the Algerian Liberation Movement and opposition to our support of the Messalists was significant. Germain was always on the wrong side in such questions. The Liberation Movement did not have in its programs the social reforms that the Messalists were demanding. It was also significant that Germain wanted maneuvers and negotiations around the unity question among what he considered the "big bosses". He obviously thought the anti-Pabloites were fools and that the SWP leaders were giving orders to the other sections following them. "Let the big boys get together and settle this"—that was Germain's suggestion. Germain's declaration had made the Pabloite tactics much clearer.

He (Burns) urged the SWP to write, as quickly as possible, a declaration to be made public by the International Committee about the causes and history of the split and about our position concerning the question of a merger. This he considered extremely important. I told him I felt exactly the same way. He said the declaration could be written either by Cannon or another comrade; but that it should be written as soon as possible since it was overdue. By not making such a public declaration we would involuntarily facilitate the Pabloite propaganda on this question. Such a declaration was necessary for the comrades who follow the Pabloites without understanding their real nature; it was just as necessary for certain younger comrades in our ranks whose political education was incomplete. It would clear up some of the illusions and distortions spread by the Pabloites.

*9. Call by the Eighteenth Plenum of the International Executive Committee "To the Leaderships and Members of the International Committee" (November 1956)*

Comrades,

At this moment when the catastrophic crisis of Stalinism is developing on an unprecedented scale, we submit a new urgent call to you with the object of bringing about a united front of Trotskyists, of fighters in the Fourth International.

Events have decided in sovereign fashion a number of the political differences which separated us in the past. Unquestionably political reconciliations have taken place in this way. Obviously enormous opportunities are now opening up for our international movement. It would be criminal to bungle them, even in part, through misunderstanding, vanity, or for any other reason. Let us all rise to the level of our historical responsibilities. A united Trotskyist international movement, without splits, would enormously increase our attractive power for the elements disappointed by Stalinism who are seeking a new revolutionary leadership. There is no question, at this time, whether organizational or political, for which we cannot find a solution together which is satisfactory to all. We have never given up calling for unity ever since the split took place. Profoundly convinced of the immense

benefit that this unity would mean to our movement at the present time, we call upon you, in all responsibility and sincerity, to reflect, to overcome secondary (aspects) and considerations, to use this same spirit of responsibility.

Let us together organise the World Congress of the International, as a striking manifestation of the unity and power of Trotskyism. We solemnly promise to study all your demands, suggestions, or criticisms in a spirit of maximum understanding. Believe us, comrades, it is not in a spirit of weakness or of any other similar consideration, that we make this appeal to you. We are certain you will be happy, upon rejoining the ranks of the Fourth International, to learn of the immense progress of our common movement. It is in this spirit of responsibility, of loyalty to our principles, and in the supreme interest of our common movement that we make this new appeal for unity. Time is pressing. Let us show ourselves worthy of our glorious traditions, of our principled program, consecrated so strikingly by history. Let us close ranks in the framework of the Fourth International. Let us together prepare its world congress. Let us immediately set up a commission to prepare the ground for this objective. It is impossible for you to remain silent to this appeal.

The 18th Plenum  
of the International  
Executive Committee

## SECTION V: THE FIRST ROUND OF REUNIFICATION DISCUSSIONS

Serious discussions of reunification began with an exchange of letters between Leslie Goonewardene, secretary of the LSSP, and James P. Cannon. The similar positions of the IS and IC supporters on the Hungarian revolution convinced Cannon that an investigation of the possibilities of reunification was called for. The political basis for this move, viewed in the context of the long struggle to build the Fourth International, was presented to the Political Committee by Morris Lewitt (a leading party member who often wrote under the pseudonyms Morris Stein and M. Short).

One aspect stressed by the SWP was the importance of focusing political discussion on current issues. Attempts to rehash the dispute of 1953 would not produce clarification but would encourage dead-end factionalism and attempts to settle old scores.

Cannon told Goonewardene that, although political differences had diminished, the differences over organizational principles had not lessened. He proposed "a sweeping organizational compromise which would permit the formal unification of the international movement before the dispute is settled."

Sherry Mangan, a former SWP member with long experience in international work both before and after the 1953 struggle, came to the U.S. as a representative of the IS. (In his international activity, Mangan used the pen-name Patrick O'Daniel.)

Cannon proposed a unification of the two factions on the basis of equal representation ("parity") in the leading bodies. Mangan proposed that the "parties that left the International" should "re-enter" the IS, accepting a minority position. The IC forces would be protected only by a short-term guarantee against new suppressions in the name of "democratic centralism."

Both Mangan and Cannon agreed on the desirability of efforts to unify the two groups in England, where Healy had won an overwhelming numerical advantage. In France, however, Mangan proposed that the upcoming World Congress be granted the right to decide the fate of the two organizations as it pleased.

The key issue proved to be the proposal for parity in the

leadership. The IS leaders raised opposition to this concept to the level of a principle, claiming that it violated democratic centralism. In fact, they tended to confuse democratic centralism with the ability of one faction to exercise unrestricted control of the central apparatus.

The proposal for parity in the leadership had precedents in the history of Trotskyism. In 1934, the Communist League of America fused with the American Workers Party to form the Workers Party. Cannon, who had been the central leader of the Communist League of America, wrote of this merger in *The History of American Trotskyism*:

"The National Committee was to have an equal number from each side and all other organization questions which might exist were to be settled on a parity basis. Such was our proposal. Its obvious fairness, even generosity, strongly impressed Muste and his friends. Our 'organizational proposals,' instead of precipitating conflicts and deadlock, as has so often been the case, greatly facilitated the unity."

The Workers Party didn't lose its democratic-centralist character because of this arrangement. Nor was the "relationship of forces" between the two groups a basic consideration. The parity agreement assured that decisions in the Workers Party would be made through collaboration and discussion involving both sides, and would not be imposed by factional fiat.

Because of this, the arrangement helped to break down organizational barriers, create an atmosphere of trust, and enabled the unity to take hold. In the case of the Fourth International, such a proposal would also provide guarantees against organizational measures such as the IS had taken against the French and British leaderships, and which had stirred bitter resentment.

Although it was clear that agreement would not be reached easily and might not be achieved at all, Cannon insisted that a strong effort toward reunification was politically justified. He termed it a "calculated risk." The next step in the initial discussions—acceptance or rejection of Cannon's proposal for a "sweeping organizational compromise"—was up to the IS.

1. "A direct appeal to the SWP to agree to arrange a united world congress": letter from Leslie Goonewardene, secretary of the LSSP, to James P. Cannon (January 2, 1957)

Lanka Sama Samaja Party  
49 Driberg's Avenue  
Colombo 10  
Ceylon

Dear Comrade Cannon,

As you know a World Congress of the Fourth International is being planned. We are also informed that a fresh appeal for unity of all the Trotskyist forces has been launched in relation to the proposed World Congress.

We of the LSSP wish to make a direct appeal to the SWP to agree to arrange a united world congress at which all the Trotskyist forces in the world could come together within a single organization framework. We believe that such a unification will be an act of the greatest political significance because it would demonstrate concretely the determination of the Trotskyist movement to give a lead to the ever increasing sections of the revolutionary forces of the world which have become disillusioned with Stalinism. We also believe that without such unity we cannot make with a Trotskyist movement a sufficient point of attraction

for it to become a decisive factor for world revolutionary development.

We also believe that the present is a time for political stock taking with a view to arming ourselves in preparation for a forward surge of our movement. Such a stock taking requires the fraternal coming together in comradesly discussion for the purpose of united action of all the Trotskyist forces.

It is also our belief that a lead from the SWP in this matter would be decisive. Whatever the differences that may have divided various trends and organisations of Trotskyism in the past, we believe they are all united in their respect for the SWP. An international Trotskyist movement without the SWP is a wounded international movement, just as an SWP outside such a movement is a grievously weakened SWP. Thus, whatever our differences, we also require each other.

I am making this appeal to you on behalf of the LSSP because we are confident that you yourself are conscious of the need today for unity for the utilisation of the tremendous opportunity with which history has provided us, as we always knew it would.

With fraternal greetings for the New Year,  
Leslie Goonewardene,  
SECRETARY LSSP

2. "Advantages of a unification at this time would far outweigh the difficulties": letter from James P. Cannon to the SWP Political Committee (copy to the International Committee—March 12, 1957)

Los Angeles, California

Dear Comrades:

Enclosed herewith is the draft of my reply to Goonewardene with a copy for the International Committee. If you agree with it, you can put my letter in the mail to Ceylon and send a copy along to Jerry with your comments. If you disagree with my letter, or want to change it in any substantial way, you can hold up the mailing of the letter to Goonewardene until we work out an agreement. While it is advantageous for us to put this correspondence in a personal form, I naturally do not want to act as a freelance and initiate any action which has not been considered and agreed upon beforehand.

We have thought a lot about this question and discussed it among the NC members here. It appears to us that we cannot any longer let the Pabloites exploit the unity slogan while we merely give a negative answer or remain silent. Neither can we take the position, or create the impression, that we will be opposed to unity under any circumstances; or that we appear to be setting up artificial and unreasonable conditions. If we appear to act simply as bullheaded factionalists, we would only help Pablo to consolidate his ranks and even to create sympathizers among the organizations adhering to the International Committee.

That is the tactical side of the question. But even more important considerations prompted the formulations in my letter to Goonewardene. It is a fact which we long ago recognized that the Pabloites began to backtrack on a number of their positions relating to Stalinism and the role of our parties at the time of their split with Mestre,

Cochran-Clarke, and Collins [Lawrence]. We didn't take these changes for good coin at the time and remained hostile to the idea of an early unification. Then came the Twentieth Congress, and the similar appraisals of it by ourselves and the Pabloite press, and Germain's letter to Breitman again proposing unity.

You will recall that I wrote to Breitman at that time expressing the opinion that we should not jump hastily but wait and see what the further evolution of Pabloite policy would be in relation to the crisis of Stalinism. Then came Poznan, the Polish upheaval and the Hungarian revolution, and Chou En-lai's tour of Eastern Europe as a policeman of Stalinism.

Here we ran into something really new. Whereas the conciliatory line of the Pabloites on the East German uprising and the French General Strike in 1953 sharply conflicted with our line and really brought the smoldering conflict with them to an open explosion, the Pabloite line on all the big events and developments of the past year has been very similar to ours. It would be absurd for us to deny or ignore these important facts and to refuse to recognize that they constitute a number of the most important prerequisites for unification. At a time when we are campaigning for regroupment of forces in this country and England, and are actually contemplating all kinds of possible cooperative relations and fusions with other tendencies which may begin to move in a revolutionary direction, we would certainly find it hard to explain why we refuse to even talk about unity with an international tendency which is taking a political position much closer to our own.

No, we cannot refuse to talk. My letter to Goonewardene takes the situation as it is and offers to discuss the question of unity. At the same time, the letter lays down conditions for built-in guarantees against any reestablishment of the old Pabloite regime. If the Pabloites refuse it,



the whole argument about unity will be turned around. Instead of having a free field as the champions of unity, while the orthodox Trotskyists appear to be sulking and refusing to discuss the question, the Pabloites will be kept busy explaining why their concept of a "centralized world party," armed from head to foot with all kinds of disciplinary powers, is more important than a unification of all Trotskyist forces for political action in the raging crisis of Stalinism. We can say to all who are interested that we are for united political action on the basis of the positions developed by both sides during the past year. Whenever the Pabloites recognize the necessity for a reasonable organizational compromise, we will be ready to go ahead with the unification.

But suppose the Pabloites accept the proposal in my letter and ask us to spell out our terms? Then we must be prepared to take them up on it and tell them precisely what we want. As we have discussed the question here at considerable length over a fairly long period of time, our demands would shape up concretely somewhat as follows:

1. The International Committee and the International Executive Committee should draw up a joint "Memorandum of Agreement" on the basic principles of our movement as laid down in the Founding Congress of 1938 and the political positions taken by both sides during the past year, and call for the immediate unification of Trotskyist forces in all countries, without waiting for a congress.

2. The two International Committees should then set up a joint sub-committee to prepare "The Fourth World Congress of Unification" and to represent the present International Executive Committee and the International Committee in the political and administrative direction of all international work, pending the joint world congress.

3. The "Memorandum of Agreement" should also declare that the united International committees obligate themselves to recommend to the Fourth World Congress of Unification that the new International Executive Committee, and whatever sub-committees it may set up, shall be constructed on a parity basis; that they endeavor to arrive at decisions by agreement and refrain from disciplinary actions or threats of same throughout the period while the possibility of harmonious collaboration is being thoroughly tested out in practice.

4. In France the two organizations should be consulted as to their ideas of steps to be taken to facilitate their cooperation as sections of the same international organization. If their decision is to maintain separate organizations for the next period, it should be suggested that a Liaison Committee of representatives of both parties be established, with a chairman who would be acceptable to both sides, to coordinate the activities of the two organizations and regulate their relations with each other. This Liaison Committee should be a consultative and advisory, not a disciplinary body.

5. In all other countries where the movement is divided, a similar procedure should be followed to facilitate the fusion of the two organizations, allowing for proportional representation in the leadership of the united body.

\* \* \*

Naturally we have no way of knowing for sure what the

reaction of the Pabloites will be to the door opened by my letter to Goonewardene. But if they accept it, as some comrades among the NC members here are inclined to think they will, we must be prepared to move directly forward with proposals somewhat along the lines indicated above and carry through the unification without any unnecessary delay whatever.

It is not profitable to play with the idea of unity. It is best to be definite and concrete about it, either to accept it or reject it, and mean business about it in either case. We are opposed to unity under conditions which would permit a restoration of the old Pabloite regime which caused the splits in the first place, and we will not hesitate to say so, if it comes to that. On the other hand, if the Pabloites accept our terms, we must not mumble and haggle over unity and back away from it.

No doubt there will be all kinds of difficulties in carrying through the unification, at least in its first stages. But it is the considered opinion of most of the NC members here that the overall advantages of a unification of the world movement at this particular time would far outweigh the difficulties and irritations. There is no doubt that unification would give our parties everywhere a stronger appeal to elements breaking from Stalinism. We must bear in mind that the crisis of Stalinism will continue to roll and create new opportunities and tests for our cadres everywhere.

We are thinking especially of France. The Stalinist rigidity of the bureaucratic crust of this party of the French working class, which has been able to stifle all revolutionary manifestations up to now, only guarantees that the revolt of the communist-minded workers in the ranks will explode all the more violently in the next stage of the development of the world crisis of Stalinism. This explosion will very probably take the form of a big split. The great danger, as we see it, is that this coming revolt against French Stalinism will get away from our cadres and take a centrist turn, which would confuse and muddle everything for a long time to come. We certainly need, by all means, the maximum concentration of all forces in France on the crisis of Stalinism, and an arrangement of relations which will enable them to cooperate and work together along the lines laid down in the "Memorandum of Agreement."

\* \* \*

If the PC in New York and the British leaders agree with the general lines of the letter to Goonewardene, and the above proposals to follow it up if the Pabloites decide to accept the proposal for an organizational compromise, then I think a meeting of the International Committee, together with the leading body of the French organization, should be called to discuss the question and get ready to act promptly in the next stage of the negotiations, either way they go. That is, to take the question of unity off our agenda if the Pabloites refuse the proposal for an organizational compromise; to carry through the unification resolutely and quickly if the Pabloites accept.

Fraternally,  
J. P. Cannon

JPC:rh  
Enc.

3. "A sweeping organizational compromise": letter from James P. Cannon to Leslie Goonewardene, secretary of the LSSP (March 12, 1957)

Los Angeles, California

Dear Comrade Goonewardene:

This is in answer to your letter of January 2, in which you propose the arrangement of a world congress to unite all the Trotskyist forces. While I respect the good faith which motivates your proposal, I do not think it is realistic in the present situation. Too much has happened and too many questions remain unresolved to warrant the hope that a quickly arranged congress could agree on decisions that would be generally satisfactory to both sides and binding on all participants. Taking all the factors into consideration, including the hostility and distrust which have been engendered. I am of the opinion that the reunification of the world movement, if it can be accomplished at all in the foreseeable future, can be accomplished only in stages. What is needed, as I see it, is a recognition that the different opinions regarding the causes of the split are pretty well fixed on both sides and are not apt to be changed by argument.

It is true that in the three-year period since the departure of Mestre in France, Collins [Lawrence] in England, and Cochran-Clarke in the United States, the political pronouncements of the two sides appeared to come closer together than was the case in the period prior to the formal split. More particularly in the past year, since the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the positions taken on the most important questions of the day came even closer together. If the thinking of the two sides should continue to evolve in the same way, then they both would have to consider the question of unity, not as a demagogic slogan to maneuver with, but as a project to be realized.

A consistent approach of both sides toward common positions on the political questions of the day would justify a deliberate and serious attempt at reunification, even if some of the important differences of general conception remain unresolved. It would not be wise to pretend that these differences do not exist or to try to get around them by ambiguous compromise formulations which would be subject to different interpretations. It would be better and more realistic to contemplate a possible unification for common political action, and to agree to disagree on some questions, allowing the test of events and clarifying non-

factional discussion to bring about an eventual settlement.

There remains the organization question, if it is permissible to apply such a narrow definition to the different conceptions of the International in its present stage of development and the whole complex of organizational and administrative practises which played such a big role in exacerbating the conflict and finally precipitating the definitive split. As far as I can see, there has been no approach toward agreement in this domain. If one is seriously interested in the actual unification of the movement and not simply in talking about it for propaganda purposes, he will have to realize that this difference exists and come forward with some practical and realizable formula to deal with it.

The question is not what ideal conception of the International and its functioning one may have in mind, but rather by what forms and methods all the Trotskyist organizations in the world can be brought together, taking them as they are with their ideas and practises as they are at the present time. One can hope that with time and experience and argument, and the further development of our movement, the conflicting opinions can be changed and modified and brought closer toward uniformity. But this agreement cannot be imposed at the present time by any formal decisions, and there is no possibility of a return to the *status quo ante* in this respect.

There is no way around this obstacle to unification except by means of a sweeping organizational compromise, which would permit the formal unification of the international movement before the dispute is settled. This organizational compromise cannot be left to the chance decision of a congress. It would have to be agreed upon beforehand.

So far, the International Executive Committee has merely talked about unification in a propagandistic manner, without making any concrete proposal as to how it could be brought about, taking the organizations of the International Committee as they are. The circular of the International Executive Committee, dated November 1956, does state, however, that it believes a solution can be found for the organizational problem. I have indicated above my personal opinion of the form this solution would have to take in the present circumstances.

Yours fraternally,  
J. P. Cannon

JPC:rh

4. "The Situation in the World Movement," remarks by Morris Lewitt to the SWP Political Committee (March 12, 1957)

The December 1956 plenum voted to open a discussion on the situation in the World Trotskyist movement. Such a discussion has become necessary for the following reasons:

Four years have elapsed since the split in the international. These have been years of fast-moving historic events. We have analyzed these events and expressed our views on them in a series of documents. Our political positions have been made amply clear. But we have, as yet, failed to clarify an important aspect of the problem: a

comprehensive review of the situation inside the world Trotskyist movement. Yet it too has altered considerably.

At the time of the split, Pablo's conciliationist line toward Stalinism constituted the most direct and immediate danger. The documents of the period consequently centered their main fire on this point.

Since then Stalinism has been unmasked more and more. The events of 1956 alone, from the 20th Congress in February up to the Hungarian uprising in October, have thoroughly exposed the criminal role of the Kremlin bureaucracy. These events precipitated a trend away from Stalinism which has been deserted by many of its adherents and supporters. Under these changed conditions the Pabloites sharply altered the course which had led to

the split. In addition, they have advanced a new proposal for the reunification of the Fourth International (Unity Appeal, 18th Plenum IEC, November 1956).

A fresh appraisal of the political possibilities for unity, therefore, becomes necessary. The political differences between the adherents of the IS and the IC have narrowed. The question then is naturally posed, why not a common organization?

We can gain most from the discussion if we start with the more general propositions flowing from the history, role, and functions of the Fourth International. Such an approach will help to determine our course on questions involving the future of the International.

The need for the Fourth International was posed in 1933 with the Stalinist capitulation to Hitler. This capitulation confronted the world working class with a second catastrophe within the span of one and the same generation—the bankruptcy of the Third International on top of the treachery of the Second International.

From then on these two traditional organizations loomed as the biggest internal obstacle to the solution of the crisis of proletarian leadership which they themselves had precipitated. They have since served to perpetuate and aggravate the crisis.

The conditions under which the struggle for the Fourth International unfolded precluded the rapid emergence of mass revolutionary parties. Nevertheless, it was possible and necessary to raise anew the banner of proletarian internationalism, to affirm the revolutionary program, and to begin assembling cadres.

These were the basic considerations behind the first call for the Fourth International, issued in 1934. But it was not until the end of 1938 that the founding congress was held. Thus the F.I. was no sooner formed than it had to face World War II.

No other movement was so carefully prepared ideologically and so far in advance, for the outbreak of war. Nevertheless, the outbreak of war in 1939 precipitated a crisis in the ranks of the F.I.

The Stalin-Hitler pact became the starting point for a revisionist current, led by Shachtman and Burnham, to discard the traditions and theoretical positions of the movement, beginning with the abandonment of the Trotskyist position on the class character of the Soviet Union and the nature and role of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The Fourth International had to swim against the stream throughout the war. The bureaucratic machines, above all the Stalinists, exercised virtually unquestioned domination over the working class. This was equally true in the colonies and in the metropolitan centers.

The Trotskyist cadres suffered persecution unexampled in history. They were hounded by the fascists, the “democratic” imperialists, the native colonial bourgeoisie, and above all by the Stalinists.

Nowhere was it possible for the revolutionary vanguard to fuse with the mass. Nowhere was it possible for the revolutionists to break out of isolation.

With the end of the war, the Stalinists and Social Democrats experienced new gains: the installation of Stalinist puppet regimes in Eastern Europe and the rise of the Titoists in Yugoslavia; the emergence of the Stalinists as majority parties in Italy and France; the Social Democratic revival in West Germany, Belgium, Holland and the Scandinavian countries; the sweep of the British

Laborites to power. This situation produced revisionist and opportunist tendencies throughout the Fourth International. (The Haston group in Britain, Morrow-Goldman in the U.S., the right-wing Geoffroi-Damazier in France, the pro-Stalinist tendency of Philip Goonewardena in Ceylon.)

Common to all these groupings was the abandonment of program, the scuttling of the struggle to build the revolutionary party, and capitulation to whatever power had the greatest attractive pull in the given country at the given time.

The wartime alliance of the imperialists, Stalinists, and the Social Democrats carried over into the most critical postwar period. The same forces that had straitjacketed the proletariat during the war continued their role in the initial postwar period. The policy of national unity for the preservation of capitalism was crowned with coalition cabinets and the disarming of the masses.

In France and Italy the workers were mobilized to rebuild capitalism. In both countries Stalinists took the lead as the majority working-class party.

In Britain the Laborites subjugated the workers to the capitalists, with the British Stalinists more pro-Tory than the Laborite right wing. In Germany, the workers were held prostrate under the combined occupation forces. In Eastern Europe, the Soviet armies and secret police destroyed the revolutionary initiative of the workers and subjected them to the rule of the native CPs.

After relative capitalist stability had been attained in the metropolitan centers, the West European workers were caught off guard by the threat of war, the program of militarism, the apparent polarization of society behind the two major world powers—the U.S.A. on the one side and the U.S.S.R. on the other. The choice appeared to be either the Stalinist bureaucracy or the imperialists. Both the imperialists and the Stalinists did their utmost to present matters as if this was the only real choice.

On the one side the imperialists and the Social Democracy demanded an alignment with “democracy.” On the other, the Stalinists demanded an alignment with the bureaucracy, not on the basis of struggle for socialism, but for the coexistence, people’s front policy of the Kremlin.

The Chinese revolution and the Korean war produced a double pressure on the Fourth International:

1. It appeared that the Korean war was the beginning of a world conflagration. This posed the question—do we have the time to build revolutionary vanguard parties when the definitive showdown is upon us?

2. The revolutionary victory in China, like in Yugoslavia, was achieved under the leadership of a Stalinist party. Does this mean that Stalinism, which had been responsible for a whole chain of revolutionary defeats over a long period, had changed its character? If this were so, then the crisis of proletarian leadership was being resolved in new ways—ways never envisaged at the founding of the Fourth International.

At this stage, the Pabloites began to subordinate the struggle for the Fourth International to the power struggle between Moscow and Washington, introducing a conciliatory policy toward Stalinism. They sought to justify their policy through the following schema:

1. World War III is about to begin.
2. The war will be merged with revolutions from the outset.
3. The Kremlin bureaucracy fighting for its life will no

longer be able to betray but will be on the side of the revolutions.

4. The Communist parties can henceforth go only to the left (theory of "gauchissement").

5. They can project a revolutionary perspective as did the Yugoslav and Chinese CP's.

6. There is a growing homogeneity within the two camps heading for a showdown.

This line was injected at the Third World Congress in 1951. The team of Pablo, Clarke, Mestre, and Lawrence then used the Congress documents as a club against the orthodox Trotskyists who resisted Stalinist conciliationism.

To this must be added Pablo's views which, although not included in the documents, served to animate his activities.

1. The theory of centuries of degenerated workers states.

2. The idea that the program of transitional demands—the founding program of the Fourth International—was no longer valid.

3. The notion that the Theses on the American Revolution had also been negated.

The French organization was the first to perceive and to offer resistance to Pablo's line. It was, therefore, the first party in which Pablo proceeded to expel the majority from the F.I. Pabloite factions were then organized in the other Trotskyist parties and groups.

We were first alerted to the menace of Pabloism through the activities of the Cochranite faction. There was no course open but to alert the world Trotskyist movement and to urge upon them an open struggle against Pablo. This was done through the November 1953, Open Letter which set the following process into motion:

The British and Canadian Trotskyists broke with Pablo, after which the Pabloite minorities in these organizations split away. The British and Canadian majorities were joined by the Swiss, the French PCI and various groups in Latin America to found the International Committee. Other anti-Pabloite minority groups emerged inside organizations controlled by adherents of the I.S.

But the impact of the struggle launched by the Open Letter went beyond the limits of the organizations belonging to the I.C. A parallel process to repudiate liquidationism started inside organizations which remained affiliated to the I.S. It produced a differentiation among these forces. Those who were most determined to follow a liquidationist course to the end, broke with Pablo and repudiated the F.I. altogether.

Pablo himself pulled back sharply from his own line. Liquidationism also became very unpopular in the organizations adhering to the I.S. Pablo's ability to maneuver and to manipulate was reduced.

The objective situation came powerfully to our assistance. The beginning of this development can be traced to the German workers uprising against the Stalinist bureaucracy in the summer of 1953. The uprising revealed the profound gulf between the working class and the Stalinist bureaucracy and the ripening conditions for the political revolution.

The Yugoslav break with the Kremlin in 1948 appeared as a conflict of two rival bureaucracies. The German uprising, however, was a spontaneous action of the workers as a class, seeking to overthrow the bureaucracy as a caste.

The French General Strike of 1953 was also a spontane-

ous action of the working class which has been heavily dominated by the Stalinists. These two events exploded Pablo's schema that the working class would act only through the traditional parties.

It wasn't that the Pabloites were not aware of the crisis of Stalinism and the growing resistance of the masses to the tyrannical rule of the bureaucracy; they were aware of it and wrote at length about it. But they were mesmerized by their prediction of the imminence of war and the fear that the crisis of proletarian leadership could not be resolved in the short interval by way of building independent parties.

But the uprising of the East German workers and the French general strike emphasized once again the imperative need of a conscious leadership expressing the needs and interests of the working class through a revolutionary party.

The Pabloite statements dealing with these events, failed to stress this central lesson. Their analysis tended to obscure the Stalinist treachery.

The year 1956 provided a decisive test of political line. The 20th Congress of the CPSU was the high-water mark of concessions by which the bureaucracy sought to bridge the gulf separating it from the masses. The repudiation of Stalin was the first serious political concession designed to placate the masses.

Not long thereafter there followed the upsurge in Poland and the mass uprising in Hungary. As a result of these world shaking events the breach in the Fourth International was not widened but narrowed. The press of the two tendencies treated the events in essentially the same way.

There has been no specific repudiation of Pablo's past line. Nor has there been any specific Pabloite statement as to whether or not the Transitional Program, for example, remains a dead letter as he claimed in 1953. On the contrary, Pablo and his supporters claim they have been right all the time and have been vindicated by the events. They do this by conveniently forgetting their false prognostications and claiming credit for analyses and prognoses which derived not from Pablo's specific line but from that of Trotskyism.

Be that as it may, we cannot justify the continuation of a split because the Pabloites refuse to admit they were wrong in the past, unless the wrong line of the past continues to determine the course today. This does not seem to be the case. Pablo is moving away from the specific line which inspired a liquidationist wing in the F.I.

In the light of this, there would seem to be no serious obstacle to the unification of the Fourth International. Unification would demonstrate serious principled politics as against bitter-end factionalism, which has often plagued the movement in a number of countries. It would facilitate more effective intervention in the Stalinist crisis. It would be more than an arithmetical addition of forces—it would be a source of new inspiration to the young Trotskyist militants. It would signal a new period of consolidation of cadres for the great task for which the F.I. was founded.

The period of the death agony of Stalinism is the period of the vindication of Trotskyism. But to win a genuine and lasting victory, the Trotskyist program and organization must triumph. The conditions for this have never been more favorable. Unity on a principled basis could facilitate such a victory and is, therefore, progressive.

What should be done to accomplish such a unity?

1. We could start with a common discussion of the past differences. Such a course would most likely lead not to unity, but on the contrary, to recriminations, bitterness and further split.

2. We could unify and follow up with a discussion of the past. This too could lead to a factional struggle, if not to another split.

3. The correct way would be to determine in advance of unity, not the respective positions in the old disputes, but the scope of present agreement on political line and organizational procedure.

From all indications, there should be no serious political obstacle to unity. The main difficulty may crop up on the organizational plane.

The split in France in 1951, Pablo's interventions in other parties and groups which led to the general split in 1953 brought to a head an unhealthy situation not only in the politics of the International, but also in its organizational functioning.

The organizational difficulties derive in large part from the numerical weakness of the International and its material poverty. The International is in no position to create executive bodies representing the most authoritative leaders of the sections. This situation existed in the International from the beginning. Its leader and inspirer, Leon Trotsky, lived in exile in Mexico while the executive center was in Europe. This in itself created a condition of duality in the leadership which sometimes led to friction. Such friction was minimized on the one hand by exercising prudence in organizational matters and by Trotsky's great authority and political wisdom.

During the war the ties between the sections were disrupted and the International bodies could function only loosely. Their main task was to maintain continuity of program and organization; to try and persuade but not to order. Under such conditions the International could set itself only modest goals.

When communications were reestablished after the war, the responsibility for reconstituting the world center was entrusted to the European Committee which had developed during the war under the conditions of Nazi occupation.

The European Committee had become the leader and organizer of the European Trotskyists. It was both the political and administrative center for all the groups. This centralization suited the needs of strictly illegal functioning imposed by war. The young and inexperienced cadres looked to the European Committee for leadership. The authoritative prewar leaders of the sections had mostly perished.

Once the organizational relationship had again been extended beyond Europe, a new approach to the proper functions of the International center became necessary. The strongest Trotskyist organizations were located outside Europe. Their leaderships contained some of the most experienced cadres in the movement. These leading elements were least able to participate in the active leadership at the International center.

This situation required a clear understanding of the limitations imposed upon the International center. It required consultation with the most important sections in advance of important decisions and actions.

The elaborate statutes adopted at the Second Congress in 1948 were based on a high degree of centralism. They could probably pass scrutiny if conceived of as a model for

an ideal international organization, having the power and resources to assemble in one place the most representative leading cadre.

For the first few years the International leadership tried to function within the framework, not of abstract statutes, but of the existing reality. When Pablo was struck with a new vision of the world and became obsessed with the immediate need of imposing his line on the world movement, he discovered the exaggerated powers vested in the I.S. by the 1948 statutes and proceeded to recklessly invoke them.

Placing the P.C.I. under receivership through the medium of a parity committee, with an I.S. representative as final arbiter, was an action without precedent in the Trotskyist movement. One has to go to the Comintern since its Stalinist degeneration to find such a precedent.

To prohibit Burns [Healy], a member of the I.S., from freely expressing his differences with that body's documents in a pre-congress discussion, represents a crude violation of his elementary rights under democratic centralism.

To give ardent support to a Lawrence in England as against the regularly constituted leadership, is to demonstrate a reckless disregard for the traditions of the movement. Such conduct undermines the painfully selected cadres, it does not build them.

To best appreciate the enormity of Pablo's recklessness one needs only to visualize what the world Trotskyist movement would have looked like had Cochran prevailed in the SWP, or Lawrence in England, or Mestre in France.

The question then arises: Is it possible to have unity with Pablo after such an experience with him? Wouldn't that mean returning to the same old shenanigans?

Unity is possible provided the lessons of the split become the property of the main cadres of the movement. We can be confident that they are. This does not mean that the cadres have all studied the voluminous documents of the period. But we can be sure that the overwhelming majority are aware of the following:

The world movement passed during 1951-53 through a revisionist crisis, which for its depth can be compared only with the crisis of 1939-40, when Shachtman and Burnham challenged the Trotskyist position on the defense of the Soviet Union and the nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Even if one accepts Pablo's denial of complicity in the liquidationist splits, the question arises, where was he in the struggle against the liquidators? Did he fight to safeguard the Trotskyist program and organization?

To merely pose the question is to answer it.

Pablo claims we failed to make the issues clear so he could take sides. Let us grant for the sake of argument that we were inept in this respect. But if that were the case, what sort of leader is it who has to have all the t's crossed and all the i's dotted before he is able to recognize revisionism? If we failed to make Cochran's revisionism clear, why didn't he see it in Lawrence and Mestre with whom he was in intimate contact? If he couldn't join us in a fight, why didn't he carry on a parallel fight against the liquidators on his home grounds?

We can be confident that the international cadres will assess the split in this light and in no other. This itself—the consciousness of the cadres is the best guarantee against a return to the status quo antebellum.

The consciousness of the cadres is the guarantee of

vigilance in the future—the only real guarantee one can realistically expect.

The Fourth International came into being under circumstances which did not permit the working class to emerge as an independent force. The selection of cadres proved extremely difficult under conditions of isolation from the mass movement. The cadres have included a disproportionate number of petty bourgeois elements, lacking experience and tradition in the workers' movement.

The polarization of the world between Stalinist-dominated workers' states and the imperialists has acted

with powerful magnetic attraction upon such individuals.

The splits in the past have in the main been definitive. The political line of the splitters has generally tended to diverge more and more from the programmatic positions of the Fourth International.

Today we are witnessing a different process. The political lines following the split of 1953 have not been diverging; on the contrary they have been coalescing.

This is a verification of the improved objective situation. The working class is coming forward as an independent force. This is reason for optimism that a unification could prove viable.

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5. *"Conditions and Guarantees for Reunification," proposed by James P. Cannon to Sherry Mangan (April 27, 1957)*

1. The situation is not one of the Fourth International versus a small split-off therefrom, but of two equal halves of the International split right down the middle; and any solution must take this as its starting point.

2. Parity on the new IEC by prior arrangement to be jointly recommended to the coming World Congress.

3. Agreement, also to be jointly recommended to the coming World Congress, that no disciplinary action will be taken against any section until the following World Congress, except by general agreement (a more exact formula for the last phrase to be worked out).

4. In France the two parties to be given the alternative

of fusion by agreement or of functioning as two official sections, with a coordinating committee acting in an advisory capacity to avoid conflicts and friction.

5. In other countries fusions to be recommended and attempted.

6. No group anywhere which has remained true to the principles of Trotskyism, as determined by a World Congress, to be excluded therefrom.

7. The IS shall be changed into an administrative body to conduct daily work and prepare political decisions for the IEC (it shall also have the right to issue declarations on historical events, such as those in Hungary).

8. The IEC and the International Committee create a joint subcommission on a parity basis to arrange the Fourth Unification Congress.

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6. *"Preliminary Proposals for a Basis for Reunification," proposed by Sherry Mangan to James P. Cannon (April 28, 1957)*

(Subject to ratification by the International Secretariat and the International Executive Committee, and acceptance by the New Zealand [SWP] National Committee and the International Committee.)

1. The IEC of the Fourth International continues to defend the concept of the International as a democratically centralized world party composed of national sections, and rejects any proposal to convert it into a federation of autonomous national parties loosely associated.

2. In view, however, of the present grave split, which spreads confusion and weakens the effectiveness of world Trotskyism, in view of the contention of many cadre elements of the sections which left the FI in 1953 that the degree of centralism then and now applied is excessive in the light of its present strength in numbers, cadres, and the authority of its international leadership, the IEC proposes two series of measures to aid reunification, to increase the representativeness of the international leadership, and to reassure the distrust expressed by the parties that left in 1953 that they would be, in any reunification, discriminated against and subjected to excessive centralism:

a. The full effective participation of those parties in the International's organisms; and, as a minimum, the per-

manent presence of a leading member of the New Zealand party at the seat of the IEC and the IS, and his active sharing in the day-by-day work.

b. Two exceptional measures until the Sixth World Congress:

(1) an exceptionally large representation, in the sense of voting rights, considerably greater than that normally accorded on the basis of numbers, of the parties that left the international in 1953, at the Fifth World Congress, and a strong recommendation to that Congress that it give similar exceptionally large representation in the IEC that it elects.

(2) a temporary revision of the powers of the IEC in favor of the World Congress, and of the IS in favor of the IEC, in the sense of a much lesser delegation of powers than has been the practice since the Second World Congress, details to be worked out at the Fifth World Congress (as a suggestion as a basis for the present discussion, a provision that the opposition of one-third of its members to an action by the IEC requires postponement of that action until it can be decided on by the next World Congress, and that the opposition of two of its members to an action by the IS requires postponement of that action until it can be decided by the next IEC).

3. Upon acceptance of these proposals, the present measure of suspension of the former sections in New Zealand [the U.S.], Canada, and Switzerland, where the situation is not complicated by the existence of a rival group, shall be lifted, and they shall immediately resume

full standing in the FI, with all corresponding rights.

4. In the case of England, where two groups exist but do not have differences so fundamental as to preclude unification, a unification is to be arranged, and the unified group, recognized as the British section, is to resume full standing in the FI, with all corresponding rights.

5. In the case of France, where there are sharp differences between the two groups: a serious attempt at unification is to be made, with however special guarantees that the Lambert group does not destroy the long, patient, and fruitful fraction work of the section, and if unification is

7. *"The first question is whether this letter to Goonewardene is acceptable as a basis for discussion": letter from James P. Cannon to Sherry Mangan (April 29, 1957)*

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Patrick [Mangan]:

I think we have gone about as far as we can go in our formal exploration of the possibilities of unification. The next step should be a formal consideration by your friends of the propositions we have drawn up and the transmission of an official answer to them. My letter to Goonewardene was approved by our Political Committee, as well as by all the NC members resident in Los Angeles before it was sent. Therefore it can be taken as a considered statement of our position.

The first question to be answered is whether this letter to Goonewardene is acceptable as a basis for discussion of concrete measures to bring about the unification. If the answer is "no," then it would be useless to continue discussions until a counter-statement is proposed. If, on the other hand, my letter to Goonewardene is acceptable as a basis, then the next step is to consider the proposals we have drawn up to implement the general idea outlined in the letter.

The other night I gave these proposals to you verbally in a rather telescoped form. Here I will state them more precisely, as they have been previously considered and approved both by our Political Committee in New York and the NC members resident in California:

"1. The International Committee and the International Executive Committee should draw up a joint 'Memorandum of Agreement' on the basic principles of our movement as laid down in the Founding Congress of 1938 and the political positions taken by both sides during the past year, and call for the immediate unification of Trotskyist forces in all countries, without waiting for a congress.

"2. The two International Committees should then set up a joint sub-committee to prepare 'The Fourth World Congress of Unification' and to represent the present International Executive Committee and the International Committee in the political and administrative direction of all international work, pending the joint world congress.

"3. The 'Memorandum of Agreement' should also declare that the united International committees obligate

achieved, the unified group (etc., as above), if, despite all efforts, unification cannot be achieved, the French problem is to be put on the agenda of the Fifth World Congress and there decided by the usual democratic process of discussion and decision.

6. The already well-advanced preparations for the Fifth World Congress are to be continued, once the step described in Point 3 has been taken, by a parity commission set up by those sections and the IEC, the English and French sections to be associated in it as soon as the steps mentioned in Point 4 and 5 have been taken.

themselves to recommend to the Fourth World Congress of Unification that the new International Executive Committee, and whatever sub-committees it may set up, shall be constructed on a parity basis; that they endeavor to arrive at decisions by agreement and refrain from disciplinary actions or threats of same throughout the period while the possibility of harmonious collaboration is being thoroughly tested out in practice.

"4. In France the two organizations should be consulted as to their ideas of steps to be taken to facilitate their cooperation as sections of the same international organization. If their decision is to maintain separate organizations for the next period, it should be suggested that a Liaison Committee of representatives of both parties be established, with a chairman who would be acceptable to both sides, to coordinate the activities of the two organizations and regulate their relations with each other. This Liaison Committee should be a consultative and advisory, not a disciplinary body.

"5. In all other countries where the movement is divided, a similar procedure should be followed to facilitate the fusion of the two organizations, allowing for proportional representation in the leadership of the united body."

\* \* \*

I suggest that you forward these proposals to your friends, and that further consideration of the entire question on our part await a reply from them. The reply can be sent to Comrade Smith [Dobbs] in New York at an address which Tom [Kerry] will give you.

\* \* \*

I might add another point of clarification. The question of representation, whether it be more or less than we would be normally entitled to according to the rules agreed upon at the time of the Second World Congress, is not of great importance to us. Because of the exceptionally difficult conditions imposed upon our movement at the present time—geographical problems, material difficulties, travel restrictions, etc.—our prime concern is about the question of organizational guarantees to effectuate the general proposals contained in my letter to Goonewardene.

Yours fraternally,  
James P. Cannon

8. "A possible unification with the Pabloites is a calculated risk": letter from James P. Cannon to Tom Kerry (April 30, 1957)

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Tom:

This is a follow-up to the letter I wrote you yesterday enclosing a copy of the formal letter I handed to Patrick [Mangan].

Since the Pabloites in Paris had already received from Goonewardene a copy of my letter to him, and will now have our concrete proposals to implement this letter, I think it very important that the International Committee have a meeting on the subject very soon to consider the matter, if the meeting has not already taken place. I am enclosing a copy of this letter for Jerry with the suggestion that he proceed immediately to contact the International Committee and keep them up to date so that they will be fully prepared for any next moves that may be made.

\* \* \*

The only thing definite we got out of the discussions with Patrick here is the information that the Pabloites in Paris have received a copy of the Goonewardene letter since Patrick left there, and that they felt "encouraged" by it. He could not say for sure whether that means they are willing to take the letter as the basis for the discussion of concrete propositions. Since this is the real point, we thought it necessary to put it bluntly in the letter to Patrick so that we can get a "yes" or "no" answer and know how to proceed from there.

Tonight we are arranging a meeting of the full NC group where Patrick will be present, mainly for the purpose of giving him a chance to explain his mission to the whole body. I think it would be useful for Farrell and other NC members to talk more with Patrick when he returns to New

York, just to get a clearer picture of the Pablo cult as it is represented by one of its devotees.

There has undoubtedly been a change in the Pabloite political line since the time of the split, but the British are dead right in their opinion that Pabloism remains pretty much what it was in other respects. We have to proceed cautiously with full awareness at every step that a possible unification with the Pabloites is a calculated risk. That is why we must absolutely insist upon certain guarantees and, beyond that, keep fully prepared for any eventuality in case the guarantees are violated.

At the same time, in view of the consistent approach toward political agreement, we simply cannot justify or explain a refusal to discuss and negotiate the offer of unity or refuse to go through with it if our demand for guarantees is accepted by them. For that reason, I think it very important that there be no further delay in bringing the matter before the International Committee and the leading comrades of the French and Swiss parties, so that they will be fully prepared for the next steps, either way the negotiations go.

I think it highly essential now for the British leadership to keep all the members of their organization fully informed of the new developments, and to give all the new people a complete review of the past experiences which led to the split, so that any steps that may be necessary to take in the near future, one way or the other, will have the full conscious support of the membership, and further as preparation of the ranks to deal with any possible attempts at factional disruption in case the formal unification goes through.

Meantime, our own NC members around the country should be kept fully informed of the new developments, so that the preconvention plenum will be prepared to present a report and recommendation for action by the convention.

Yours fraternally,  
James P. Cannon

JPC:rh  
AIRMAIL  
Enc.



## SECTION VI: PABLO REJECTS THE PROPOSED BASIS OF REUNIFICATION

The correspondence between Michel Pablo (Michel Raptis), the secretary of the IS faction, and Sherry Mangan, the IS representative in the discussions, shows that Pablo was less than enthusiastic about the prospect of reunification. He was caught between the desire of his allies (the Ceylonese and others) to see moves toward unity and his own determination to retain his domination of the central apparatus.

Pablo's letters reveal that he did not accept the official IS position that the differences had narrowed. On the contrary, he informed Mangan that the SWP suffered from "ideological rotteness" which had, if anything, worsened since 1953. He described the IC, including the SWP, as "a tendency in which a mixture of opportunist and sectarian ideas prevail and which is topped with organizational conceptions on the national scale which are decidedly Stalinizing (or at best Zinovievist)." Characterizations like "liquidationist" and "centrist" were bandied about as Pablo warned Mangan that Cannon's goal in the discussions was to render the international "impotent."

The SWP's cothinkers in France, Switzerland, and Britain were characterized by Pablo as "nuts" with whom it was not worthwhile to negotiate and whose participation in a reunified international was hardly desirable.

Pablo's more flexible attitude toward the SWP in these letters is perhaps explainable by the fact that there was no pro-IS grouping in the United States which could pose as an alternative. Efforts to sound out Cochran, described in the first letter in this section, got a negative response.

Pablo's approach to the organizational side of reunifica-

tion reflected his preoccupation with organizational control of any reunified apparatus. The very idea of reunification of two equal tendencies within the International must be rejected, he held. Instead, the IC must "re-enter" the International as a minority, subject after an interval to the discipline of its factional opponents and their leader, Pablo. This was accompanied by grandiloquent phrases about "the International's" generosity in offering undeserved "concessions."

It hardly seems plausible that Pablo, an astute politician, believed that any section of the International Committee would accept such terms. The letter sent to the SWP by the IS on May 7, while phrased in more polite language than Pablo's directives to Mangan, hewed closely to his organizational requirements.

Part of the political basis of Pablo's opposition to reunification is indicated by his reiteration of the theory of centuries of bureaucratically deformed workers' states, despite his attempt to reduce this theory to a mere speculation about timetables. While Pablo kept this position out of official documents, it played a part in determining his basic political perspectives and course.

The full implications of Pablo's theory became clearer when Pablo split from the reunified Fourth International in 1965. A desire to avoid debate on this and other "private" political views of the central leader of the IS may have encouraged Pablo to take a hard line on reunification.

Pablo's terms were unsatisfactory to the SWP leadership. Discussions were suspended while the SWP leaders sought consultation with Healy and other IC leaders.

1. "I did see Bert": letter from Sherry Mangan to Michel Pablo and Pierre Frank (excerpt—May 7, 1957)

Dear G and P:

I am rather disturbed that, after my bombarding you with so many reports from the 26th on, I have no word from you at this critical juncture.

Until I have answers, first personal, then official, to the demands posed in JPC's May 29th letter, I cannot advance things much here.

I did see Bert [Cochran], and confirmed what Jim & Co. had said: They not only have no further connection with the Fourth, but Bert now openly uses the kind of phrases that I jokingly used to characterize his last letter to us: "We're busy with serious things; if you boys want to play

with internationals. . . ." or "We don't see any use in having anything to do with a paper international." His cynicism is such that it makes JPC's cynicism seem oblate devotion by contrast. They have dissolved their organization as a party and merely have a loose grouping supporting the magazine which, by the way, is having a great success even though it seems to be aimed at pre-Debs Kansas socialists of 1888. His idea appears to be to put everything back into a vaguely socialist pot and brew it up—eventually something may result. They are utterly hopeless and have nothing whatsoever to do with the revolution any more. How they got that way is another problem, which I should like to discuss with you on my return in connection with my general ideas about the American party regime. . . .

[salutation missing]

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2. "I am afraid that this ideological rotteness may have gotten worse since then": letter from Michel Pablo to Sherry Mangan (excerpt—April 19, 1957)

Dear Sherry,

Received your letters of April 9 and 10. We thank you very much for them. We very much appreciate the seriousness with which you conduct the matter as well as the conclusions you draw from it. We agree with you completely: It is a question of a negotiation which, as a matter of fact, revolves around the existence or nonexistence of the International as a democratic-centralist world organization. By making mistakes we might unconsciously involve ourselves along a path of veritable liquidationism. The way they pose the question of the International, their reflections and reactions show that from the time of the split there was already something rotten in the state of Denmark, and it is just this which precisely explains the split. I am afraid that this ideological rotteness may have gotten worse since then. The goal of the negotiation now is to exert the maximum pressure on them so that they may pull themselves together, so that they accept reasonable terms which will turn out in the future to have helped their own health as a really Trotskyist tendency. There is no question for us of transforming the International as a loose federation of national groups nor of agreeing to present two internationals to the outside ("theirs" and "ours" announcing our "reunification"). The concessions we are ready to make are along the following plane: We are ready to consider a broad representation of their tendency in the leadership bodies of the International, far greater than what they represent numerically; we are ready to grant them broad guarantees concerning the democratic functioning of the International (which is certainly infinitely more democratic than their national organizations); we are prepared to reinforce the prerogatives of the world congress and of the International Executive Committee at the expense of the IS if they so wish. On all that we can arrive at an agreement before a world congress. But that is all. Naturally, when we face concrete proposals

from their side, we will see if there is ground for making other concessions to them.

I think that the key to the question, what kind of ending the negotiations will come to, is now to be found more than ever in Jim's hands. One must speak to him at length, frankly, firmly. Make him understand his historic error of 1953, explain to him who are his international "allies" (because he has forgotten about them), the Swiss, the Lamberts, etc.; describe our progress since that time to him, which he doesn't know about or which his advisers, informants, knowingly minimize; make him understand that if we want reunification it isn't because of weakness (he has a power complex) but because of a spirit of responsibility.

Our advances are real and have qualitatively changed our movement. We are the ones who animate what may be called at the present time the left wings of the SPs and the CPs in a series of countries. This is tremendous and it is a brilliant justification of our entryist tactics, contrasting with the hollow boasting of the "independent" groups a la Lambert. . . .

He must understand what's happening. If he doubts all of this, *let him send some qualified person in all seriousness* to the World Congress or better yet, *let him come himself*; he will have the proofs. You must insist heavily on that point as well as the necessity to pursue negotiations here with one of them and not with Burns [Healy] or some other lunatic. That would not be serious and we have neither the time nor the desire for wasted chatter. *We mean business, real business.* [English in original.] He has to be shaken up. One must open a little window for him, a view towards the real world, across the opaque wall of his "America uber alles" tower and his American "go it alone." That is not thinking seriously and along that line he will destroy his life's work.

You will possess, I am sure, all the necessary patience to bear with his sarcasms, his occasional cynicism, his lack of comprehension, his narrowmindedness. He has to be shaken up. . . .

Very fraternally,  
Gabe [Pablo]

3. "Centuries of transition": letter from Michel Pablo to Sherry Mangan (excerpt—April 29, 1957)

Dear Sherry,

I received your lengthy and quite interesting letter of 4-24-57. Good job.

Now we are waiting for the news of your talks with Jim.

About the two questions posed in your letter: (a) the "amendments" burned by Clarke. Naturally I know nothing of that "mysterious" affair except that Clarke did in fact receive comments or amendments and that he asked them to withdraw them. Which they did, according to him (going by what he told me). If they deemed their amendments to be important, why didn't they protest at the time and why didn't they report anything to the IS? Why didn't Manuel [Novack] ever raise this question? Why, on the contrary, did they approve and publicly hail (Jim personally) the results and line of the 3rd Congress?

As for the "centuries of transition," I'd have to send you the three texts in which this question was posed: namely, an early article on the social character of Yugoslavia; my article "Where Are We Going?" published in the February-April 1951 *Quatrième Internationale*; and my answer to the accusations and falsifications of Bleibtreu in an *International Bulletin*.

They know about (and must have) these three texts!

I did indeed write and affirm that the *transition from capitalism to completed socialism* must be considered as a historical epoch of "several centuries." I explained that the *lapse of time which will pass since the publication of the Communist Manifesto until the completion of socialism* (that is, the beginnings of Communism) will appear as a historical epoch of some centuries. To me, that seemed to be obvious for anyone who would think about it at all seriously. It is a matter of the era encompassing the victory of the revolution over world capitalism and the subsequent completion of socialism on a scale likewise worldwide. More than a century has already passed since Marx wrote that "the spectre of communism is haunting

the world" and more than 50 years have passed under imperialism, the "highest phase of capitalism."

Now we are still not at the point of the world victory of the revolution. And this victory, once guaranteed, does not lead us yet to "completed" socialism but to the preparatory phase of socialism. I likewise wrote and reaffirmed that the bureaucratic phenomenon having its deepest roots in the inadequate material and cultural level of the masses, it follows that during this transitional epoch, *bureaucratic deformations* are inevitable but that they will be eliminated as the revolution and socialism conquer in a "more and more considerable part of the world."

I spoke of bureaucratic distortions and never of bureaucratic degeneration on the Stalinist model.

As for Stalinism, on the contrary, I claim to have been the one who since at least 1948 has fought to get it understood that, in spite of its apparent "successes," it had in reality entered into a phase of decomposition.

I consider these questions of a great theoretical importance but I have in no way insisted on imposing *these personal viewpoints* on the movement. No official text contains these views. So what practical interest, from an immediate point of view, can there be if I as an individual consider that the transitional epoch from capitalism to completed socialism will extend over some centuries, while others think it will happen over a few decades or a century?

I can only admire in a strict sense their perspicacious optimism, without necessarily sharing it. Of course History will settle the issue (unfortunately without bothering at that time about our poor existence).

Every political discussion must deal with the official documents of the movement and not with the exclusively personal views of this one or that one.

If we should join in this little game too, we might see mountains of comments formulated about the articles and writings of such or such on their side. . . .

Very fraternally,  
Gabe [Pablo]

4. "Representation of the IC tendency . . . cannot constitute a de facto overturn of the majority": letter from the International Secretariat to the leadership of the SWP (immediate literal translation by Sherry Mangan—May 7, 1957)

Dear Comrades,

The IS is by now conversant both with the important letter of Comrade Cannon to Comrade Tilak [Goonewardene] and with the conversations engaged in, in our name, by Comrade Patrick [Mangan] with yourselves.

We have also received a copy of the letter of April 29 addressed by Comrade Cannon to Comrade Patrick.

The IS salutes the beginning at last of concrete and responsible negotiations on the question of unification, so important in particular for the effectiveness of the international Trotskyist movement at the present stage.

We have studied with the attentiveness that they deserve the letter of Comrade Cannon to Comrade Tilak and the

one addressed, to us, to Comrade Patrick. We are disposed, as it was clearly indicated in the appeal of the IEC of November 1956, to examine with the greatest understanding all proposals aiming at the reestablishment of unity. With this purpose, we are sincerely disposed to make important—very important—concession, which otherwise would not be justified either by the democratic centralist regime of the International, or by its present strength, or by its way of recalling and explaining recent history. The one thing that we are not able and certainly shall never be able to do, is to liquidate the International, as it were, as a democratic centralist World Party, as Leon Trotsky already in 1938 bequeathed it to us by struggling against reformist and centrist conceptions in this matter. It is not necessary, between us, to recall the arguments of L.T. and of the movement against an "International" of the type of the present Socialist International or the example of the famous London Bureau.

In order, however, to take into account your way of interpreting the responsibilities for the split and the

International's past conduct (with which, however, you were completely associated), and your demand for "guarantees" for the future, the IS is ready to support the proposals made on this subject by Comrade Patrick to Comrade Cannon. You may consider these proposals as being our own. The IS is also ready to support as ample as possible a representation of the International Committee tendency, quite apart from its real numerical strength compared to that of the International, but one which cannot constitute a pure and simple *de facto* overturn of the majority, accompanied by a *de facto* regime of complete political impotence for the work of the International.

The normal solution for this question, in conformance with our democratic principles, would be, as soon as we have reached a political agreement on the general line to be followed between the reunification Congress and the following Congress of the International, to leave the question of representation to be democratically decided by the reunification Congress itself. This Congress naturally would be organized, as far as its representation is concerned, on the basis of a joint supervision by a parity Committee giving all guarantees to both sides.

But, we repeat, we are disposed to support the accordance to the International Committee tendency of a representation amply—very amply—greater than that to which it would normally have a right.

We are also completely in agreement to support the idea that between the reunification Congress and the following Congress of the International there shall occur no alteration in the organization and policy of the leadership of the International which is not decided on by joint agreement between the two tendencies making up the leadership, as well as no disciplinary measure toward the sections, groups, or individual militants having taken part in the reunification Congress.

The question of the nomenclature of the reunification Congress must not, in our opinion, set up major obstacles. We ought to be able easily to find a satisfactory compromise on this question.

As for the more special questions of the situation of the Trotskyist movement in France and England, we shall advocate unification on the basis of a healthy democratic centralist regime, supposing that a previous agreement has occurred on the general political line to be followed in both countries. In case such an agreement should prove to be not immediately possible, we are ready to envisage a solution such as that which Comrade Cannon suggests for France in his letter to Comrade Patrick; but, in our opinion, this should not be prolonged beyond a certain period, for example that lasting between the reunification

Congress and the following Congress of the International.

The IS is persuaded that the new beginning of negotiations for reunification corresponds to a sincere desire in common to achieve it, and not to transform the intervening time into propaganda operations with a view to bogging the question down or finding the pretext for a new break. Starting from this point of view, we insist on the need of proceeding with extreme seriousness, of formulating reasonable proposals, and of demonstrating in practice the enormous importance which, in our opinion, the reunification of the international Trotskyist movement has.

An organizational solution must be found, but it would be contrary to the principled traditions of our movement to consider the question as being of a merely organizational nature, and of sacrificing to the formulation of its solution the fundamental concepts and principles of our movement in matters of truly democratic organization and functioning.

It is the International that is in question, and the International is the very essence, the vital principle, of our movement. No organizational compromise must as an unfortunate precedent devoid of principle mortgage the future or render the present impotent.

Also from this point of view, we insist on the necessity of having the negotiations continued by highly responsible and qualified persons. The participation of one of you is judged by us to be indispensable. That would be for us a tangible indication that you are animated by a real desire of reaching the goal, and of the seriousness that you accord to the question of reunification. Heretofore we have not spared our efforts, including on the material level, to make headway in negotiations for reunification. The voyage of Comrade Patrick is the most recent and eloquent example in this matter. We feel that we have a full right to ask you that you in your turn show a similar spirit, by including in any organism entrusted with continuing the negotiations a responsible representative of your organization.

The contents of this letter for the moment engage the responsibility only of the IS. A meeting of the International Executive Committee has been called for a date in the immediate future and you will soon have its own reply. We can, however, anticipate matters by stating that it will certainly support the general line of this letter.

We consequently authorize Comrade Patrick to act along the lines of his own proposals completed by the present letter.

With our fraternal salutations.  
The IS

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5. *"Their ideas about the International are flatly liquidationist and centrist": letter from Michel Pablo to Sherry Mangan (May 10, 1957)*

Dear Sherry,

You must have already received our answer to Jim's proposals. What you must insist on with them are the following points:

(a) There is no question for us of changing the statutes of the International in the direction of a federation, etc. Only a congress has that power, and we will be against such a modification. The concession which we can make in that area is to accept *de facto* a system letting them act for a period of time, in fact as a quasi-independent organization loosely associated with the International. Their ideas about the International are flatly liquidationist and centrist, greatly resembling those developed by Clarke-Cochran-Lawrence. We broke with the latter on this

question, and it is, to say the least, a cruel irony of history to see the "orthodox" take up the same path.

Jim's idea about the International as such carrying out entryism into a conceivable centrist international reveals the course their thought has taken since the split—right into the opportunist and liquidationist swamp.

The International as such does not and will not ever proceed on entryist lines. That would be the end of our movement. It will only fuse with an International that takes up its program. Individually or even on a section basis, one may maneuver with entryism but the International as such remains independent. That's the ABC of Trotskyism, proclaimed by the pope of the "orthodox" together with so many other fundamental things. We must be aware that we are going to merge with a tendency in which a mixture of sectarian and opportunist ideas prevail and which is topped off with Stalinist-like organizational conceptions (or at best Zinovievist) on the national scale.

(b) It is not a question of granting them parity in the IEC and the IS, just like that. They only represent at best one-third of the International. They must stop bluffing on that point. Their argument that the International is split into two equal halves is just bluffing. As for the Ceylonese, they are completely with us (more than ever) and if they've written to Jim, it is because we asked them to do so. Their opinion of the split is that it was a matter of a "betrayal" by those who brought it about.

It is not a question whether we should pursue negotiations or form parity commissions only with the lunatics among their friends in Europe: the Lamberts, the Swiss, etc. They must send at least one of theirs. Otherwise it amounts practically to taking no further interest in the unification. They know their allies here very well, and we don't have either the patience or the interest in starting again to spend our energy and nerves on wasting our time with them.

This question of their representation is very important, including consequently the matter of the composition of the IEC and the IS.

With whom among them can we form such common structures which can discuss and work out these matters seriously and effectively. If they don't participate, that

means having to do deal with the Swiss and types like Lambert because even the English will only have the possibility of sending one or two there.

You see the difficulties if we should accept a "parity" leadership. That suits Jim fine and those friends who in reality start with the idea of a decorative International and so wish to render it impotent. But that doesn't suit us at all, we who see the serious, effective functioning of the International as the ideological motor, the stimulating element for our entire movement, and for the activity of the sections and the work of constructing new sections.

We do not want to render the functioning of the International impotent. They must understand that and they must offer us an answer which prevents such a result in practice. A parity leadership, with whom (concretely)? They don't give a \_\_\_\_\_ if the International's leadership is unable to work, is ineffective, etc. They would even want it to be that way. They would like in reality to apply their conception of a decorative International through this shuffling. But for us that is unacceptable.

I write all this to you to alert you, to clarify the meaning of our letter, and to indicate the limits in which concessions are possible.

Would you bring with you, if possible: (a) J. Beal's book on Foster Dulles; (b) Mills' "Power Elite"; (c) the book just published about the IWW.

Ask them as well if they see anything inconvenient in our publishing Warde's [Novack] criticism of "Power Elite" in Q.I.

Try to see Natalia again before you leave and talk to her about our congress and our sincere desire to see her there.

Regardless of the final result, your mission is already a success and you've accomplished it in your typically exceedingly serious manner which we appreciate truly very much.

I've come back from England. It might be useful for you to know, I think, that Burns [Healy], for several reasons, needs the unification and will push in that direction.

We have put off the IEC until June so that you can attend and make your report. Take care of your health. Very fraternally,

/s/ Gabe [Pablo]

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6. "Their reply to the JPC memo was unsatisfactory . . . further discussion was suspended pending consultation": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (May 20, 1957)

Dear Jerry:

We received your letter dealing with the unity matter and are having it mimeographed for distribution to our National Committee.

Jim is here and will remain until our convention which will give us the opportunity of discussing the whole question with our national leadership and submit to you a detailed elaboration of our thinking on the problem.

Patrick [Mangan] was invited to appear before our PC and present his (Pablo's) views on unification. A transcript was taken of his remarks which will be forwarded to you as soon as we have the stenographic notes transcribed. (Unfortu-

nately the comrade taking the notes was taken to the hospital for an emergency appendectomy and so there may be a little delay.)

Patrick was informed that their reply to the JPC memo was unsatisfactory and that all further discussion was suspended pending consultation with:

1. Our co-thinkers abroad.
2. The national leadership of the SWP.
3. The SWP membership.

Patrick was also informed that in no sense was he to consider the exchange of views with members of the SWP as "negotiations." His appearance before our PC had a salutary effect in disclosing little change in the peculiar Pabloite mentality. He left a generally bad impression, which, if anything, re-emphasized the necessity of proceeding with the utmost caution with these people.

Smith [Dobbs]

## SECTION VII: HEALY VOICES SUPPORT FOR THE REUNIFICATION EFFORT

Gerry Healy's letters expressed support for Cannon's proposals on reunification, while showing little enthusiasm about the prospects for success. He was particularly concerned with the possibility that reunification would lead to a new factional struggle with supporters of Pablo in the British Section. He suggested that the proposals be clarified to protect his group against maneuvers on the part of the Revolutionary Socialist League, a group led by Ted Grant which had recently begun to collaborate with the IS. The SWP leaders readily agreed to Healy's proposal.

Today, Healy claims to have openly opposed Cannon's proposals from the start. In writing to Goonewardene, Healy asserts, Cannon had "decided to sell out to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the imperialists."

In *Problems of the Fourth International*, Healy wrote:

"Immediately upon hearing about Cannon's letters to Goonewardene, we wrote to the SWP and disassociated ourselves from Cannon.

"He wrote back the kind of a letter the lord of a manor writes to a serf. It was a letter from an arrogant American nationalist telling the English comrades where to get off.

"We put the question about the importance of prior discussion before unification took place. Cannon said that there was no need for any discussion.

"He had in effect completely capitulated to Pabloism."

No trace of this alleged exchange could be found in the materials available to the editors of this collection. Nor is any trace of it to be found in *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*, the multivolume documentary collection edited by Cliff Slaughter and published by the Healyites. Healy's

version of the events appears to be a fabrication.

The available record shows that Healy responded to Cannon's proposals by writing that "we agree with your proposals but would like to stress that these are a definite minimum." He expressed pessimism about the prospects for unity because of the remaining differences, particularly differences in method. In reply, Farrell Dobbs described the differences of method that existed and explained why differences of this type did not justify continuing the de facto split. Peng wrote a letter along similar lines.

Healy never indicated any disagreement with Dobbs' reply of May 27 which took up the main points Healy raised in a May 10 communication. On the contrary, Healy repeatedly expressed his full support for Cannon's proposals, although his actions in the next period often seemed to contradict his words.

"We are all agreed on the necessity to provide a positive answer to the 'unity' question, and we shall certainly allow no opportunity to slip by us in this respect," he wrote, promising that the next meeting of the IC would approve the Cannon proposals.

Had Healy expressed differences with the analysis presented by Dobbs, a political discussion of reunification in the IC would have been possible. Healy forestalled this by strongly indicating general agreement with the approach of the SWP leaders.

The evidence now indicates that Healy was maneuvering during these discussions of the possibility of reunification, seeking to block any agreement with the IS while hiding his objectives from the SWP. In this respect, his course paralleled that of Pablo in the IS.

1. "Pablo's movement has not the same significance that it did even three years ago": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (January 15, 1957)

Dear Jim:

I have just received a copy of Goonewardene's letter to you. This follows within a few weeks, a similar sort of declaration from the Pabloites' IEC. A copy was sent to New York from this end, and I expect you have received it.

Towards the end of the Spring 1954, you will recall that we had some political communications with the LSSP in which they moved close to the line of orthodox Trotskyists regarding Pabloism except in relation to the reasons for the "Open Letter." They subsequently produced a statement on Pablo's "The Rise and Fall of Stalinism" which in essence agreed with ours. They also supported a postponement of Pablo's so-called Fourth Congress. Now all this seemed to indicate an agreement with us and during their stay in Britain we went out of our way to forge a close political association with them.

On their return, it was noticeable that Goonewardene himself did not want to associate much with us, and bit by bit we found out that they did not present their political document at Pablo's conference, but in turn voted for his, with the exception of some amendments. This was a shock to us, but when we met Colvin de Silva he asked us to help them to overcome the difficulties. Accordingly we had long discussions and agreed to the idea of the parity committee, with the *understanding* that they would come to Europe and participate in its work. Needless to say they forgot all about this arrangement when they went back to Ceylon. As you know, it wasn't long before the parity committee was revealed as a smokescreen for all sorts of maneuvers by Pablo and Frank. As you know we broke off relations with it. Before doing so, however, we wrote to Goonewardene asking his opinion, but he didn't even have the courtesy to reply. Comrade Peng wrote on a number of occasions and beyond receiving one or two noncommittal notes, nothing else happened.

Now this new approach is from start to finish prompted by Pablo and Germain. Goonewardene is only carrying out what they request and as usual he does it in a two-faced fashion. No one more than Tom [Sam Gordon] and myself have been so conciliatory to the LSSP leadership, but we are forced more and more to the conclusion that people such as Goonewardene act in a manner which at all critical times helps Pablo.

This present "unity" offensive talks peace at a time when the forces of orthodox Trotskyism are making progress everywhere. I have written at some length to New York on the situation here and no doubt you will have seen some of my letters. The interesting thing is that we have had Pablo here for at least two weeks touring around sowing confusion, trying to chip off some of our new people, and meeting Stalinist dissidents. He turned up at a Peter Fryer meeting the other evening and took the floor. All he has succeeded in doing is stringing together around Grant a number of old sectarians into one of his "sections." We now have definite information from ex-Stalinists that his old "section" led by Lawrence works closely with the Stalinist leadership at a time when everyone else is breaking away from it.

Pablo formed an open organization here called the Revolutionary Socialist League with a paper which he produces in Paris called the "Workers International Review." The handful of people he has in the L[abour] P[arty] publish a duplicated bulletin called "Socialist Current." These latter disciples urge all and sundry to join the LP whilst the RSL urges everybody to join the "Fourth International." Besides fighting us they try to make Trotskyism a laughing stock in front of dissident CPers. All in all it hardly goes to create an atmosphere conducive to unity.

At this moment when there is a great shake-up in the Stalinist world, a lot of revisionist currents, Shachtmanites, state-capitalist, etc. move around talking about "regroupment" and "unity" in order to prey upon the Stalinists blind faith to such phrasemongering in the past. Invariably they seek to push us into the position of opposing such "unity" and "regroupment" in order to gain a factional advantage. Party to party, movement to movement, they cannot compete with us, so they get up to tricks. My opinion is that Pablo is also playing this game, but with one exception, and that is the continuous pressure of a number of people still trapped in his ranks.

It would be very wrong of us to fall for this kind of stampede game. Experience teaches us here that the best Stalinist workers are thinking a lot and will listen to correct arguments. All that is required is patience and principles when discussing with them. They are not impressed with "fake unity" because they have seen enough of it. One example goes to show this. Peter Fryer, ex-London foreign correspondent of the "Daily Worker" was approached by Grant at a meeting last night. Grant led off with a tirade about "unity" of Trotskyists, etc. knowing that Fryer worked sympathetically with us. Fryer told him that despite all this he thought that there were principled differences which could not be glossed over. One of these, Fryer insisted, was on how to approach the CP and he stressed the correctness of the way our group did it as against that of Pablo. We don't have to worry if our arguments are correct and we avoid getting involved in organizational maneuvers.

The fact is that with all Pablo's pretence his movement has not the same significance as it had even three years ago. This is an entirely different situation, with more and more potential cadres coming our way. By unity, Pablo would like to attach his little groups to us so that they could embark on factional work when it suited him. Our experience of this man's politics leaves us with our eyes wide open. We paid one price for his nonsense—we don't intend to pay another.

One final point. A leading comrade of ours has just returned from Ceylon, and he tells us that there is considerable resentment smouldering against the parliamentary opportunism of the leadership, as well as other things. For this reason also, we must speak clearly on all the questions.

We all hope you are feeling well, and that your eyes are improving. Everyone looks forward to your reply to Goonewardene. Proofs of "Notebook of an Agitator" are on the way.

Warmest regards,  
/s/ Burns [Healy]

2. *"If the Pabloites accept the proposal, your organization will be amply protected": letter from James P. Cannon to Gerry Healy (March 12, 1957)*

Los Angeles, Calif.  
March 12, 1957

Dear Jerry:

Please forgive me for delaying so long to answer your letters. We have been thinking about the problem all the time and talking about it here in Los Angeles, and I believe the final result of our thinking will prove to be worth the delay.

My letter to Goonewardene and the supplementary proposals contained in the letter to the PC and the International Committee ought to be helpful to your organization in Britain either way it goes. If the Pabloites reject the proposal you will have all the answer you need to convince the people breaking from Stalinism that the Pabloite unity propaganda is merely a maneuverist diversion. Since the Pabloite regime was the direct cause of the disruptive split in England, nobody can reasonably ask you to take another chance on it. On the other hand, if the Pabloites accept the proposal, your organization will be amply protected against the kind of disruptive interference that caused the damage in the past. It must be borne in mind that the British cadres, tested in two great struggles, one internal and one in the mass movement, are much firmer and stronger now and much more able to cope with any irritating problems that might come up as a result of unification with the small Pablo group. You should have no difficulty in putting them to work and under control.

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We are most of all concerned about France. Alongside

their sectarian trend and their excessive factionalism, we seem to sense a nationalistic current there. We were very unfavorably impressed by their handling of the Bleibtreu case, and also by their threat to withdraw from the International Committee because of its inquiry into the matter. I think that, a little later on, Bleibtreu and his friends should be given an opportunity to reintegrate themselves in the movement, if they wish to do so.

We are dead set against nationalist-isolationist tendencies, and also dead set against the idea of permitting the French comrades to veto a necessary decision on the larger question of international unity. Of course, every effort should be made to persuade them to go along with the proposal. But it should be made clear that we have to proceed by majority rule, or else we will have to give up the idea of trying to work together.

We are all greatly enthused by your successes among the people breaking from Stalinism. We are also making substantial progress along the same line here on the West Coast. Now, if we can make headway in the ranks of Stalinism in the two countries where the Stalinist parties are the weakest and probably the most corrupt of all, because they have been most directly dependent upon the Soviet bureaucracy, why can't we make big progress in France where the Communist Party is a real workers' organization and where our chances should be one hundred times better? That is something to think about very seriously.

Please give my best regards to Tom [Sam Gordon] and the other militants. Tell Tom I did not yet receive the letter I have been expecting from him, but I am still waiting.

Fraternally,  
J.P. Cannon

JPC:rh

3. *"We are in agreement on the need for testing out this unity mongering": letter from Gerry Healy to Tom Kerry (April 11, 1957)*

Dear Tom,

We have been giving careful consideration to the situation in the World Trotskyist movement over the past three weekly meetings of our Executive Committee. Our conclusions are as follows:

a) The basic methodological differences between ourselves and Pablo remain and have not been eradicated despite the favourable objective situation. We should be completely clear on this score, and under no circumstances seek to minimise them. That could lead to serious miseducation.

b) From his activity in Britain, it seems most likely that he visualises Grant and his small group as a source for a future faction in our ranks. We are not kindly disposed towards this especially with the bitter experience of Lawrence on our mind. It took us a long time before we were able to overcome this edition of Pablo's "experiments."

c) We are in agreement on the necessity for testing out

this unity mongering, on a fifty fifty committee basis provided there is ample time for an international discussion which should proceed, as far as we can conduct it, under the best possible atmosphere. Either way we do not have anything to lose.

One of the things which greatly disturbs us is the deterioration in Ceylon. Colvin de Silva and Perera were here a few days ago and made no effort to see us. We learned that they were defending their policy on Chou En-lai and attacked us as sectarians. There seems to be a definite movement away there and this could of course be very important for the future. In 1954 they were with us fairly solid politically but now they are heeling over towards Pablo. Here is an extract from a report submitted to our E.C. by one of our comrades who spoke to an English Pabloite.

"Bornstein told us that Colvin visited him on March 20. Colvin R. de Silva told him that he has recently received a letter from Comrade G. Healy 'asking him to make specific demands to the Chinese delegation.' Colvin stated that when he finished reading the letter he burst out laughing and thought that 'Healy is mad.' Bornstein said that he has seen the letter and agreed with Colvin that the demands contained in the letter were not only infantile but



impossible at this stage because, as Bornstein puts it, the Stalinists are in process of change for the better and that it was possible, Bornstein added, for the Stalinist leadership to learn from their own terrible experiences; and that to make such demands would impede the democratisation of the C.P. in China."

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4. *"It is worth doing everything possible to get one world organisation if we can": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (April 24, 1957)*

Dear Jim,

Nobody here is enthusiastic over the possibilities of fusion with the Pabloites. We are constantly being attacked by their British adherents who now openly boast that in the event of fusion that Pablo and his "International" will "protect" them in the fused organisation. In other words we are to run the danger of a repetition of the Lawrence episode right from the start. There is no doubt in my mind that the sole reason why Pablo maintains this wretched little outfit of all sorts of quitters from our movement in the past is because he wishes to utilise them against us.

We will under no circumstances have any sort of fusion under conditions which will allow anything of this sort to happen. Our group is growing rapidly and has just completed a first rate job inside the CP. If we are forced to keep constantly looking over our shoulders to see what Pablo is doing next and at the same time return to Pablo's globe trotting politics, this work will suffer.

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5. *"The change in Pablo's line therefore does not at all imply a change in his political methods": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (May 10, 1957)*

Dear Jim,

We have just received copies of your communication dated April 28-30. These are being immediately transmitted to members of the International Committee and a meeting will be arranged in June so that a full discussion can take place, after the sections have had an opportunity to discuss the matter thoroughly.

We do not see, and I am sure that you will agree, any reasons why our people should be stampeded into hasty conclusions. Because of our failure to appreciate the thoroughly revisionist character of the Third World Congress decision, we paid a heavy price, which resulted in the disruption of the French section, and a situation where in 1953 we found ourselves trapped inside Pablo's organizational set-up which in turn forced us to move swiftly and issue the "Open Letter." We now know that not everybody was ready for this sharp break and again we had to pay a price which would undoubtedly have been less, on an international scale, had we alerted ourselves in time to the revisionism personified by Pablo-Germain and Co. It would be very wrong now if we were to get caught up in the exchange of organizational proposals no matter how well they are drafted on our side, and overlook the very deep-going political differences that exist.

This reference here is to a letter I wrote to Ceylon along the lines of the Militant Editorial, so you can see the problem. I hope to write J.P.C. in a few days, I am terribly busy at the moment.

Warmest regards,  
Jerry

Our group is ready to seek out ways and means to draw all the orthodox Trotskyists under one roof so to speak. In this respect we agree with your proposals but would like to stress that these are a definite minimum.

What worries the comrades here is the deep-going methodological differences which exist between ourselves and Pablo. All our experiences emphasise that it is impossible to bridge such a gulf unless Pablo himself is prepared to learn. Personally I cannot see this happening, but it is worth doing everything possible to get one world organisation if we can.

The IC has not yet met and the next meeting is on May 11th. It is very important that we get the maximum agreement on this body and that all negotiations are done through them. The Pabloites are constantly spreading the false rumor that the Americans are negotiating directly with them and think nothing about the IC. The French will use this unless everything is done through the IC.

I agree with your observations regarding the French.

Please keep in regular touch with us so that we are together on all the issues.

Warmest regards,  
Jerry

We all know how the Chinese Stalinists supported the rape of Hungary and endorsed the Soviet intervention. They attacked the Yugoslavs and their spokesmen provided ideological cover for the worst types of Stalinist bureaucrats all over the world. In his latest resolution "Decline and Fall of Stalinism," February 1957, Pablo treats the Chinese experience in the following way:

"The XXth Congress of the CP of the USSR, the Khrushchev Report, and the political revolution in Poland and Hungary, have had a profound influence on the CPs of all the workers' states—including that of China, where there was shown a *certain delay* in 'destalinization', explicable above all by the backward state of the country and the enormous objective economic difficulties *that the leadership of the Chinese C.P. must face*. But the pressure of the current of 'destalinization' was sufficiently strong to impose important decisions on the Congress of the Chinese C.P., especially in favour of the right to tendencies, the right of minorities to defend their ideas within the Communist Party even after majority decisions, and even the need of tolerating several 'democratic' parties in a workers' state. These ideas will exercise a great influence on numerous communist parties, especially in Asia." (Our emphasis.)

This is the classical Pablo line—not a word about the treacherous role of Chinese Stalinism in Hungary whose document "More on the Historical Experiences of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" was designed to counteract

the growth of Trotskyist ideas amongst Stalinist dissidents. Reread that paragraph and you can only conclude that its aim is to whitewash this treachery and boost up Chinese Stalinism in the colonies. Pablo is well aware of the opportunism of our Ceylonese leadership and true to type he is pushing them along. It is impossible for us to remain silent on this matter. Furthermore we have to take into account that the LSSP leaders have moved further away from the orthodox Trotskyist position since 1954. At his Fourth Congress Pablo included a few of their amendments and they capitulated. They are now further away from us politically than at any time previously. For example, the Trotskyist-dominated Ceylon Federation of Labor sent the following May Day Greetings to the Russian Trade Unions:

“Ceylon Federation of Labour sends you and Soviet people fraternal May Day Greetings and pledges support against all imperialist threats to your country.”—N.M. Perera, President.

Not one word about Hungary and the revolutionary fighters in the USSR. Instead it lends aid and comfort to the Stalinist bureaucracy which in turn will use this to maintain its hold over the Soviet masses.

Turn to the next page of the same document (“Decline and Fall of Stalinism”) and read the last paragraph:

“The immediate repercussions of the Hungarian revolution can stimulate a momentarily predominant faction in the Kremlin to ‘harden’ again its attitude toward the countries of the ‘glacis’. But the pressure of the masses cannot fail to *continue to grow* in these countries. The fermentation of national independence and the autonomy of the CPs toward the Soviet CP cannot fail to ‘break up’ a large part of the youth and of the communist militants themselves. *The process of transformation of relations among workers’ states, of relations of national oppression and economic exploitation into relations of equality and fraternal collaboration, is irreversible. The sooner the Soviet bureaucrats bow before this process, the more harmoniously it will be carried out. The more they resist it, the more it will lead to violent conflicts and sanguinary collisions.*” (Our emphasis.)

Here you have the double talk of the Third Congress brought up to date. With all the bitter experience of the Hungarian Revolution at our disposal, once again a question mark is placed over the role of the bureaucracy in the political revolution. How can you build mass Trotskyist parties with such a policy? And in fact Pablo doesn’t believe that you can. Study the document from the first page to the last and you will not find a single call for the construction of Trotskyist parties in the USSR, China, or Eastern Europe. Was that not one of the main reasons for the split in 1953?

It would be wrong to assume that Pablo’s political line in terms of method has changed. The rank-and-file members of his groups are undoubtedly impressed by the revulsion of CP and ex-CP members against Stalinism. They instinctively tend to approach this situation with the basic ideas of orthodox Trotskyism. Pablo’s double talk pays lip-service to this, but his basic revisionist method remains.

The change in Pablo’s line therefore does not at all imply a change in his political methods. In the preamble to his document “The Decline and Fall of Stalinism,” which is to be submitted to his so-called Fifth Congress, it states:

“The thesis, ‘Rise and Decline of Stalinism’, adopted by the Fourth World Congress of the Fourth International,

applied to the analysis of the dynamics of Soviet Society the general conclusions that the Fourth International had drawn from the reevaluation of the world situation carried out at its Third World Congress. . . .

“That is why the present theses do not take up again either the historical expositions or the structural analyses and definitions of the theses ‘Rise and Decline of Stalinism’, of which they are neither a substitute nor a corrective, but a natural continuation and thus an integral part.”

When you consider that it was the document “Rise and Decline of Stalinism” which sparked off the split in 1953 and that Pablo reaffirms it at a time when he is calling for unity, it is perfectly logical if we understand that we are here dealing with a tendency which substitutes empiricist and eclectic methods for Marxist analysis. Pablo continually covers up his revisionism with declarations with which we have no disagreement. It all depends on the pressures around when he writes his document. We had 95% agreement, as it were, at the Third Congress, but it was that odd 5% which did so much damage to our movement.

Recently we have been reviewing the internal documents of our world movement since the end of the war, and it is quite clear that an objective study of that period is extremely important for the education of our cadres in the future. Pablo and Germain’s double talk have had some terrible effects in the miseducation on our comrades on the continent, and this cannot be put right simply by declaring that the objective situation since the Twentieth Congress is very much in our favor. The Marxist education of our cadres has to take into account how Pablo and his tendency developed just as you were able to do in the books dealing with the struggle against Shachtman and Burnham. The objective situation is not sufficient by itself to do this. All sorts of tendencies ranging between opportunism and sectarianism are now raising their heads amongst those who are leaving the CP. Whilst a united Trotskyist movement could be an important rallying center, nevertheless if its basis rests upon lack of clarity and slurred over differences, a new crop of disastrous splits may well develop once again, even though we are working in a favorable objective situation.

It is extremely difficult for empiricists of the Germain-Pablo school to become Marxists. People like this, or globe trotters of the P. O’D. [Mangan] variety cannot build the revolutionary parties of the future; on the contrary, these parties can only be built up in constant theoretical struggle against such tendencies, and if anyone can be assisted this is the only way to do it. The revolutionary cadres of the future must be thoroughly educated against impressionistic double talk, otherwise our movement will flounder during critical periods. Experience teaches us that there is no greater ideological trap for inexperienced people than the type of two-faced politics at which Pablo and Germain are past masters.

We think therefore that the International Committee must theoretically prepare itself without any organizational hindrances. Even if Pablo and Co. accept every one of your points, members of the IC have the duty and responsibility to complete the preparation of their documents on world perspectives and to submit them for the discussion. A World Congress should not be rushed without adequate political preparation. Whilst this should be done in an objective fashion, everybody should have the

right to speak out and get things clear. This does not mean giving way to bull-headed factionalism, but facts are facts, and you cannot get round political differences by tactical plausibilities. Progress internationally can develop only from a firm political foundation. The British Section will never agree to anything which may cut across essential clarification. We have had our basinful of that sort of thing over Lawrence when Pablo and Clarke were jointly managing the Paris office. Time and again we hushed things up about his pro-Stalinist behaviour as editor of the "Socialist Outlook," on a request from the Pablo center. "Don't be too harsh with the comrade," they said, "he is sensitive, well-meaning but a little confused." In the interests of unity we listened and by God we paid a bitter price. The "sensitive" Pablo lamb turned out to be a raging Stalinist lion when the class pressures forced him on, and he almost disrupted the entire patient work of seven years. Ironically enough, this same Lawrence who fully supported the Soviet intervention in Hungary is now preparing to get thrown out of the Labour Party and join the Communist Party, when every self-respecting militant is preparing to leave it.

If we assume without qualification that the present favorable political situation can greatly help in checking the disintegrating splits which characterized our movement in its isolation, this could lead to a one-sided and erroneous conclusion, in just the same way as the "mass pressure" theories of Pablo and Germain during 1953. The strengthening of our cadres is decisive in this present period and this can only be done in a thoroughgoing education around the problems of revisionism. That is the most important conscious role which our movement has to play.

The talk of "two groups" in Britain in the manner engaged in by P. O'D. is nonsense. Our group is the British Section, from which the Pablo group headed by Lawrence split off in 1953. During last year Pablo recruited Grant, formerly Haston's "theoretician" in the RCP, and a man named Fairhead who deserted to the Stalinists in 1949; reappeared in 1953, and once again broke with the movement in 1954 on the grounds that it was led by tyrants and was finished. His declaration at the time stated that from then on he was going to listen to "good music" and read Kafka. He is now working full time with Grant, the wage of both being paid by Pablo from Paris. This small group is now seriously split on a number of questions concerning the Labour Party. It has not recruited a single member of the CP, to our knowledge. Its sole activity is trying to rally old die-hard sectarians who left when Haston took off. The main basis of recruitment is that Pablo will give them special protection in a fused group—in other words he will set them up as his faction. They openly say this in conversation.

We would like, therefore, to amend your statement: if your terms are accepted the British Section will be fully recognized and after that consideration can be given to the Grant group on a proportional representation basis, if they want it that way. We will not be placed in the same

category as this phoney group; nobody should have any illusions—we will not permit anybody to disrupt our work here. We are always ready to unite with any group on a principled basis, but we are not repeating the Lawrence episode.

We realize in writing all this to you that, to use an English phrase, we are "carrying coals to Newcastle." The movement here has been largely educated on the rich experiences of the SWP in its long struggle for principles. We would like to believe today we are reaching a position where we can help our American comrades as a result of the favorable conditions under which we work. Since the Pablo split we have gone forward as never before in our history. The sharpening of our principles which was a direct gain from the split greatly helped us and politically tuned up our movement so that it was able to take full advantage of the Twentieth Congress. For the first time in our history we are assembling a first-class intellectual cadre, alongside trade union factions which are steadily increasing their influence. "Labour Review" is a foretaste of things to come from Britain. We shall, we believe, in time win over the most important dissident elements from the CP. Our annual congress in a few weeks time will record important gains for our movement over the past year.

For some time now the propaganda resources of Pablo and Germain have been assiduously spreading the story that they can only negotiate direct with Cannon. Our section and the International Committee are looked upon as some sort of hangers-on to the New Zealand section [SWP]. The visit of P. O'D. is designed to strengthen such gossip. This "big boss" conception of negotiation is typical of the "cultism" in general. Because of this the International Committee and the New Zealand section must march in step together, especially since there appears to be an obvious attempt in Pablo's terms to separate the Swiss, New Zealand and Canadian sections from ourselves and the French. Nothing can or must be decided without the fullest discussion. I am sure we will have your cooperation towards this end.

One final point. We are completely opposed to a return to the old Pablo conception of international organization: the draining of national sections' resources so that some globe trotter could stiffen up Pablo's faction in some small group thousands of miles away; the constant spate of meetings in Paris which meant sections raising funds to send representatives; innumerable appeals for help so that we could go on lifting ourselves up with our bootlaces, with all this taking place at a time when the national sections had little or no resources. Our international work must be organized on a realistic basis in line with the resources of sections and not along lines which tend to imitate the old Comintern.

With best wishes,  
Burns [Healy]

Adopted unanimously by the Executive Committee British Section of the Fourth International 13th May, 1957.

6. *"The best we can hope to get is some kind of joint working relationship": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (excerpt—May 23, 1957)*

May 23, 1957

Dear Farrell:

We have just received your letter dated May 20th.

As we see it, one of the most important things is to study Pablo's resolutions for his congress. This is the only real way you can judge his line.

We do not see how real unification can be achieved on the basis of his politics which are substantially the same as in 1953 so far as method goes.

The best we can hope to get is some sort of joint working relationship which would help us win over the closest people to us who still remain trapped inside his organiza-

tion. Jim's proposals would help towards this end, but the backbone of the whole process would be the drive towards political clarification. We badly need a study of the development of World movement since the end of the War. Michael Banda is working on this, but it will take time, and that is a commodity we are very short of just now. We have not yet placed Pabloism in political perspective, in the same way as we were able to do with the Shachtmanites, and this leaves a gap which could very easily transform any unification into a swamp in which 1953 may well be repeated once again.

We would like you to understand that we are just as ready as you to do anything to speed a better situation internationally, but it is essentially a political question, and we do not see any way round that except the principled way. . . .

Warmest regards,  
s/ Jerry

7. *"Our objective is not Pablo, but the majority of comrades remaining with the IS who are loyal to the Trotskyist movement": letter from Peng Shu-tse to the members of the International Committee (June 1, 1957)*

Dear Comrades:

I am very sorry of not having the possibility to participate in this important session of the IC (the reason of which I have just explained in my letter to Comrade Betty [Hamilton]). Hence, I can only state here briefly my opinions on the important problems confronting us:

(1) On the question of unification—In principle, either on national or international plane, unification of the Trotskyist movement is absolutely necessary. In the present conditions of a world situation favorable to the development of revolutionary movements, especially of the new situation most particularly favorable to the Trotskyist movement created by a general and deep-going crisis within the CP's since the 20th Congress of the CPSU and the revolutionary upsurges of Poland and Hungary, we should exert all possible efforts *to unite the Trotskyist forces on the basis of reaffirming the fundamental principles of Trotskyism* so to adapt ourselves to the exigencies of history.

From this point of view, I therefore consider the concrete proposals put forward by Comrade Cannon on the unification (re Cannon's letter to Patrick [Mangan] on the 29 April) as opportune. The I.C. should support such proposals and facilitate their realization.

The British comrades have pointed out (see Burns' [Healy] letter to Cannon on the 10 May) that Pablo has not corrected his revisionist methods. I not only entirely agree with this just reproach, but I personally deem it most difficult for Pablo to change his revisionist viewpoints

based on impressionism and his bureaucratic methods and maneuvers in organizational matters. Nevertheless, we cannot refuse or delay the unification for this reason only, because if we want unification, our objective is not a few individuals like Pablo, etc., but the majority of the comrades in the national sections remaining with the I.S. who are loyal to the Trotskyist movement. Besides, it is only in the process of unification, in the discussions in view of a common political agreement that the complete liquidation of the influence exercised on the Trotskyist movement by Pablo's revisionism is then possible.

The British comrades complain that the I.S. did not pass by the IC but negotiated directly with Comrade Cannon and the SWP. This is a fact, alas! But this is precisely the necessary consequence of the light and irresponsible manner in which the IC treated the "Parity Commission" in the past, and is worthy of a serious reflection.

(2) The British comrades insist that full political preparations are necessary for unification. This is quite correct. Yet it is on this very point that the IC has been very negligent, at least in the past period. For instance, although the IC has decided long ago to convoke a world conference, but has not yet until today organized any discussion and taken any official motion on the drafts of political resolutions indispensable for such a world conference. This attitude of extreme negligence towards political questions is worth recalling and to be particularly noted.

Consequently, I propose to the IC to proceed most rapidly as possible to a serious discussion of all political resolutions already drafted in order to arrive at common positions agreed upon by a majority as the basis of discussion for the coming conference and for unification.

/jb

Fraternally,  
/s/ S. T. Peng

8. *"The Situation in the World Trotskyist Movement," resolution of the 13th Congress of the British Section of the Fourth International (June 1957)*

(1) The 13th Congress of the British Section of the Fourth International considers that the International unification of tendencies claiming to be Trotskyist, with the International Committee of the Fourth International (orthodox Trotskyists) must be based upon fundamental agreement on the principles and programme of the Fourth International as elaborated by the late Leon Trotsky and the 1938 Founding Conference of the Fourth International. This means the rejection of all forms of revisionism of the State Capitalist, Shachtmanite, and Pabloite-Deutscher varieties, and the acceptance of the principle that it is necessary to build sections of the Fourth International in all countries in the world dedicated respectively to the overthrow of Imperialism, and the political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies. Any form of organizational unity without basic political agreement would only lead to a further series of splits which would greatly hamper our international growth and development.

9. *"We are fully aware of the remaining political differences between us and the Pabloites": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (June 27, 1957)*

Dear Com. Burns [Healy]:

We have just concluded a highly successful convention. It was well attended and enthusiastic. The party is recruiting members. The circulation of the press and literature is increasing. We are beginning to break out of isolation. The membership is facing the future with confidence. The main task guiding the party's activity for the period ahead is that of the regroupment of revolutionary socialists. This has proved a very fruitful arena for us at a time when all other radical tendencies are in crisis. We have registered gains among all of them, including not only Stalinists, but also the moribund SP and the Shachtmanites.

A left wing has been formed inside the Shachtmanite youth organization. It has been waging a principled offensive against Shachtman's craven capitulation to the Social Democracy. We have found that among them there are serious, devoted young revolutionists, who will undoubtedly represent an important acquisition for us.

The convention action on the recent developments in the World Movement has already been communicated to you.

In conjunction with the convention the comrades at the center had an opportunity to discuss the unity question with Comrade Cannon present. The opinions expressed here represent our collective views:

1. We will be only too glad to include in our unity proposals the amendment you request in your letter adopted by your EC May 13th. You are quite right in insisting that there is no question of healing a split in Britain. The split with Lawrence left your group the only legitimate and undisputed Trotskyist section. Today, as

(2) Congress therefore recognises that the attainment of unity must of necessity allow adequate time for discussion of the differences which exist, leading to the preparation of a world congress. It charges the incoming National Committee with the task of making a written analysis of the post-war political positions of our world movement and the elaboration of a basic document on world perspectives in collaboration with the sections affiliated to the International Committee.

(3) Congress maintains that the immediate practical side of a political unification must be taken in stages. It proposes to the International Committee that a parity committee consisting of the International Committee and Pablo representatives should draw up a memorandum of agreement on the issues where there is basic agreement. This joint body should constitute the leadership of the world movement and its primary task would be to prepare the Fourth World Congress of Unification. It would recommend to this congress that for the next period the International leadership be a parity leadership on all committees which would lead by persuading individuals and sections rather than by invoking the discipline of statutes. Only in this way will possibilities of principled unity of the Fourth International be realized.

you report, Lawrence is seeking unity not with Trotskyists, but with Stalinists.

In any negotiations to heal the split of 1953, the Grant group can have no claim to special consideration. If they wish to reintegrate themselves in the British Section, they should apply to the section for admission and you could if you wish accept them and extend to them the rights of a minority with proportional representation on leading bodies.

2. We heartily endorse your statement of being "completely opposed to a return to the old Pablo conception of international organization . . ." We were troubled by Pablo's organization methods even when we thought we saw eye to eye with him politically. But it took a serious political disagreement to point up the full danger of the excessive centralism which Pablo and Germain preached and practiced.

The Pabloite organization method has been detrimental to the development of cadres, especially in France, where the IS had hovered over the organization ever since the end of the war, intervening not only in the internal political struggles but also in all the petty squabbles and personality conflicts. Even if all the world's wisdom and experience were concentrated in the IS, such a method would hinder the development of a native leadership in France. The record of Pablo's interventions in France, if someone took the trouble to compile it, would make a good manual on how not to lead an international organization. You of course have had your own experience, including the constant financial squeeze you refer to in your letter.

3. We can assure you also that we are fully aware of the remaining political differences between us and the Pabloites, especially of the differences in method. Pablo is essentially an impressionist and an opportunist in his politics. Such kindred souls as Clarke and Lawrence gravitated towards him naturally. The difference between

them is that Pablo proved far more sensitive than either Clarke or Lawrence to the changes in the objective situation signaled especially by the uprising of the East German working class in June 1953. Their parting came shortly after that.

Everything we said in our Open Letter about Pablo's capitulationist line at that time was correct. But Pablo began at that time to pull back from the consequences of his line, while Clarke and Lawrence did not. This type of an about-face is not new for Pablo. He executed earlier a similar turn in relation to Yugoslavia. You will recall the time he staked everything on Tito—when he was going to convert the Yugoslavs by sending delegations, etc. All criticism of Tito's line disappeared from the Pablo-controlled press and we were reprimanded by him for carrying critical articles in our paper. Germain wrote a series of articles after a visit to Yugoslavia which had nothing but enthusiastic praise for everything there.

This happened at the very time when Tito was preparing to back the West in the Korea war. Germain's articles became an embarrassment. Pablo left him suspended in midair while he himself came forward with the 3rd Congress line that the military showdown between the Kremlin and Washington was not far distant and that all the problems be resolved in that war. Germain had great difficulty at that time in readjusting himself to the new line and Pablo was on the verge of a complete break with him, just as he broke later with Clarke and Lawrence when they failed to make their adjustment after the German events.

When we speak today of the changed objective situation and its effect on the Pabloite tendency we are not thereby according them any special credit. All we say is that they have zigzagged between Trotskyism and alien tendencies depending on the prevailing wind—when the wind is favorable they speak and act like Trotskyists.

In connection with the Polish and Hungarian events, their line, as reflected in their press, has paralleled ours in all essentials. It is important to note this fact despite the contradictory character of their resolutions. If these events were momentary, we could say that tomorrow it would all change once again. But we do not think so. We think we are in the period of the definitive crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy. That henceforth it cannot have any attractive power capable of engendering significant capitulationist currents in our movement. We therefore think that the objective situation is favorable to a reunification.

The objective situation has come powerfully to our aid. It has helped us attract elements who only yesterday were hostile to us. Why shouldn't it apply also to the Pabloites.

4. We can easily lose the advantage of a favorable objective situation if we were to behave in a narrow factional manner, or if we gave cause for anybody to charge that we are behaving in such a manner. The Pabloite appeal for unity must therefore be answered so as to leave no doubt that *we favor unity*. This is especially important when unity appears plausible and realistic, and when a continued split becomes more and more difficult to justify. The very fact that the press of the two tendencies speak in similar terms about the major world events leaves no other course for us but to say in no uncertain terms, "Yes, we are for unity."

The only stipulation we can reasonably make in responding to such a unity proposal, is that the respective

tendencies have adequate organizational guarantees against abuses by one or the other. Cannon's organizational proposals are designed to serve that end.

5. A unification would not at all mean the abandonment of the conquests of the split of 1953 which were in the main positive. It enabled us to overcome the liquidationist tendency with the least cost. It exposed Pabloism, its political line and organizational methods. It facilitated the consolidation of our tendency and the elaboration of our own political line on the major world problems in a series of documents written in the manner and tradition of orthodox Trotskyism. None of these gains will be abandoned in a unification. They remain the tools with which we operate. *Unity would only mean another form of struggle for the same ideas which had previously led to a split*. It would not mean acceptance of any of the Pabloite documents either of the Third of the Fourth Congresses. All these documents, including our own, are part of the record. So is the world reality these documents were supposed to depict. We believe the record is favorable to our tendency.

A discussion at the present time of this record would appear sterile because it would deal with events which have receded into history and given way to new events which need examination and analysis. If the differences between the tendencies are to come to the fore once again, it is far better that they be based on new events and situations. The new people in the movement will more easily understand such disputes and the old ones will be freed from the need of self-justification and be able to reorient themselves more easily. Those who have gone through the split do not need such a discussion at this time. They had it when it had real meaning. Those who did not experience the split would only see in such a discussion a sectarian withdrawal from the world as it is today.

If and when differences appear in a unified world movement, we would be favored by the fact you mentioned in your letter, namely; "that the rank and file members of his groups are undoubtedly impressed by the revulsion of CP and ex-CP members against Stalinism. They instinctively tend to approach this situation with the basic ideas of orthodox Trotskyism."

\* \* \*

Everything points in one general direction: The crisis of Stalinism means inevitably a crisis for all the tendencies in the movement which in any way tied their fortunes to that of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Pabloism was one of those tendencies. We can make gains among all of them, if we act with political firmness, confidence in the future and a readiness to adapt the forms of struggle to the needs for the times.

It is essential that we come to an early agreement on the above questions, so that we can take full advantage of the opportunities before us. This means not only the broader opportunities in the labor movement, but also the specific opportunities in the Fourth International movement as it has been constituted historically.

Here is what we mean specifically: The Pabloites have initiated the unity proposal. We have given the reply which seems indicated. We said we favor unity provided it is based on parity. This means we favor unity but not on

the old basis. That this is to be a unification of *two tendencies* in which neither one can have the organizational advantage. What gave Pablo his power in the past is precisely the fact that he controlled mechanically the International bodies. This is the advantage he does not wish to give up. He would settle for anything short of that. Can he get away with it? Can he prevent a unification by opposing parity? We believe that any attempt to do so would lead to a struggle in his group. The unfoldment of this struggle will depend on us. If we drag our feet on this

question, the Pabloites can have a new lease on life by blaming us for a breakdown of negotiations. If on the other hand we do not retreat in our readiness to unite on the stated conditions and stand pat, we can be sure to make gains.

We are eager to hear from you. You can treat this if you wish as a personal letter. But let us know what you think of it.

Fraternally,  
Smith [Dobbs]

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10. *"We will be ready to seize any opportunity that may arise to press the JPC proposals along": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (July 2, 1957)*

London

Dear Farrell,

This is a brief reply to your letter of June 27th.

(1) We are all agreed on the necessity to provide a positive answer to the "unity" question, and we shall certainly allow no opportunity to slip by us in this respect.

(2) Our leadership is very conscious of the heavy responsibilities which would fall upon this section in the event of there being agreement on the JPC proposal. You are aware of the difficulties in France, and the problem of Comrade Peng, which leaves in the main the Swiss and German comrades. The heaviest burden would fall on our section, and whilst of course we know you would be right behind, so to speak, nevertheless we are separated by distance and decisions have sometimes to be taken quickly. We will have not only the problems of Pablo's intrigue but also the difficulties among the orthodox Trotskyists. For this reason, since we want to gain the maximum from the JPC proposals and in the interests of our movement's requirements internationally, it is extremely important that our section is as clarified politically as we can make it. Our strength as a leadership depends upon the political strength of the ranks. Here it is perhaps necessary to acquaint you with some of our problems.

(3) A big majority of our members have been recruited since the split in 1953. They are in the main first-class people who are very interested in the history of our movement. We have not neglected this and recently we have stepped up the educational aspect of this work. It is not our experience that the history of the Pablo question appears sterile to newcomers. Provided it is presented properly, it can be a great source of concrete educational value. For us the Pablo experiences are to a large extent an internal problem in the educational sense. It was in this respect that a critical article was written by Comrade Sinclair [Hunter] on Pablo's latest document. A copy was transmitted to Pablo by a Ceylonese member who borrowed it for study. Pablo of course starts screaming, but there is nothing we can do about that. Unity, as you yourself have stressed, means taking the movements as they are. Without being in the least factional, it will have to be acknowledged that these differences exist. Personally, I think that this is not a bad thing since it indicates

that we are not going to tolerate any "monkey tricks". At the same time we will be ready to seize any opportunities that may arise to press the JPC proposals along. We are writing to them presently along these lines so that they can see we are behind you on this.

(4) We feel that the differences between the policy expressed in the Pabloite press and in their resolutions is, of course, the "two faces," as it were, of this eclectic tendency. We must be extremely careful here and educate our comrades to understand this, even though the objective situation is favourable. We will have an awful lot of unnecessary trouble if we don't do this. There are, as you know, no short cuts in this connection, and we are taking steps to provide our comrades with an up-to-date summary of all the documents. For you, Pabloism is not a problem, but for us it still remains one, although in a really small way.

(5) In Britain the Grant group is a rump sectarian hangover from the old Revolutionary Communist Party. It campaigns against us with Pablo's assistance, but it makes no progress. Our comrades are constantly reminded of the factional side of Pabloism as a result of all this, and it is another reason why we are proceeding cautiously. The Grant group by itself is not a problem—but in the hands of Pablo as part of his organisational faction, it could do a lot of damage in our organisation. We wouldn't of course tolerate this. In any case right now they are against "entry" and in favour of "open work" with Pablo's full support. A small "entrist" group split away from them at their Whitsun conference. A fusion is not really practicable unless we want to keep going over the old dispute of the forties. Grant essentially lives in the past. To this very day he says the RCP was correct.

Our section is being changed almost beyond recognition. We have recruited and are in the process of recruiting a layer of intellectuals and mass workers, such as we have never been able to touch in the past. We are a result greatly strengthening our hands inside the Labour Party and the trade unions.

We are having a meeting of the IC in the very near future and I feel certain we can then issue an immediate statement supporting the JPC proposals.

Comradely,  
Burns [Healy]  
Secretary

PS—Enclosed is a draft letter which will come up for ratification in two days.

## SECTION VIII: HEALY TRIES TO TORPEDO REUNIFICATION

In his July 2, 1957, letter to Dobbs, Healy wrote that the British section had published an article by William Hunter, writing under the pen-name of W. Sinclair, in its internal bulletin. Hunter's "Under a Stolen Flag" was a polemic against the draft IS resolution, "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism." The final version of this resolution, adopted by the "Fifth World Congress" in the summer of 1957, can be found in the Education for Socialists publication, *The Development and Disintegration of World Stalinism* (\$1.25).

Healy's letter to Dobbs neglected to mention that an introduction to this article—apparently reflecting the views of the leadership of the British Trotskyists—declared that "the gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider." Healy, like Pablo, denied that the political differences had narrowed.

Curiously, neither the introduction nor the article by Hunter made any attempt to *prove* that the differences had grown. This would have required comparing the IS response to key events in the class struggle in 1953 (the death of Stalin, the East German uprising, the French general strike) with their reaction to the events of 1956 (the Twentieth Congress, and the Hungarian and Polish rebellions). Such an effort could not demonstrate growing differences without outright falsifications of the record.

Hunter restricted himself instead to a tendentious analysis of the draft resolution for the upcoming "world congress" of the IS. This approach differentiates Hunter's method sharply from that of such 1953 documents as the "Open Letter" and "Against Pabloist Revisionism," which analyzed Pablo's documents in the light of the actual political practice that flowed from them.

A still graver action was Healy's ultimatum to the tiny Revolutionary Socialist League, the IS representatives in Great Britain. Healy demanded that the RSL "repudiate the recent Pabloite document, 'The Decline and Fall of Stalinism'" as the price of unity. This was a demand that the RSL break politically as well as organizationally from the IS before unification could be considered.

Furthermore, it denied the right of members of the RSL to advocate the line of "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism" inside the British Section. Such bans were unheard of within the Trotskyist movement. The demand was an ominous early indication of how Healy's conception of democratic centralism was evolving, under the pressure of his factional attitude to the IS.

Today, Healy appears to regard his ultimatum to the Revolutionary Socialist League as an embarrassment. His letter to the RSL is not reprinted in the many-volumed documentary collection published by the Healyites, *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*. References to this letter in other documents have been omitted by the editors of the Healyite collection (for instance, in Volume 3 of the series, by excerpting rather than printing in full the July 9, 1957, letter from Healy to the IS which is reprinted in unabridged form in Section IX below).

Ernest Germain replied to Hunter in "An Unprincipled Maneuver Against Trotskyist Unity." He challenged the

accuracy of Hunter's description of the IS position. His contribution defended the line of the IS since 1953, described the "Open Letter" as "the document which engineered the split," and attempted once again to defend his view that the SWP had come around to the IS positions of 1953.

Germain never challenged the assertion that the differences between the IS and the British Section had grown wider and wider. Instead, he attempted to demonstrate differences between the SWP and the British Section on events since the Twentieth Congress, using Hunter's factionally distorted article as a foil.

However, the positions of the British Section and the SWP on these developments were essentially identical, as Germain could have readily demonstrated by reference to the literature and activity of both groups. The British Section reprinted the SWP resolution, "The New Stage in the Russian Revolution," as well as two speeches by Cannon on the Twentieth Congress revelations, in a pamphlet entitled *The 20th Congress (C.P.S.U.) and World Trotskyism* (London: New Park, 1957). An introduction to this pamphlet stated: "Here, in Cannon's two speeches and in the resolution of the S.W.P., are summed up, in clear Marxist terms, the reasons for the Khrushchev speech."

What a shift was to occur in Healy's politics over the next decade! In "Problems of the Fourth International" (1966), Healy wrote, "Immediately, that is from the split of 1953, Cannon rejected the ideas which led to Khrushchev's speech." Healy, of course, does not acknowledge his 180 degree turn, since that would undermine his claims to political omniscience.

The international resolution adopted by the British Section in 1957 presented, in a capsulized form, views similar to those of the SWP and endorsed the "process of regroupment and discussion" which the Twentieth Congress had produced in the U.S. Numerous articles in *Labour Review*, including articles by Hunter, gave concrete expression to what appeared to be a common approach to the crisis of Stalinism by the SWP and the British Section.

By leaving unchallenged the assertion that Healy's differences with the IS had grown wider since 1953, Germain fed suspicions in the SWP that the IS was not interested in genuine unity of all Trotskyists, but was attempting to foment a politically unjustified split between the SWP and the British Section.

Although Germain's reply focused on precisely the questions that Healy said were the most important to discuss with the IS (such as the question of who was right in 1953), neither Healy nor any of his supporters ever replied to "An Unprincipled Maneuver Against Trotskyist Unity."

The rejection of parity by the IS (that is, Pablo's insistence on organizational control of a unified international) had already stalled the discussions. Healy's insistence that IS supporters must recant their political views in any fusion and the implicit denial that a political basis existed for reunification, helped assure that the impasse would not then be broken.



1. *Letter from Gerry Healy to the Revolutionary Socialist League (June 13, 1957)*

Dear Comrades,

The 13th National Congress of the British Section of the Fourth International adopted the following resolution and instructed me to forward it to you.

*Unity Negotiations*

“That we are prepared to enter into negotiations with

2. *“Introduction: The Fight Against Pabloite Revisionism,” unsigned introduction to “Under a Stolen Flag” (reprinted from Internal Bulletin of the British Section)*

DURING THE PAST thirty years world Trotskyism has been assailed by two basic trends of revisionism. Both of these concern the nature and role of the Soviet Bureaucracy, and in turn emerged during certain difficult periods of our movement’s history.

The years of the middle and late thirties found our numerically weak international movement under constant pressure from the forces of imperialism then actively engaged in the preparation of war on the Soviet Union. Things came to a head in the autumn of 1939 when a large group headed by Professor Burnham and Max Schachtman opened an all-out attack inside the SWP of the United States, against the theory that the Soviet Union was a degenerated workers state, maintaining that it should not be defended in the event of imperialist attack. The bureaucracy, they claimed, was a new class—a bureaucratic collectivist class. This point of view was mercilessly opposed by Leon Trotsky and the record of that great struggle is to be found in the books, *In Defence of Marxism*, and *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*.

Trotskyism emerged from the second World War still isolated from the mass Labour movements, and weak numerically. Thanks to the treachery of Stalinism in Western Europe, the old capitalist politicians assumed leadership once again, with the Stalinist parties retaining powerful support amongst the working masses, particularly in France and Italy. In Britain, the Labour Party came to power and successfully headed off the mass movement against Toryism. A period of slow, painful work in building up our sections began, under the most difficult material conditions. As in the years before the war, our movement had practically no financial resources, and a terrible shortage of cadres.

Then in 1947-53 came the period of the Cold War. The question was constantly posed: could we build revolutionary parties in time before war was upon us? During this period certain prominent individuals in the Trotskyist movement, headed by a man named Pablo—under combined pressures of European Stalinism and world imperialism—began to revise and reject the fundamental principles, criteria and method of analysis of the Trotskyist movement. The result of all this was a profoundly pessimistic world perspective and a false orientation based on a sceptical rationalization: the imminence and inevitability of the Third World War. This prognosis presumed not only the organic incapacity of the American and Western European working class to prevent such a

the RSL tendency if the following conditions are carried out:

“a) That they dissolve the RSL as an independent organization and accept the perspective of work in the L[abour] P[arty].

“b) That they repudiate the recent Pabloite document ‘The Decline and Fall of Stalinism.’”

Yours fraternally,  
Burns [Healy]  
National Secretary

war (and thereby dismissed its revolutionary potentialities) but conversely it also attributed to the imperialist bourgeois a power, homogeneity and stability which it did not possess. Trotsky’s prognosis of Socialism or Barbarism was consequently replaced with the Pabloite schema of Barbarism first, Socialism afterwards.

Pablo developed the theory that since the next war would be against the Soviet Union, it would by its very nature be transformed almost immediately into an international civil war. Under these conditions, so the argument went, the Stalinist parties would move to the left and in certain circumstances could be expected to take the power as has happened in Eastern Europe and China. At first sight this looked reasonable enough, and it was not until Stalin died that the real face of the theory was revealed. In the summer of 1953 Pablo issued a draft document called ‘The Rise and Decline of Stalinism’. In this he advanced the idea that sections of the bureaucracy in the USSR could unite with the Soviet masses and successfully re-introduce Soviet democracy.

When the East German uprising took place, Pablo opposed the withdrawal of the Red Army from Eastern Germany. It then became obvious that from the theory of ‘international civil war’ and the possibility of the Stalinist Parties taking power, Pablo, copying Isaac Deutscher, had now extended this theory into the USSR itself. For after all, if the bureaucracies of the CPs outside Russia could take power, why could not fundamental changes be introduced inside Russia by more ‘left’ or ‘liberal’ sections of the bureaucracy?

Like the theories of Burnham and Schachtman, Pablo revised the fundamental Trotskyist conception of the parasitic role of the Stalinist bureaucracy and by implication ascribed to it a conscious and progressive historical role. Whereas the orthodox Trotskyist movement from its inception maintained that the bureaucracy must be overthrown by the Soviet masses under the revolutionary leadership of a regenerated communist movement in the USSR, Pablo now placed a question mark over this basic proposition, and the result led to a series of splits in the world Trotskyist movement.

In France, Pablo placed the PB [Political Bureau] and the CC [Central Committee] of the French Section PCI under the discipline of the IS, refused to allow the PCI to designate its own PB, forced a split in the party and bureaucratically expelled the orthodox, proletarian majority. Two months before the split which he consciously provoked, he registered the PCI with the Paris Police Department under the leadership of the minority nominated by him!

In Britain, Pablo assisted Lawrence to organize a secret

faction behind the backs of the democratically-elected leadership of the section. When the overwhelming majority of this leadership rejected Pablo's policies, he utilized this faction in an attempt to blackmail the section into supporting his policy. He informed the majority that Lawrence was not subject to the discipline of the British section but to the discipline of the International, in other words, Lawrence could do whatever he pleased, provided it suited Pablo, who at that time was the only official of the International present in Paris. The first thing he did was to refuse to implement majority decisions regarding the policy of our weekly paper. This led to a split on November 24th 1953.

Three weeks later, on December 15th 1953, Pablo constituted the Lawrence group as his official section and assisted them to re-organize their ranks in an all-out effort to capture control over our paper. The fight continued over six months, and at the end the policies of both Lawrence and Pablo were decisively rejected.

Several weeks after this, Lawrence took Pablo's policy seriously about the possibilities of the Communist Parties doing the job: he disbanded his group, stating that there

was no need for an independent revolutionary party in Britain.

From that day to this, Pablo has never uttered one word of explanation of Lawrence's conduct. The fact that in 1954 his entire 'British Section' collapsed is kept well in the background.

Instead he set out to build another 'section' as if nothing had happened. Anxious to get some support, he obtained agreement with a small group of sectarians headed by G. [Grant]. Whilst, in true opportunist style, this group declare their opposition to Pablo in private conversation, they nevertheless manage to support him publicly in their journal 'Workers' International Review'.

This unprincipled alliance is directed mainly against the orthodox Trotskyists. It is designed to 'pressurize' us into an unprincipled unity by an all-out effort to confuse workers. In publishing the following document by Pablo with a reply, we urge our comrades to study both with great care.

The gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider. We feel sure that this bulletin will be of important educational value for all the members of our organization.

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3. "*Under a Stolen Flag*," by William Hunter (May 22, 1957—reprinted from the Internal Bulletin of the British Section)

The document the 'Decline and Fall of Stalinism' is published by a body calling themselves the 'International Secretariat of the Fourth International.' In the name of the Fourth International they insidiously sap at its programmatic foundations.

Four years ago the same body published another document 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' which because of its revisions of basic principles, provoked a split in the world Trotskyist movement. It is hardly possible to find another four years in the past thirty which have delivered a more fruitful harvest of lessons for Marxists. They have been years which laid absolutely bare the counter-revolutionary character of Stalinism, the utter corruption and parasitism of the Soviet Bureaucracy; which outlined clearly the nature of the political revolution necessary to cleanse the workers' states, and clearly indicated the forces which will carry that revolution through.

Pabloism however, has forgotten nothing and learned nothing from those years. 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism', 'Decline and Fall of Stalinism'—the same method characterizes both. Four years have not cured the revisionist disease. In truth, the eclectic double-talk of the 'Decline and Fall' (1957) differs from the infamous 'Rise and Decline' (1953), only in that it is more miserably threadbare and more superficial in its analysis.

The IS begins its 'Draft Theses' with the declaration '... the present theses do not take up again either the historical expositions or the structural analysis and definitions of the theses 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism', of which *they are neither a substitute nor a corrective, but a*

*natural continuation and thus an integral part'* p. 2 (our emphasis).<sup>1</sup>

We must remark, in passing that Pablo and Co. show scant courtesy to the little group in Britain which made an unprincipled fusion with it last year. How now, Comrade G? You have justified your bargain—two professionals and a magazine, in exchange for a 'section' in Britain with a few 'principles' thrown in—by declaring Pabloism has changed. This shabby covering has now been torn away by none other than Pablo himself.

On page 1 of its thesis the 'International Secretariat' informs us that: 'The more and more dramatic events that have followed one another in the USSR itself, the Peoples' Democracies and in the CPs of the capitalist countries since the 4th World Congress, have completely and brilliantly confirmed the correctness of this analysis'. (Rise and Decline of Stalinism)

The major thesis of the 'Rise and Decline' was that the Stalinist bureaucracy was trapped between the drive of imperialism to immediate war and the ever-increasing mass pressure arising from the post-war revolutionary wave. Its 'objective basis' in the Soviet Union 'disappearing', this bureaucracy could no longer act in the same way as before. Conclusions which were essentially *apologetics* for Stalinism were summed up in the phrase which Lawrence, the British Pabloite leader, constantly and incessantly used: the bureaucracy 'has the will but not the capacity'. It has the 'will' for counter-revolutionary acts but not the 'capacity' to commit them. The 'Rise and Decline' put it: "This new situation restricts more and more the capacity of counter-revolutionary measures of the bureaucracy'.

There was no possibility of any real concessions to imperialism by Moscow. The Stalinist parties would be pushed more and more to the left. Temporary turns to the right might take place but they would be eddies in the mainstream of development and result only because 'mass

pressure has not reached its culminating point'.

Meanwhile, in the Soviet Union the 'Malenkov era' signified '*the beginning of the decline of the Bonapartist dictatorship*' (their emphasis).

'That regime can now maintain itself only by suppressing—temporarily or definitively—the most hideous aspects, that is to say the *most characteristic ones of the regime*' (our emphasis).

Thus a disintegration of Stalinism was taking place within the Soviet Union and within the mass Communist parties.

It is these arguments which we are told have been *completely and brilliantly confirmed!* *The more events expose it the more the IS beats its chest to cover the hollowness of ideas.*

What are the facts? The bureaucracy which *could no longer make concessions*, has continued to direct its diplomacy towards a deal with imperialism! In the year following the publication of the 'Rise and Decline' it was entering into a compact with imperialism in an attempt to freeze the Indochinese revolution, enabling imperialists to maintain a toe-hold there. In line with the bureaucracy's wooing of French capitalism, the Stalinists in France voted for Mollet's emergency measures against the Algerian revolution.

It was the communist Parties which were to continue to move to the left, who followed the right wing directive of the 20th Congress and developed the 'theories' of the peaceful and constitutional road to socialism! And it was the regime whose most 'hideous aspects' were to be suppressed, the bureaucracy whose 'capacity for counter-revolutionary measures' was being more and more restricted, which launched the brutal attack on the Hungarian revolution!

The IS boasts that its analysis 'rendered our movement the only tendency in the international workers' movement capable of foreseeing and correctly interpreting the evolution of the world crisis of Stalinism'. We would ask: Gentlemen, don't you think you should take a little break from self-praise and explain the evolution of 'your movement' in America, France and Britain? What happened to Collins [Lawrence], Clarke, Michele Mestre and Co? They took your documents to their logical conclusion, broke all formal adherence to the Fourth International and ended as open Stalinist fellow-travellers. Collins' role today is to give the Stalinist party a boost, and assist its leadership in its most severe crisis, when whole layers of the party have broken with Stalinism. The IS pass by in silence the evolution of these tendencies, but Collins, Michele Mestre and Clarke built on the foundations of Pabloism. The method which produced these open Stalinist tendencies yesterday, is the method of the IS today.

### The Disembodied Revolution

The 'Decline and Fall of Stalinism' substitutes for the political revolution a conception of irresistible *evolution* in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. To be sure, the IS writes often of the 'Political Revolution', it even elaborates a programme for it. The nature of that programme is itself revealing and we will return to it later. But what is the content of this Pabloite 'political revolution'? It is a process. More, it is an *irresistible process*—born from above, pressure from below, rifts between 'liberalisers' and 'Stalinizers' in the bureaucracy, and the growth of tenden-

cies in the CPs which will lead the masses in struggle. It is the gradual peeling off of Stalinism like peeling the skins off an onion.

The process can swing back but, like a pendulum, it never returns to the point from which it started and will swing forward again. Thus: 'The "liberalization" of the regime, temporarily braked after the fall of Malenkov, started advancing again during the preparation, the holding and the aftermath of the 20th Congress'.<sup>2</sup> (Decline and Fall, p. 3)

And certainly a secondary place in this evolution is given to the masses. Their role is to be primarily one of pressure until, under the leadership of a section of the bureaucracy, they give the final spurt to the process towards socialist democracy, by finishing off the diehard faction among the bureaucrats.

The father of these theories, as has often been remarked, is Isaac Deutscher. The method is the same. Abstract generalizations are given the force of historical factors. There is a vulgar mechanical theory of the relationship between the material base of the society and its superstructure. Stalinism was the product of a certain set of objective circumstances, these circumstances have now changed and therefore we can expect 'a breathtaking reversal of the process by which the Soviet democracy of the early days was transformed into an Autocracy'. That is how Deutscher puts it in 'Russia after Stalin'. The IS limps along after him, with its 'liberalization', its 'new course' and so on—all implying a process of reform forced on the bureaucracy by objective circumstances. Its so-called political revolution is not a dialectical leap but an evolutionary march.

The IS uses the term 'political revolution' as an abstraction. What we have is a *disembodied* 'revolution' *separate from its content of mass action*. Hence the confused formulations in the 'theses' dealing with the action of the masses in relation to the political revolution. 'Without a transformation of the *pressure* of the masses into *direct action* of the masses' we read on p. 7, 'the political revolution cannot succeed in the USSR' (their emphasis).

If we have the traditional conception of the political revolution which is, precisely . . . direct action—the above statement is a tautology. Without the political revolution of the masses the political revolution cannot succeed. But if the concessions of the bureaucracy, the 'battle for freedom of thought' at the 20th Congress etc., are all part of the 'political revolution'; if we conceive of the 'political revolution' as being, in fact, an *evolution* towards democratization then the statement means something.

*Again*, we are told of future developments in Hungary, 'Encouraged by a fierce *passive resistance* and an *unremitting mass pressure*, the revolution will again *take up its march forward*'. P. 16 (our emphasis). Obviously, the 'march forward' is the actions of the bureaucracy on which mass pressure is exerted.

The metaphysicians of the IS love to play with idealistic abstractions. Listen to these lines which are palmed off on us as 'Marxist analysis'. '*. . . the battle for freedom of thought in the USSR won at the 20th Congress tremendous victories whose effects cannot be wiped out*. Filtering inexorably through all the cracks and crevices henceforth opened up in the shaking dictatorship, *the spirit of rebellion*, will penetrate into the political field (the 20th Congress was non-political!) and will strike the spark of the political revolution' p.5 (our emphasis). What lyrical poet was responsible for this piece of nonsense? Will someone

please tell us what exactly is this 'battle for freedom of thought'? Like the twin spirits of rebellion and criticism, it appears to be creating untold havoc in the bureaucratic structure entirely apart from human beings.

We must admit, that posing developments in this way relieves one of the necessity of discussing concretely the nature and strength of the real forces at work. And that is what Pabloism avoids. It must spread cloudy words to bolster up its conception of evolutionary progress and of the decisive role of liberal tendencies among the bureaucracy.

What a mass of confusion is its analysis of the 20th Congress. First we are told that the 20th Congress 'witnessed the parallel development' of two tendencies. The IS makes the spectacular discovery that one of these is a 'proletarian tendency'! It is 'the proletarian tendency which is raising particularly the question of *equality* and which tends more and more to raise the question of the *administration of the plants*'. So writes the IS on page 4. The emphasis is theirs and they continue:

This tendency obtained important concessions at the 20th Congress (raising of low salaries, equalization of pensions, etc.). It skilfully seized on the 'struggle against the personality cult' to fight the principle of single command . . . It also obtained the recognition in principle (!) that the Labour code . . . must be revised. The attempts made by the Stalinist representatives of the economic bureaucracy (Kaganovitch and Bulganin) to introduce a reform into the salary system which . . . in reality reduced the overall pay of the skilled workers, were successfully combated. The proletarian tendency took its inspiration from the example of the Polish and Hungarian trade unions to demand a return of the unions to their genuine historical function<sup>3</sup>: the defence of the specific interests of the workers if need be, against the administration and the bureaucratically degenerated state.

Now the IS itself tells us later in its 'theses' that the 'CP of the USSR can scarcely be considered any longer a workers' party in the sociological meaning of the term (it is to a large extent composed of bureaucrats, as is confirmed by the statistics published on the occasion of its 19th and 20th Congress)'. p.9 Yet the strength of the proletarian tendency at this Congress of bureaucrats was so great that it was able to win important concessions! Not only that, but this powerful proletarian tendency of bureaucrats fought consciously for a proletarian programme! It *skilfully seized on the struggle against the personality cult to fight the 'arbitrary omnipotence' of the manager over the worker. It was 'inspired' by example to demand a return of the unions to their genuine historical functions etc.*

As against this proletarian tendency is the 'tendency of the *most* conscious representatives of the *most* privileged layers of the bureaucracy'. p. 4 (our emphasis). And what successes has this tendency achieved? 'This tendency' we read on p. 4 'had scored points especially during the year 1955 . . . but workers pressure aiming at revising the Labour Code threatens to destroy part of those advantages. The bureaucracy (its most privileged layers?) demanded and obtained at the 20th Congress, the extension of the bonus system in favor of the administrative personnel. It is *asking* for a 'liberalization' of the Penal Code in economic matters and is obtaining particularly the right for each industrial enterprise to sell certain production goods. (Our emphasis).

Tot up the balance sheet and it would certainly appear that the proletarian tendency had the better of it! With 'objective conditions' irresistibly forcing 'de-Stalinization' then certainly this 'proletarian tendency' may rapidly win

over the majority of the bureaucracy. That is, given one thing—that the Pabloite cloud-cuckoo land bore any relation to reality.

But we haven't done with 'tendencies' yet. The 20th Congress, which 'witnessed the parallel development' of *two tendencies* on page 3 of the IS document, sees the bureaucracy *torn into 'various tendencies'* on p. 5.

'Under the pressure of the masses and of a discontent that was beginning to take on a political aspect, the leading nucleus of the bureaucracy was torn into various tendencies: *a tendency in favour of major concessions to the masses (Malenkov-Mikoyan?)*; *a tendency for stiffening the dictatorship (Kaganovitch-Molotov?)*; *a centrist tendency (Khrushchev-Bulganin)*'. The emphasis is ours, the question marks are the IS's very own. For a serious analysis they substitute a 'three card trick'. Instead of 'Find the Lady' however, it is 'Find the Liberal'.

And even now we are not done with 'tendencies'. On page 7 we meet up with a 'left faction within the liberal tendency'!

What a welter of confusion is in these pages. What a terrible theoretical degeneration. To what childish nonsense are those reduced who exchange eclecticism and impressionism for Marxist method. Pabloism, however, is something more than confusion. Its theories would lay the Fourth International prostrate in face of historic opportunities, would drain away its firmness, and confidence—in a period when the forces are maturing which will destroy the Stalinist canker. It does this by creating illusions in a faceless 'liberal section' of the bureaucracy.

One of the most important and even decisive sources for the crisis of Stalinism has been and still is the Chinese revolution. Unlike the Yugoslav CP however the Chinese CP leadership has attempted—*up till the present*—to maintain its differences with the Soviet bureaucracy within the framework of an unprincipled alliance which has retarded the crisis of Stalinism and undeniably bolstered up the Khrushchev regime. The unholy alliance revealed itself unmistakably during the Hungarian revolution. The Peking regime—in return for industrial aid and credits from the Soviets—placed itself unreservedly on the side of the counterrevolutionary dictatorship of Kadar. This was a double blow against not only the working class of Hungary, but also the working class movement of the world. Firstly the Chinese CP justified the Russian intervention as 'righteous', secondly it threw all its prestige behind the bureaucratic national oppression of the Kremlin and the oppression of the working class so clearly illustrated by the suppression of the workers' councils. It is true that since then the Chinese leaders have had occasion to rethink their policy in Hungary, thanks mainly to the pressure of the revolutionary working class of China, who in the struggle for industrialization are becoming increasingly intolerant of bureaucracy and excessive centralism.

No analysis of Chinese Stalinism, however, can be considered complete or even truthful which does not expose and condemn the role of the Peking leaders during the October Hungarian Revolution. From this standpoint the analysis of the Pablo clique stands condemned. They do not mention *once* the role of the Chinese CP or its notorious statement, 'More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat' which provided the 'theoretical' justification for the bureaucracy. It is amusing—and also a little tragic—to contrast the exaggerated emphasis given to the October 30th declaration of the

USSR with the absence of any reference to the Chinese statement. The document does not mention the changes in the Constitution of the Chinese CP, and the current of 'de-Stalinization' which is operating within it. All this is correct and we have no intention of disputing the current trend of 'letting all flowers bloom'. This however does not regenerate insidious Pabloism. A stopped clock, it is said, can be correct twice in the day. What is important for our movement is that the present changes in China do *not* in any way obviate the necessity for a Chinese Section of the Fourth International. The constant and continuous persecution of the Chinese Trotskyites, the murdering of its leaders, and the refusal to rehabilitate Chen du Hsiu, founder of the progressive and Communist movement, in China, confirm and underline the necessity for a party based on the programme of the World Revolution. It is incumbent on the leadership of the Fourth International to state this clearly, unequivocally and without hesitation. Pablo deliberately refrains from issuing such a call. Why? To ask the question is to answer it.

### Hungary and the Irreversible Process.

'One of the most spectacular results of the Hungarian revolution was the Soviet declaration of 30th October' the 'theses' inform us, and go on to assert: *'This statement attempted to establish relations between the peoples' democracies and the USSR on a new basis*, thus implicitly recognizing the element (!) of national oppression that the Kremlin had introduced into the mutual contacts among workers' states'. The statement attempted nothing of the sort. The only way to establish relations between Hungary and the USSR on a 'new basis' was by the withdrawal of Soviet troops. In fact, under cover of its October 30th statement and its negotiations with the Nagy Government, the Kremlin prepared the second intervention and launched the attack on Budapest after cynically arresting the Hungarians, who were discussing putting relations on a 'new basis'.

The IS declaims:

Though the brutal intervention of the Kremlin in the Hungarian revolution opposes a scathing denial to the bureaucracy's protestations of good faith, its 30th October declaration will nevertheless be invoked again every time that a tendency in the CP of the 'Peoples' Democracies' will try to free itself effectively from Kremlin tutelage. It will thus become, without the bureaucracy realising it, a new time-bomb which will blow to bits the relationships of subordination among Communist Parties and workers' states.

Of course, the masses will seek to use to their own advantage every concession or statement that the bureaucracy makes in self-defence. But the important lesson from the Hungarian events and the Soviet statement is that only the political revolution of the masses can resolve the national question in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

In the shadow world of the IS, however, this statement of October 30 enters as part of the de-Stalinization process. The implication is that it was a product of the liberalizers in the Kremlin. Now 'The immediate repercussions of the Hungarian revolution can stimulate a *momentarily predominant* faction in the Kremlin to 'harden' (note the quotation marks) its attitude toward the countries of the glacia. *But the pressure of the masses cannot fail to continue to grow in these countries*'. National oppression must succumb to the ever-unfolding process! 'The process of transformation of relations among workers' states, of relations of national oppression and economic exploitation

into relations of equality and fraternal collaboration is *irreversible*'. (p. 17 Decline and Fall) (our emphasis).

We are back to the essence of Pabloism, teleology replaces Marxism. History grinds onwards, irresistibly, to its predestined goal. And the role of the advanced guard, the conscious revolutionary force? Can there be any place for it when the march of progress is irreversible? But wait! There is a task for it to perform: to persuade the Soviet bureaucrats not to resist the laws of history. The IS ends this central section of its document with the following sentence: 'The sooner the Soviet bureaucrats bow before this process, the more harmoniously it will be carried out. The more they resist it, the more it will lead to violent conflicts and sanguinary collisions'.

And this appears under the Fourth International! The more they resist the more it will lead to violent conflict. Absolutely so. The more the temperature drops the colder it will get!

The question, of course, is not what will be the results if the bureaucracy resists, but whether it will resist or not. It is that which the IS revealingly leaves open.

### The Political Revolution and Its Leadership

'The formulation of a more detailed and precise programme for the political revolution by the Fourth International' is an 'urgent necessity', writes the IS. And do they give us such a programme? They do not.

Certainly we have a whole section which the authors have seen fit to present to us under the heading: 'The programme of the Fourth International for the Political Revolution'. But in the pages which follow is not a programme for the political revolution at all. There is what can only be described as a 'Draft Constitution for a Healthy Workers' state', and advice (to whom?) on measures to prevent a future bureaucratic degeneration.

Of course, every Marxist is concerned with the general problem of the danger of bureaucratization in the working class movement and workers' states. But the fight against bureaucracy demands a concrete programme against today's concrete bureaucracy. But by laying down a general programme for future healthy relations, the IS avoids a real program for the fight against the *present* bureaucratic cancer of Stalinism.

A programme for the political revolution must begin from the necessity of organizing the masses independently of the bureaucracy. Compare the Pabloite 'programme' with that for the political revolution in the Transitional Programme. Here are no abstractions, but a programme for struggle. Its sentences are clear and sharp, ringing with a revolutionary hatred of the bureaucracy.

A programme for the political revolution must have as its central aim the building of a conscious leadership. It must be imbued with the ideas that the success of the political revolution and the social revolution in the west are intertwined. From this follows the need for that leadership to be firmly imbued with internationalism and to be part of a world movement.

For the IS the problem of leadership is dissolved in the 'irresistible march' which will throw up a leadership from Stalinism. It is true you will find a sentence on page 15 where it refers to the 'essentially spontaneous character of the 23rd October insurrection' in Hungary and 'the lack of a revolutionary leadership capable of quickly coordinating the proletarian forces'. But the leadership it sees lacking in

Hungary is the leadership that was pushed up in Poland. 'The political revolution in Hungary', affirm the theses, 'burst out in far more favourable conditions than those that permitted the Polish revolution to win its first stage'. Among the favourable conditions listed is 'the lack of an alternative leadership resulting from the lack of a broadly based tendency in the whole party and the workers' movement'. (p. 15)

In other words, the irresistible and irreversible process skipped a stage of evolution in Hungary and went outside the party and the bureaucracy and therefore did not spontaneously generate a leadership as in Poland. Thus, for the IS, Hungary is an aberration,—the process, in the future will be patterned on Poland!

The IS take their inspiration, not from the real movement towards political revolution, but from their reflection. If we are to arrive at a correct perspective for the political revolution, then we must concretely analyse the East German uprising, Poznan and Hungary, from the point of view of how the mass struggle developed, what was its strength, what were its inadequacies. The first lesson is that, in their uprising against the bureaucracy, the masses will develop their own organizations, opposing them to the bureaucratic regime and all its agencies. This was shown most clearly and irrefutably in the Hungarian revolution, which developed to the stage of dual power with the setting up of a national network of Soviets. But the same lesson is to be drawn from the East German uprising which was organized not through, but against, the instruments of the regime—the party and the trade unions. In Poland, the Poznan strike and the mass upsurge which followed resulted in the setting up of workers' councils.

Hungary further revealed that the spontaneous development of the political revolution can carry it to a high level. It can unite the entire working class around democratic organs of the workers. But the first examples of the political revolution in real life, have also underlined the absolute necessity of a conscious leadership. A leadership that can carry the unity of the working class forward to the taking of all power by the Soviets; that can mobilize this class around a thoroughgoing programme to root out Stalinism; a leadership that understands, above all, that its political revolution will only be successful if extended to the Soviet Union and linked with the revolution in the west. Finally, we must add, a leadership that must fight all illusions in the bureaucracy—in Hungary this would have meant preparing the whole nation and the world working class for Moscow's bloody attack.

The IS implies the 'political revolution' in Eastern Europe will go through a stage of tendency struggles in the Communist Parties, which will end in mass action under the leadership of an oppositional tendency.<sup>4</sup>

Its whole perspective for Eastern Europe is summed up in the following paragraph on page 9:

Gomulka in Poland, Nagy in Hungary, tomorrow perhaps<sup>5</sup> Herstedt or Ackerman in East Germany by becoming in the eyes of the masses symbols of the struggle for national emancipation are creating favourable conditions for a *renewal of popularity for the CP* (through its national tendency) and permitting the political revolution under oppositional communist leadership to mobilize national feeling in its favour.<sup>6</sup> This has occurred especially in a *classical* form in Poland. (Our emphasis.)

The role of Gomulka and Nagy, in fact, only assumes importance—and then temporarily, from the point of view of this whole period of political revolutions—because of the weakness of Fourth Internationalist leadership.

What really occurred in Poland? What is the political revolution under 'oppositional communist leadership' and does it provide the norm, the classical form, for the future?

First: the basic movements in Poland were those of the masses, beginning with the June 28th general strike in Poznan. The strike began around economic demands, but, in face of resistance of the regime, developed into an uprising for national independence and worker's democracy. The Stalinist regime attempted to crush the uprising by similar means as those used in East Germany, even to the denunciation of the strikers as 'imperialist inspired', and the staging of a show trial.

Several factors combined to make the subsequent course of events different from those in East Germany. The 20th Congress has increased the crisis of the Stalinist regime, which in turn had given greater confidence to the workers. Popular support for the uprising continued to be expressed and a movement of criticism developed among students and intellectuals. The widespread but formerly suppressed feelings against the Soviet occupation were voiced more and more. The Polish bureaucracy was using Russian troops and the harshest measures of suppression. They called back Gomulka. A section of this native bureaucracy began to lean on the masses to counteract the demands of the Kremlin.

It remains to add that the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution undoubtedly was one reason why the Soviet bureaucracy finally made concessions to Poland.

What are the conclusions? That the urge to political revolution in Poland was from below, the motor forces were the mass discontent resulting in the Poznan strike, the setting up of the workers councils and the workers arming themselves. The tendencies in the CP were a reflection of that. Gomulka was flung to the top by it. The concessions granted were a by-product of the revolutionary activity of the masses.

The political revolution has not been carried through in Poland. The revolutionary developments of the masses were arrested by the compromise of the Soviet bureaucracy with Gomulka. What exists now is an unstable relationship of forces in Poland. Gomulka is balancing and improvising between the workers, the peasantry, the Catholic Church and the Soviet Bureaucracy. The Natolin clique, the direct representatives of the bureaucracy, continues organized. Already Gomulka has been forced to make concessions to it, attempting to limit the activities of the workers councils. At the same time there exists the danger from the growth of capitalist elements seeking support in the peasantry.

To carry through the political revolution it is essential in Poland to have a conscious leadership. The major task is to utilize this period, when the workers possess a confidence after winning concessions by struggle in October and before, when the ferment is continuing among the students and intellectuals, to build that leadership.

And what of the IS perspective in the rest of Eastern Europe: tendency struggles in the CPs leading to a renewal of popularity for these parties and then an oppositional tendency from the bureaucracy leading the political revolution?

It is possible, in the particular circumstances now

existing in Poland, for a period, to have a degree of discussion in the Polish CP although the Natolin clique is seeking to suppress it and the leadership refuses to lift the ban on factions. But only on the basis of eclectic confusion and falsifying the real nature of the CPs, can the IS argue that the next stage of development in the rest of Eastern Europe is the launching of tendency struggles.

What is posed by the argument of the IS—although, as usual, they do not draw their conclusions out openly—is that in Eastern Europe the ‘political revolution’ will flow through and transform the Communist parties. However, when we come down to concrete facts, of which the IS is so contemptuous, we find that a feature of the revolutionary movements in Eastern Europe is that the workers set up their own organizations, as opposed to the instruments of bureaucratic oppression.

Will there be now an ‘increase of popularity’ for the CP in Hungary? The real support for the Hungarian party was shown in the uprising—when it collapsed. The political revolution there did not unfold under the leadership of an ‘oppositional communist tendency’. In fact the uprising of 23rd October took place *despite* Nagy. Even when Soviet tanks were moving into Budapest the following day, Nagy was making appeals for the laying down of arms. Nagy, like Gomulka, was thrown off balance by the revolution. The relationship which quickly developed between the Nagy Government and the insurgent masses was one of dual power.

Of course, sections of the CP fought with the masses. But they entered into the Councils as part of a leadership being forged in the struggle against the Stalinist apparatus.

As to the future in Hungary, isn’t it clear that the organization of the future rising of the Hungarian working class will proceed underground among the masses, with the Communist Party more than ever isolated as part of the hated apparatus?

But Pabloism continues to speculate on the rise of new Nagys and new Gomulkas to save the masses. Nowhere, in this document, is there a mention of the necessity of building sections of the Fourth International in Eastern

Europe or the Soviet Union. And it is here, according to the ideas expressed in the theses, that the fate of the world revolution will be settled.

At best, the IS would reduce the FI to a collection of political *commentators*, and superficial pro-Stalinist commentators at that. The building of the Fourth International can only proceed through rooting out its conceptions which are set down in these ‘theses’ with all the ambiguity and confusion which characterizes the Pabloite tendency. Pabloism once again shows here that it abhors precision, clarity, the drawing out of thought to the end. Marxism begins from what is, seeks scientific objectivity, but Pabloism covers truth with obscurantist phraseology.

Its very ambiguity and confusion is revealing. Half a truth is the whole of a lie, and those who are ambiguous on the principled questions of Stalinism are miserable apologists for the bureaucracy—however much they prate abstractly about ‘political revolution’—like thieves crossing themselves while robbing the altar.

The IS has its formulae, its occasional phrases to cover up its departure from Marxism. They inform us they ‘considered the “new course” of the Kremlin not as a movement of self-reform by the bureaucracy, but as a movement of self-defence of it’.

Chatter about the ‘new course’ being self defence of the bureaucracy means nothing. The questions at issue are whether the moves of the bureaucracy are part of a simple evolution in the direction of democratization, or a measurement of the maturing forces of the political revolution, the prospects of which are bound up with the development of the masses, and the growth of their organization and leadership. Whether in face of all forms of self-defence of the bureaucracy—concessions and repressions—we expose the hypocrisy, counter-revolutionary nature and cynicism of Stalinism and aim at rousing the masses against it. And finally, whether we undermine the struggles against Stalinism by minimizing these brutalities and counter-revolutionary activities, exaggerating its concessions, and peddling notions of spontaneous process as a substitute for a struggle to prepare a leadership for the coming political revolution.

### Footnotes

1. Is an author of this document the same modest fellow who declared: ‘Do you believe that I, who have predicted *perhaps alone in the whole world what would happen in Russia and the rest of the Stalinist sphere of influence this year 12 months ago, have “capitulated before Stalinism”?* I am the author of the first draft of the “Rise and Decline.”’ (Germain: letter to Breitman Nov. 15, 1953, Discussion Bulletin Feb. 1954) (Our emphasis)

2. The quotation marks around ‘liberalization’ are those of the IS. All other words from the Deutscher school—democratization, de-Stalinization, new course, etc., it reads the same. What Marxist precision! If we were asked the difference between Deutscherism and Pabloism we could truthfully and briefly answer: Quotation Marks!

3. What example? The 20th Congress took place before Poznan and before the Hungarian uprising! Later on (p. 9)

the document talks of the masses in E. Germany, Poland, and Hungary using the trade unions ‘for their own ends.’ In fact these struggles were not expressed through the official trade unions, but in the streets, under the leadership of spontaneous organizations. In Hungary, particularly, the Trade Union Federation was isolated as an instrument of the bureaucracy. When after the revolution, the Central Workers Council organized a general strike, the Federation appealed to the workers not to strike as to do so would ‘play into the hands of the counter-revolution’. Its appeal was ignored.

4. What a welter of confusion in the analysis from which this conclusion is drawn. The author appears to have written it with both hands without his left knowing what his right hand was composing! On pages 8-9 you will find the following ‘theses’. The bureaucratic apparatus in Eastern Europe is *completely isolated from society as a*

*whole. But the CPs, (which are part of that apparatus) are composed of the majority of advanced workers active in them! The apparatus hangs desperately on to the . . . principle of the monolithic party, unable to tolerate the slightest fissure without risking loss of power. But tendency struggles can be launched more easily in these parties than in the CP of the USSR!*

5. How will this 'scientific precision' provide us with that

'precise programme for the political revolution' which the IS informed us was a burning necessity? Armed with speculations like these an attack on the bureaucracy can be paralysed. *Do not shoot, he may be a Liberal!*

6. It is too tedious and lengthy a job to elucidate all the contradictions in this eclectic document. Comrades themselves can compare the above with the reference to Nagy and 'national feeling' on page 16.

4. "*An Unprincipled Maneuver Against Trotskyist Unity,*" by Ernest Germain (June 20, 1957)

The document "Under a Stolen Flag", published in the *Internal Bulletin* under the signature of W. Sinclair [Hunter] is a disgrace to the movement.

We shall come back to this fundamental aspect of the document in the conclusion of our article. For the moment, we like to stress that "Under a Stolen Flag" is not only a disgraceful document; it is also a very curious one. It starts out to declare war "to the death" against a hideous enemy. In its second paragraph it accuses the IS of the Fourth International "to revise the basic principles (!)" of that organization. It pompously asserts that the IS theories "would lay the Fourth International prostrate in face of historic opportunities."

Yet the evidence mustered to prove these accusations is so scarce and contradictory—it just consists of a couple of sentences torn here and there out of their context, a childish attempt one can apply to any documents of Marxism, from the *Communist Manifesto* to the Transitional Program, with equally "revealing" results—that the authors themselves, embarrassed as they are, can only have one argument in the last resort: the "real poisonous content" of Pabloism is always "not outspoken," "hidden," "obviously implied." It is like declaring a war against a ghost nobody can put his hands on. You can't see it, hear it, feel it, touch it. You only know the existence of "Pabloism" by Sinclairite intuition. In fact it is not a "war" at all, but an exercise in exorcism. Comrade Sinclair must pardon us, but as we told some more intelligent people before, we refuse to have this kind of "intuition"

take the place of Marxism as the basic method of analysis of our movement.

The Fourth International has been trained in Lenin's and Trotsky's style of polemics. Lenin and Trotsky were not only thinkers of gigantic stature; they were also fighters in every nerve of their bodies and brains. They put at the service of their brilliant Marxist thought an implacable style, which like acid separates truth from half-truths and quarter-truths. But people who think that it is just sufficient to show oneself "harsh" in polemics, in order to remain in the true Leninist tradition, commit a very sad mistake. They have not yet learned the dialectics of means and ends. Divorced from correct analysis and loyal research of scientific truth, "harsh" polemics become just a disgraceful—and slightly ridiculous—exercise in abuse and ignorance. "Under a Stolen Flag" is certainly a masterpiece of the kind.

Marx, Engels, and their great disciples had that rare gift of discerning in the first stages of a discussion the ultimate theoretical conclusions the opponents would come to draw from their initial positions, thereby arriving at the roots—the objective class nature—theoretical differences initially expressed. This is a very great and rare gift—but does not justify at all every attempt made by irresponsible people to "characterize" their opponents as almost anything from the start. Otherwise the Stalinists, who have been busy "exposing" the "bourgeois counterrevolutionary nature of Trotskyism" for over 30 years, would have accumulated great merits for the revolutionary cause. To show that you possess that gift, it is not sufficient that you call your opponent in a faction fight a "revisionist," a "petty-bourgeois," or a "capitulator before Stalinism." It is also necessary—small and unimportant detail—that his-



tory bears out your analysis and prognosis.

When revolutionary Marxists called Bernstein and his friends revisionists capitulating to capitalism, they hadn't to wait long to prove their point. Barely two years after the initial discussion, Millerand entered a bourgeois cabinet, and things thereupon went even further than the Marxists thought they would go. When Trotsky and his comrades called Stalin a revisionist, it didn't take long to prove the point either. From the Menshevik revision of Bolshevism, which manifested itself in the Chinese revolution, till the strangling of the party and Soviet democracy within four years time, the analysis and the prognosis it included were proved up to the hilt. When Shachtman was accused of revisionism by joining Burnham in a violent faction fight against the revolutionary-Marxist majority of the SWP, the FI did not need a couple of years to see Shachtman revise not only the Marxist analysis of the Soviet state but the whole conception of our epoch and its motive forces, up to the point where a little bit later he abandoned revolutionary defeatism in the very bastion of world imperialism, the USA.

But the strange "revisionism" of the IS and "its" sections Sinclair is out to "prove" did not materialize anywhere. The IS did not "capitulate" before capitalism or "dissolve" any section (like people irresponsibly said it intended to do) anywhere in the world. It "revised" neither the Trotskyist analysis of the Soviet bureaucracy as a parasitic caste, nor the Trotskyist principle of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism. As a matter of fact so little "revisionism" is today visible in the "Pabloite IS" that Comrade Cannon himself, for whom Sinclair still retains a little respect as an authority on "orthodoxy" states in a letter to the secretary of our Ceylon section:

"It is true that . . . the political pronouncements of the two sides appeared to come closer together than was the case in the period prior to the formal split. More particularly in the past year, since the XXth Congress of the CP of the Soviet Union, *the positions taken on the most important questions of the day came even closer together.*"

Our "revisionism" has therefore materialized itself in the fact that it led us to . . . come to the same political conclusions as the "orthodox" Trotskyists! A very strange "revisionism" indeed.

The very case of the Lawrence-Mestre-Clarke groups Sinclair tried to embarrass us with furnishes additional evidence to the strict adherence of the FI and its leadership to Trotskyist principles. We are not intuitionists and crystal-ball gazers. We judge people and will continue to judge people by what they actually do, say, and write, and not by what they *intend* to do, say, and write in the future, as revealed by Divine Revelation. As long as Lawrence-Mestre-Clarke did not make any break with Trotskyist principles, we refused to have them condemned and expelled for "revisionist intentions," thereby defending the democratic structure of our movement. From the first day they opened their mouths to put a question mark above the necessity of the Trotskyist party and a Trotskyist International, we condemned their revisionism unconditionally and openly, at the Fourth World Congress. Sinclair knows this very well and his childish attempt to insinuate that we did "pass in silence" the evolution of these people is only one among innumerable lies, distortions, and slanders which abound in that masterpiece of bad faith, "Under a Stolen Flag".

### To Set the Record Straight

Sinclair's method is a very simple one of begging the question. "As everybody knows" that Pabloites really capitulate before Stalinism, they are "conscious agents of Stalinism" as the document which engineered the split of the FI said, it is not necessary to call attention to the innumerable articles, manifestos, theses, and practical actions by which the FI has demonstrated its unceasing fight against Stalinism and the Soviet bureaucracy. All that only proves its "ambiguity," you see, because behind these actions cover the "capitulationist intention." One is reminded of the classical Stalinist argument that all Trotskyist revolutionary activity in capitalist countries was just "camouflage" to hide its real purpose of aiding and abetting capitalist counterrevolution. As Comrade Trotsky aptly commented: the Pope, without doubt, is only Pope in order to hide his real "intentions" of furthering the struggle against religion.

A very typical example of this method is given in the two first pages of "Under a Stolen Flag." Sinclair, speculating upon the bad memory of his readers—or upon the fact that many of them are uninformed, not having read the said document—brazenly sets out to "define" the "infamous" thesis defended by a former IS document, adopted by the Fourth WC: "Rise and Decline of Stalinism." He uses the occasion to take exception to an "immodest" remark I made in a letter sent to Comrade Breitman. I stated that I—not as a person, but as a representative of the group of comrades who have led the International during that crucial period—was proud to have been a representative of the only political tendency in the world which *predicted the deadly crisis of Stalinism inside the Soviet Union and the "new phase in the Russian Revolution" as far back as 1952.*

In order to acquaint the British comrades with some of the material they obviously do not know, and in order to set, in passing, the record straight on the documents so brazenly distorted by Sinclair, I should like to recall a couple of quotations to Sinclair's failing memory:

1) On May Day 1952, I wrote an article in *Quatrième Internationale* entitled "The victory of Leon Trotsky" (article which was reproduced if I am not mistaken in the review *Fourth International*) in which I drew attention to the increasing boldness of the young skilled workers in challenging the Soviet bureaucracy. I said that revolutionary ideas were spreading quickly in Russia, among workers and students, and that in their logic they were going in the objective direction of Trotsky's ideas; and I predicted that, based upon the victories of world revolution in Yugoslavia, China, and other colonial countries, revolution would soon spread to the orbit of the Soviet bureaucracy.

2) In November 1952, at the end of an analysis of Stalin's last article—an analysis published in the pamphlet by the IS—I explained the reason for that article by the fact that for the first time in more than 20 years, Stalin's ideas had been openly challenged in the Soviet Union. "Behind the monotonous repetitions of the former seminary student, one hears in this article the rumblings of the coming storm," the rising of the Soviet masses, I wrote. The young generation of workers and intellectuals who have challenged the theories of the bureaucracy will soon challenge its power.

3) In the same pamphlet was reprinted an article I wrote

a couple of days after Stalin's death. In that article I said that Stalin would have no heir, that there would never again be a new Stalin, that there would never again be in the Soviet Union a protracted period of terror like the one which lasted from 1934 till 1953, that the Soviet bureaucracy was entering the period of its death agony and the masses were preparing to rise against the bureaucratic dictatorship, because on a world scale and in the Soviet Union, the relationship of forces was developing favorably for the proletariat.

4) On May 1, 1953, the IS of the FI published a May Day Manifesto which had as title and as central theme: "The revolutionary upsurge of the masses is passing into the orbit of the soviet bureaucracy." Comrade Pablo was the author of that manifesto which set out to prepare our movement and the international working class for the great events which were to come: Berlin, June 16-17, 1953; Vorkuta; Poznan; Polish October; Hungarian revolution.

Now this is no matter of "modesty" or "immodesty" of individuals. This is a matter of documentary and historical record. What other tendency in the international labor movement, nay in the whole international world of people busy in politics, did predict in 1952 or before and immediately after Stalin's death, mass uprisings in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? The Stalinists? The reformists? But they were busy praising the "iron stability" of the dictatorship (which could only be kept in check by imperialist rearmament). The Shachtmanites? They were thinking in the same terms, as they prated about the "atomized workers," no longer even proletarians but "state slaves" etc. . . The various ultraleft sects? They only gave variations of the Shachtmanite version. Deutscher and his friends? They were predicting only changes at the top, no *actions* from below. The so-called "orthodox Trotskyists"? Please, Comrade Sinclair, show me one document, one resolution, one article calling attention upon *immediate* revolutionary perspectives in the USSR and Eastern Europe, earlier than June 17, 1953. The last time Comrade Burns [Healy] participated in an international discussion, he used his breath to warn us against "exaggerating" what was happening in Russia and Eastern Europe. We were "exaggerating" indeed. One month afterwards there came the momentous workers' uprising in Eastern Berlin and Germany!

Sinclair knowingly distorts the meaning of the document adopted at the 4th WC—"Rise and Decline of Stalinism"—by presenting its "major thesis" like this: The "Stalinist bureaucracy was trapped between the drive of imperialism to immediate war and the ever increasing mass pressure arising from the postwar revolutionary wave" and therefore the bureaucracy would liquidate itself in an evolutionary process. Nobody can find any evidence for this. The "basic thesis" of "Rise and Decline of Stalinism," as developed at great length in that document and again repeated at the outset of "Decline and Fall of Stalinism" is that the social relationship of forces has become irreversibly unfavorable, for a whole historical epoch, to the Soviet bureaucracy, and that therefore what we had to expect in the Soviet Union and its orbit was not a "bloody fight to determine who would inherit Stalin's mantle as a dictator"—but the preparation of the objective and subjective preconditions for the political revolution of the masses against the bureaucracy, for the rising of the masses like they rose in Berlin, Poznan, Budapest, and Warsaw. This is said over and over again in that

document, and only people of bad faith can willfully distort truth to the point of pretending the opposite.

Just to give uninformed comrades a couple of samples, we quote at random:

Thesis 21: "Our sections must resolutely fight against any tendency of apologising for or justifying the present political regime in the USSR, tendencies which will appear in petty-bourgeois circles who like to come to peace with Malenkov. The Bonapartist dictatorship, by 'liberalising' itself, remains nevertheless a dictatorship. The proletariat remains politically expropriated in the USSR. The new penal code, even a real *habeas corpus*, would defend before all the bureaucratic privileges in the same way as police arbitrariness defended them till now. The task of destroying the dictatorship and the privileges of the bureaucracy, the task of a new political revolution in the USSR, remains more urgent than ever. THE MEANING OF THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IS THE MATURING OF CONDITIONS WHICH PREPARE AND FACILITATE THAT REVOLUTION."

Thesis 18: "Historically, the Malenkov regime signals the beginning of the decline of the power of the Bonapartist dictatorship. The 'liberalisation' as well as the hardening of the regime are only alternative means of self-defence of the bureaucracy, which will in any case try to use all the resources at its disposal in order to protect itself against the rise of the Soviet masses. But history has shown that autocracies, when they are condemned to disappear, cannot save themselves by either of these methods, nor by a condemnation of both. The Bonapartist dictatorship in the USSR is already condemned by history. The masses will crush it and will, by their political revolution, sweep away the power and privileges of the bureaucracy."

It was around these theses and not on the question of "approaching war" that the discussion arose in 1953 (after the split and not before the split, because before the split there did not appear, either in Britain or the United States, a single line of criticism of the Thesis in an internal Bulletin of the national or international organization)! The only political document which criticises the thesis at length, the document entitled "Against Pabloite Revisionism" adopted by the November 1953 plenum of the SWP, takes exception with exactly those basic theses (it is the only honest, if hopelessly eclectic, political document the whole international faction fight produced, because it tried at least to formulate a rounded political position against ours). It says, among other things:

"A global study and a realistic summary of the net results of the forward march of the international revolution from 1943 to 1953 leads to this conclusion: notwithstanding its great results and even greater potentialities, the revolution has failed in the conquest of the great industrial countries, thereby preventing the revolutionary forces of the working class to overthrowing the Kremlin oligarchy and to give an irresistible impulse to the disintegration of Stalinism. There has not yet occurred a qualitative change in the world relationship of forces between the classes. . . ." (retranslated from French).

We said such a change has already occurred and would lead to a political revolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Sinclair's friends said such a change had not yet occurred and had not given an "irresistible impulse to the disintegration of Stalinism." Will Comrade Sinclair please tell us who has been shown right or wrong on this decisive matter? The document, "Rise and Decline of Stalinism," or

the document, "Against Pabloite Revisionism"?

We could go on quoting that last document, where it says (like Healy said in 1953), that we were exaggerating the events in Eastern Europe and the USSR, that the period of "collective leadership" would only be a transition period between the death of the old dictator and the rise of a new one, etc., etc. Happily the SWP comrades have revised their position on all these questions and say today the same things we have been saying since 1953. Today, they warn against an underestimation, not an overestimation of the events in the USSR. We dislike quoting these old documents, because we think it serves no purpose to return to differences which have been solved by history. But Sinclair's cynical affirmation that our theses have been "exposed" by events, forces us to set the record straight, even if this means having to go back to old (and overcome) differences and thereby creating an atmosphere which is not favorable for unity. But Sinclair's article is precisely a provocation with this purpose.

### Mass Pressure And Mass Action

But, Sinclair repeats over and over again, we know that the IS uses many "phrases" about "political revolution." But these phrases do not mean the same thing they mean to us. Because, you see, at the bottom of the "Pabloite theory" there is the idea of the "irresistible *evolution*" in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Mass pressure forces the bureaucracy to dismantle itself. The process of self-destruction of the bureaucracy, as a result of mass pressure, takes the place of the process of revolution. Only "a secondary place in the evolution is given to the masses. Their role is to be primarily one of pressure till, under the leadership of a section of the bureaucracy, they give the final spurt to the process towards socialist democracy by finishing off diehard factions among the bureaucrats."

Again, there is no shred of evidence to support this slanderous assertion. Again and again the stress in "Decline and Fall of Stalinism" is put, not on the role of a "section of the bureaucracy," but on the decisive role of mass action.

Thesis 2 ends with the following summary statement of the present evolution:

"Thus the continuance of the 'new course' is inexorably preparing the big showdown between the proletariat and the more privileged layers of the bureaucracy, a showdown which will have as its main stake the administration of the plants and which will inevitably raise all the questions of the structure and control of the economy and of the workers' state."

There is no question here about a showdown between the "liberal" wing of the bureaucracy and the "diehards"; no question of an automatic evolution. There is question of a showdown, a fight, an open struggle, a revolution of the masses against the more privileged layers of the bureaucracy (we shall take up further in this article the question of the other layers of the bureaucracy). Thesis 5 begins with the following description of the present situation:

"In this way the objective and subjective conditions of the revolution mature rapidly. After having lost the aureole of omniscience, the Kremlin has lost *this* of omnipotence. Having abandoned the mantle of autocracy, the bureaucracy loses the mantle of enlightened liberalism. With unheard-of speed, history obliges Stalin's heirs to throw down all their trumps and to face the

assault of the masses nearly with bare hands."

There is no question here of "evolution" nor of the "decisive role of the liberal wing of the bureaucracy"; at the contrary, the "liberal mask" is exposed as a fake, and the thesis reminds the reader of the fact that, after the crushing of the Hungarian revolution, the Kremlin can no more efficiently use its "liberal" mask than it can use, with success, the weapon of omnipotent terror. This paragraph follows the end of thesis 4 which speaks about the repercussions the Hungarian revolution has had among the Russian soldiers:

"Through the Soviet soldiers in contact with this powerful revolutionary movement, the wave of political revolution will pass from the 'glacis' (Eastern Europe) back into the Soviet Union, where it will toll the bell for the desperate bureaucracy." Not an "evolution" but a "revolution," realized in the same way as it was in Hungary, which will "toll the bell for the bureaucracy" (not the diehard bureaucrats).

Again the end of thesis 5 gives a concrete prognosis on the way the political revolution will break out in the Soviet Union. It starts with a very clear statement:

"This growing tension between the masses and the bureaucracy, between the various currents inside the bureaucracy, between the desires of the soldiers and the function of repression which was given to them (Hungary!), approaches inexorably the point of violent explosion (some evolutionary process indeed—EG). Be it that a left faction inside the 'liberal' wing appeals to the masses; be it that these masses descend on the streets in order to settle an economic, social or political question which is dear to them; be it that vanguard currents in the youth, in the working class or even in the army start spontaneously to formulate a program of political demands; or be it that we assist at an interaction of all these different factors,—the logic of the political revolution prepares an OPEN COLLISION (will Sinclair "interpret" with his keen sense of "intuition" the term "collision" as expressing an "evolutionary process"?—E.G.) BETWEEN THE FORCES THAT DESIRE TO MAINTAIN THE FUNDAMENTAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE DICTATORSHIP . . . AND THE MASSES WHICH WANT TO TAKE INTO THEIR OWN HANDS THE DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE AND THE ECONOMY. Without a transformation of the *pressure* of the masses into their *direct action*, the political revolution could not win in the USSR."

Now, Sinclair gets a firm grip on this last sentence—torn out of context—and with a hopeful grin (we've gotten proof, at last!) he runs on (isolating of course the sentence from the whole preceding paragraph):

"Hence the confused formulations in the 'theses' dealing with the action of the masses in relation to the political revolution. Without a transformation of the pressure of the masses into direct action, we read on p. 7, the political revolution cannot succeed in the USSR. If we have the traditional conception of the political revolution which is precisely . . . direct action—the above statement is a tautology. Without a political revolution of the masses, the political revolution cannot succeed. But if the concessions of the bureaucracy, the 'battle for freedom of thought' at the Twentieth Congress, etc., are all part of the 'political revolution'; if we conceive of the 'political revolution' as being in fact an *evolution* towards democratization, then the statement means something."

The brazenness of this interpretation is nearly incredible. Whereas a whole paragraph, as any reader can see, is used to give the various variants of mass actions; whereas the whole argument is turned against those who pretend that without mass action there can be a political revolution in the Soviet Union, distorter Sinclair tries to prove that words mean exactly the opposite of what they mean, and that when we write that only direct action of the proletariat can bring success to the political revolution, we really mean . . . that the political revolution is a peaceful evolution towards democratization from the top . . .

Let us however go a little bit further into Sinclair's distortions. We are in for a couple of surprises. It is "revisionism," we learn, to equate concessions from the top, "evolution towards democratization," with revolution. Very good. We know a document which could not have escaped Comrade Sinclair's attention. It is called "The New Stage in the Russian Revolution". It is a resolution adopted by a meeting of the National Committee of the SWP held April 13-15, 1956. Please, notice the exact date: April 13-15, 1956. There was not yet a Hungarian revolution (direct workers' action); there was not yet a Polish revolution, even Poznan; and in any case, the document speaks about the *Russian*, and not the world, the European, the Hungarian, or the Polish revolution. Could Comrade Sinclair tell us to what "direct action"—such a tautology!—this "new stage of the Russian revolution" refers? Perhaps to the Vorkuta strikes (which happened 2-1/2 years before, a long time to discover a revolution, don't you think so, Comrade Sinclair?) Not at all. The authors of the document leave no doubt about the events their definition refers to:

"A new stage has opened in the continuing development of the Russian revolution. The masses of the Soviet Union, who were politically expropriated by the bureaucracy under Stalin, and who suffered its brutal rule for nearly three decades, *are evidently once again in motion; they have already forced far-reaching concessions from the bureaucracy* and more can be expected to follow. The international repercussions, great as they are, have only begun. The correctness of Trotsky's struggle against Stalinism bids to rapidly become a key issue among the ranks of the Communist parties throughout the world. Stalinism, the main obstacle on the path of the world revolution, faces its death agony. Great new possibilities are now opening up for reassembling the world revolutionary socialist movement on a new plane and thus solving the crisis of leadership which has paralyzed the revolutionary proletariat. **THIS IS THE MEANING IN BRIEF OF THE DEATH KNELL OF THE STALIN CULT SOUNDED AT THE TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE CP OF THE S.U.**"

Please don't rub your eyes, Comrade Sinclair, you are not confronted with typographical error. It is not the rotten through and through "revisionist Pabloite" IS who writes that the "death knell of the Stalin cult at the Twentieth Party Congress" is "a new stage of the Russian revolution". It is the National Committee of the SWP. We completely accept the analysis, but we would be a little more cautious about the definition. We would prefer to say that the Congress opens a prerevolutionary period of more rapid maturing of the objective and subjective conditions for the political revolution in the USSR. But surely, Comrade Sinclair will immediately and indignantly refute the SWP's "revisionist thesis" about "concessions" and

"pressures" being a "stage of the revolution."

Of course the SWP document refers to the Eastern German and Vorkuta events as proofs of the fact that the masses are in motion. But at the time of the party Congress there were no great mass strikes or demonstrations to our knowledge in the USSR. The above named events exercised "pressure" on the bureaucracy which answered with "concessions." That "Pabloite-Deutscherite" thesis is defended by the SWP. We quote:

"The Congress (!) thus marks the beginning of a new, profoundly revolutionary (!) stage in the Soviet Union. The immediate reason for the concessions, as we have indicated, was the palpable pressure (!) of the masses which has grown so great that the bureaucracy calculates it cannot be suppressed simply by sweeping purges as in the days of Stalin—it is more expedient to bend with the pressure in hope of avoiding being broken by it."

Isn't it clear? The "pressures" as a stage in "revolution"? Horrible thought! Doesn't that mean that there is "no place left for the Fourth International"? That the masses will only come in "as a secondary factor" to finish off "the diehard bureaucrats"? No, it means nothing of the sort. If Sinclair and his friends would set aside stupid factional arguments, and sit and think about the history of *any* revolution past or present, social or political, they would come to the following simple conclusions:

A revolution occurs in a country when the given form of government (political revolution) or structure of society (social revolution) becomes unbearable to the great majority of the population, and when the ruling social forces can no more suppress this violent discontent. This is of course not an "event," but result of a more or less drawn out historical *process*. In *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*, Marx explains how the bourgeois revolutionary forces began to prepare by their "pressure" the events of 1848 as far back as 1840. In the first chapters of *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Trotsky explains at length how a chain of events, a "process" led from the Russian Revolution of 1905, the "liberal" half-reforms of Stolypin and their gradual suppression to the entry of Russia in the war, the disintegration of the leading classes and tsarist state, and the February 1917 days of Petrograd. Marx and Trotsky were not "revisionists." But they knew very well that a revolution, i.e., direct action of the masses, can never come about if it has not been prepared by a intermediary stage, during which state power begins to be weakened and to disintegrate, while the masses exercise "pressure" on it which does not, or only in very limited forms, appear as identical with "direct action." Only when this "pressure" becomes direct action, the preparatory "evolution" becomes a revolution.

"Revisionism," "reformism," "evolutionism" is not the *denial* of that phase of evolution preceding revolution; that is the ABC of Marxism. Revisionism, reformism, evolutionism is the denial of the thesis that this process of "pressure" and "concessions" needs to transform itself into a revolution, a direct action, a qualitative "leap" (as we say in the language of dialectics), in order to achieve history's goal. Deutscher was a revisionist as long as he thought that "liberal reforms" could achieve soviet democracy. We do not know if he still thinks so. If he does, he still is a revisionist. But those who understand the profound meaning of the "concessions" and the "pressure" (as the comrades of the SWP do) **PRECISELY AS A STAGE—AND A NECESSARY ONE AFTER 25 YEARS OF**

WORKING-CLASS PASSIVITY—TOWARDS DIRECT ACTION AND REVOLUTION BY THE WORKERS, are only orthodox Marxists, not “revisionists”.

Sinclair and his friends are like the sectarians of which the Transitional Program says that they fear succumbing to temptation. In order not to “equate the process of pressure and concessions” to revolution, they deny the importance or the very existence of the concessions. *Significantly, there is not one word in their document on that world-shaking event of ending the Stalin cult*, which prodded the comrades of the SWP to announce that a new stage of the Russian revolution had begun. One should admit that closing one’s eyes to reality in order not to succumb to temptation isn’t altogether the method of “orthodox Trotskyism”.

### The “Disembodied Political Revolution”

Of course, Sinclair comes back to his primitive falsifications when he quotes our final sentence on the Hungarian revolution:

“Encouraged by fierce passive resistance and an unremitting mass pressure, the revolution will again take up its march forward.” Obviously (!) ‘the march forward’ is the actions of the bureaucracy (!) on which mass pressure is exerted.”

Obviously our distorter is here caught redhanded! For the sentences which precede say very clearly:

“The Soviet military interventions . . . were unable, however, to break the magnificent combativity of the Hungarian workers. They lost only the first round of the political revolution, WHICH WILL ARISE AGAIN, INVINCIBLE, FROM THE BLOOD-LETTING IMPOSED BY THE KREMLIN. Already the Kadar regime is forced to keep part of the conquests of 23rd October (the workers’ councils in the factories—E.G.). Encouraged by passive resistance and an unremitting mass pressure, the revolution will again take up its march forward, and will reestablish, with full and complete proletarian democracy, the honor of communism in Hungary.”

“Obviously” between the November defeat and the next victorious stage of the revolution there must be an intermediary phase. But because this phase is one, not of defeatism, passivity, and demoralization, but one of “fierce passive resistance and unremitting mass pressure,” the Hungarian revolution will rise again, invincible, sooner than many think. And obviously this “revolution,” as any honest reader of our above-quoted passage can see, is not identified with the “concessions granted by the liberal (?) wing of the bureaucracy,” but is a “revolution” of the Hungarian workers, like the one we witnessed from October 23 till November 4 or, if one wishes, till the general strike of December. What remains of Sinclair’s “accusation” is only the demonstration of his obvious bad faith and slanderous distortions.

Now we have already seen how foolish is Sinclair’s accusation that “The IS uses the term ‘political revolution’ as an abstraction. What we have is a disembodied revolution separate from its content of mass action.”

We have already seen that our Theses precisely insist on the fact that without mass action there is no revolution, but only the process which prepares that revolution (“pressure” and “concessions”), and that we go into great length to analyze the concrete conditions in which this mass action can come about. If Sinclair would really be

interested in the political revolution, and not in a cliquish faction fight for “conserving control” of his organization, he would have noticed that the very passage he attacks, i.e., the end of our thesis 5, analyzes at some length the variants of a possible beginning of mass action: “Be it that a left faction . . . appeals to the masses; be it that these masses descend on the streets in order to settle a . . . question which is dear to them; be it that the vanguard currents in the youth, in the working class or even in the army start spontaneously to formulate a programme of political demands, or be it that we assist at an interaction of all these different factors”.

But, as Sinclair is by no means interested in the political revolution for any other reason than finding ammunition for his faction fight, he rapidly glosses over that section (there’s no proof there of “Pabloism”!) and doesn’t notice that these variants and their combination are precisely the story of what happened in Eastern Berlin, in Poznan, in Budapest, and in Warsaw, i.e., are nothing else than the simple generalization of the experience we already can gather about revolutionary actions against the Soviet bureaucracy!

But Sinclair’s shadow boxing against the “disembodied political revolution” reaches its climax in the following remarkable passage which has already gained a place for itself in the anthology of poison-pen products of factionalism. Here it is in all its glory, and nothing suppressed:

“The metaphysicians of the IS love to play with idealistic abstractions. Listen to these lines which are palmed off on us as ‘Marxist analysis’: *‘the battle for freedom of thought in the USSR won at the 20th Congress, tremendous victories whose effects cannot be wiped out. Filtering inexorably through all the cracks and crevices henceforth opened up in the shaking dictatorship, the spirit of criticism, the spirit of rebellion, will penetrate into the political field (the 20th Congress was nonpolitical!) and will strike the spark of the political revolution,’* P.5 (our emphasis). What lyrical poet was responsible for this piece of nonsense? Will someone please tell us what exactly is this “battle for freedom of thought”? Like the twin spirits of rebellion and criticism, it appears to be creating untold havoc in the bureaucratic structure entirely apart from human beings. We must admit that posing developments in this way relieves one of the necessity of discussing concretely the nature and strength of the real forces at work. And that is what Pabloism avoids. It must spread cloudy words to bolster up its conception of evolutionary progress and of the decisive role of liberal tendencies among the bureaucracy.”

Of course, if Sinclair would have taken the trouble to read our Theses a little bit more carefully—but who wants to “read” Pabloite documents? One wants to “crush” them!—he would not have failed to notice that the passage he quotes comes from thesis 3 in the chapter “Decline and Fall of Stalinism in the USSR.” He would have noticed that thesis 1 analyzes *the economic* development in the USSR since 1953; that thesis 2 analyzes *the social* development, analyzes the main antagonistic aspirations and demands of the *three social forces present* (proletariat, bureaucracy, and peasantry), and that it comes to the conclusion that a violent conflict between bureaucracy and proletariat is inevitable.

He would have noticed that *after* having so analyzed “concretely the nature and the strength of the real forces

at work," the document passes on to the question of the attitude of the intellectuals, scientists, and artists in the Soviet Union. He would have noticed that the whole thesis he quotes from is concerned with the intellectuals. And he would not have distorted *the very sentence* he quotes by cutting off its first part: "DESPITE THE DESPERATE RESISTANCE OF THE BUREAUCRACY . . . THE STRUGGLE FOR THE FREEDOM OF THOUGHT IN THE USSR HAS WON TREMEMDOUS VICTORIES AT THE 20TH PARTY CONGRESS." He would also have noticed that the "twin spirits" of rebellion and criticism, far from being divorced from "human beings," are "embodied" in concretely enumerated men, i.e., intellectuals who are at the spearhead of that fight today in the Soviet Union. He would also have understood why, after having won "tremendous victories" only on the field of history, of literature, of art, and of science, the "spirit of rebellion" which had not yet penetrated the field of politics at the Twentieth Party Congress—or does Sinclair know of any orator at that congress who criticized the present party line of the Khrushchev regime?—would be brought by the intellectuals into the actual field of politics as well. A prediction which, we have learned in the meantime, has become true in the opposition platforms worked out by the Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev University students after the Hungarian revolution. When after having read all this, Sinclair still obstinately mumbles, "Pabloism avoids discussing concretely the nature and the strength of the real forces at work," one can only shrug one's shoulder and say that some cases of course are always hopeless.

But there is more to this disgraceful method of polemics than meets the eye. It also happens to be an act of criminal irresponsibility. For as we all know, hundreds of gifted intellectuals have just left the Communist Party of Britain, precisely because they passionately revolted against the "suppression of freedom of thought," precisely because in them came again to life—thanks to the shattering events of the 20th Party Congress, of Poznan, of Poland, and of the Hungarian revolution,—that "spirit of criticism and of rebellion" without which Bolshevism is unthinkable. Leaving the Stalinist CP, these intellectuals, who don't throw Marxism overboard, are looking for a revolutionary alternative. They become interested in Trotskyism. They study the works of Trotsky. They try to get acquainted with the groups which call themselves Trotskyist. And what do they find? They find a pocket book of King Street, telling them to get off all that "nonsense" about "freedom of thought," and these "metaphysics" about the "twin spirits of rebellion and criticism." If ever they should take this brand of ignorant arrogance seriously, Trotskyism will lose the chance of winning many valuable new members and cadres in Britain!

And it is not alone a question of intellectuals either. The workers in the CP have had their bellyfull of the lies and distortions and slanders with which the King Street bureaucracy has kept the joint going for many years. They have now got what Sinclair cannot get into his thick head: a real and passionate thirst for truth. Why, it was a worker, and a workers' leader at that, who spoke these historical words to Stalinist hack Andrew Rothstein: "You are the enemy, you bloody old *lying* swine." And bloody right he was!

An old Pabloite of the name of Leon Trotsky once also made a passionate speech about truth, absolute truth, and

the fact that socialism and the labor movement were impossible without that love of truth. He was, of course, a metaphysician with slightly lyrical deviations. But hundreds of thousands of Polish and Hungarian workers happen to have the same kind of poetical interests in "freedom of thought" and "metaphysical truth" as did that incorrigible Pabloite.

As if it wanted to present a final blow to Sinclair's stupid concoctions, history had it happen that the first manifestation of the "process" which set in motion the political revolution in Poland, long before the Poznan workers rose, was precisely the poem of a man called Adam Warczik, and a poem about truth, lies, and freedom of thought at that! It so happened that that poem, as well as the many articles written by Polish intellectuals asking for freedom of thought, letting criticism, social criticism, invade all forbidden nooks and corners of bureaucratic mismanagement, were bought by the workers on the black market, in thousands and thousands of hand or mimeographed copies.

It so happens that the Hungarian revolution was prepared by the months-old political agitation which was unfurled at that intellectuals' wasps' nest, the Petofi club, called after a lyrical poet, and that the very October 23 demonstrations behind which the Budapest workers closed ranks and started the revolution was called by a student body with slogans asking above all for "freedom of thought" and transferring "the spirit of rebellion and of criticism" from the realm of literature into the realm of social sciences, of economy, and of politics. Of course, all these facts are of no interest to Wizard Sinclair who wants to know about the "real forces at work." But they happen to be the facts of the political revolution we witnessed till now, and there is a good chance they also will be the facts of the political revolution to come in the Soviet Union.

#### The Differentiation Inside the Bureaucracy

It is not by accident that the intellectuals' struggle for freedom of thought and the penetration of their criticism into the realm of social structure was a necessary preparatory phase of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions. This is a general law of history and an inevitable phase of development. The reason for it is very simple. Under any autocratic regime, there is no public political activity of the masses. Because the regime is autocratic, mass political action is precisely—the revolution. But before the masses dare pass into action, after years if not decades of oppression and bloody terror, they must be convinced that their enemy has become decisively weakened. Of course, in many skirmishes, at the shop, in the factory, at the office, they feel that the enemy loosens its grip, they feel him weakening, hesitating, retreating. But these skirmishes are isolated. The newspapers don't report them. There is no national and not even a citywide organization which permits generalization of experience. Each section of the proletariat thinks that this is just a particular situation in its own plant, factory, or office.

It is at that moment of crisis that writers and artists, feeling the new forces at work and being by their very talent and nature called upon to express indirectly what social forces feel, start to speak out. First hesitatingly, fearfully, sometimes in panic. The bureaucracy, the autocracy knows very well what this means. It tries to nip these timid demonstrations of incipient rebellion in the

bud. But now happens the unforeseen. The real relationship of forces begins to assert itself. The writers no more obey the crackings of the whip. Some of them, all of them, resist, continue, go over to open rebellion. Furious and panic-stricken at the same time, the autocracy takes stock of its weapons of repression. It can of course, put some writers in the Bastille or send some others to Siberia. It calls upon its agents. They inform their masters, truthfully, that it would be necessary to deport thousands of writers and to close three-quarters of the newspapers in order successfully to conclude this repression. The autocrats hesitate. Would they dare? Wouldn't they? In general they will take a middle course, after trying both medicines.

But in the meantime, the people, the workers will have read the poems, articles, pamphlets, books, by the thousands. They will make a big discovery. "We are not alone. There are thousands of people who think like we do. Why, even the best paid writers of the regime say so. If they let these things be put into print, they must be much weaker than we thought they were." And the illegal circles will grow, and will regroup themselves around some semilegal, or suddenly legalized institution, like the Petofi club, or the Writers' Association.

That is how revolutions were prepared, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. That is how the French revolution was prepared—every child knows the role the fight of the Encyclopedians played in its preparation. That is how the Russian revolution was prepared—yes, comrade Sinclair, Arch-Pabloite Trotsky even wrote that in periods of autocracy, *literary criticism replaces politics*, and that Belinski, Chernyshevsky, and other great literary critics were indirectly the trailblazers of the Russian revolution. That is how the Polish and Hungarian revolutions were prepared. And that is how the political revolution is being prepared right now in the Soviet Union.

Why, the first public opposition meeting being held since 1927 in Moscow was just held at the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* offices, for discussion of Dudintsev's novel *Not By Bread Alone*. People were standing a mile deep in the street, waiting to be admitted, and the basic bureaucratic dogmas about the "socialist society in the Soviet Union" were publicly being torn to shreds. . . .

And because we have learned from history how revolution actually occurs, we know that it is of utmost importance to follow all the differences and differentiations inside the ruling group, in this case the Soviet bureaucracy. We said above that revolutions occur when the given state of things has become unbearable to the people and the ruling group cannot protect its power adequately any more. But we may add: the surest sign of such a state of things is precisely when the "monolithism" of the ruling group is shaken to its foundations; when the main symbols and myths of that group—the Stalin cult in the case of the Soviet bureaucracy—have to be hastily abandoned; when those who want to rely exclusively on terror fall out with those who want more subtle means of government. Actually in his last great political document and real testament, "The Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution," Trotsky puts at the very first of his four conditions for the victory of a revolution, "the bourgeois impasse and the resulting confusion of the ruling class." This rule completely applies to the ruling caste of the Soviet Union as well.

It applies to that caste all the more because, precisely, it

is *not* a class, it is socially not homogeneous, it is a parasitic outgrowth of the proletariat and when a political revolution threatens, it finds itself suspended in midair, without social support whatsoever. Like Trotsky predicted in his Thesis "The Fourth International and the USSR," the bureaucracy would rapidly disintegrate under the hammer of the political revolution. The very thought of a "civil war" between the bureaucracy and proletariat is meaningless. This was exactly confirmed in the experiences of East Berlin, Hungary, and Poland. In all three instances, the only people which actively opposed the revolution, arms in hand, were the secret police stooges—and not all of them at that—which would find themselves in such a minority that no serious fight would be necessary to drive them from the streets. The only difference was that in East Berlin and Budapest, the Soviet army came to the help of the local bureaucrats and saved their skins, while in Poland there was no intervention and therefore no serious fighting whatsoever. And as in the Soviet Union there is no outside army ready to rush to the help of Khrushchev and Co., one might prepare oneself for a short and violent battle rather than for any long drawn-out military operations.

We just reminded our readers that the bureaucracy is not homogeneous. More than that. It is linked to the proletariat by a whole pyramid of intermediary strata. The petty trade-union and party bosses; the stakhanovites; the less-paid technicians, the lower-grade employees and bookkeepers; the sergeants and lieutenants of the regular army. . . these millions of people whose "privileges" are only of a salary double or triple that of a worker, will inevitably drift towards the proletariat the moment the workers will start to act. To think that these people would risk their lives for defending the big bureaucrats' dachas and limousines is fantastic; it has not been borne out by facts in either East Berlin, Hungary, or Poland.

Of course, this does not mean that the bureaucracy abandons its privileges and power without struggle. Not at all. It means that precisely by its very social nature, its main line of defense, confronted as it finds itself by a growing revolution, must be maneuvering before the actual outbreak of mass uprisings rather than trying to confront the masses in their final assault (this does apply to the USSR but not necessarily to Eastern Europe, where the presence of Soviet forces adds an additional element to the situation). This is precisely why the room for these maneuvers is very large—why we have witnessed not only the liberation of 3/4 of the concentration camp inmates, but also the liquidation of the Stalin cult and why we shall witness some more surprises soon. That is why Mao at least says he is granting the right to strike, and tomorrow opposition newspapers may appear in this or that country (like they do today in Poland).

Some supporters of Sinclair used to argue, a couple of years ago that all these discussions and fights were "only intra-bureaucratic strife." This was typical for a mechanical way of thinking, divorced from the real living process of history. Of course there were no "proletarians" at the 20th Party Congress, which was a congress of bureaucrats.<sup>1</sup> The discussions were "only among bureaucrats BUT PRECISELY REFLECTED—in a distorted and indirect way, of course—THE VARIOUS SOCIAL FORCES IN THE COUNTRY. Otherwise they become unintelligible and really open the road for capitulation to the

bureaucracy. *If anybody can argue that out of its own will and sagacity, the bureaucracy suddenly decided to throw the Stalin cult overboard and started to restore historical truth, at least partially*—and that is obviously what happened at the 20th Party Congress—then one gives the bureaucrats a lot of praise which they do not merit and did not call for. But if one sees these steps only as inevitable concessions wrung by the pressure of the workers from a confused and divided ruling caste tottering towards its decline and fall, then the process becomes perfectly understandable and takes its place in a Trotskyist analysis of our epoch.

Having once for all forgotten how to read, Sinclair hastily asks the comic question: “How could a proletarian tendency at the 20th Party Congress of bureaucrats take inspiration from Hungarian demands about trade unions which had not yet been formulated?” The very nerve of the man is in the end exasperating! If he would have read the very sentence he quoted less hastily, he would have noticed that we talked about the “preparation, the course AND THE AFTERMATH of the 20th Party Congress”, i.e., the whole period from mid-1955 till the end of 1956. He would also have noticed we never said that the two main social tendencies were directly represented at the 20th Party Congress, but only that that Congress had to make concessions to them (i.e., felt their pressure). And he would have finally noticed that we nowhere identify these *antagonistic social tendencies* with the two colliding factions inside the Kremlin, but only say that one of these factions tends to make major concessions to the masses (the “liberal” faction), while the other tends to favor a stiffer policy.

If Sinclair still doubts that the “proletarian tendency” in the country received great concessions from the 20th Party Congress, we may quote to him two passages from the SWP resolution, “The New Stage in the Russian Revolution”:

“That these pressures are proletarian in character is demonstrated by the simple fact that what the bureaucrats promise in breaking up the Stalin cult is a return to Lenin. This is the most popular promise they could make, the promise best calculated to appease the forces moving against the bureaucracy. A return to Lenin means keeping the planned economy but restoring the workers’ democracy that existed in Lenin’s time. The slogan ‘Back to Lenin!’ is thus a proletarian slogan which the masses will inevitably fill with their own revolutionary socialist content” (p. 25 of Pioneer Publishers pamphlet) and before that:

“The result was to give a really major concession—nothing less than Stalin himself. This was done at the Twentieth Congress, making it a landmark in Soviet history. In addition, other concessions—genuine concessions—were made. These included the promises of a shorter working day, an increase in social benefits, better housing, an end of lawless dictatorial rule, the rehabilitation of victims framed up by Stalin.” (p. 23)

So you see, either you admit that there is a “proletarian tendency” in Russian society, which was very much “present”—by the pressure it exercised—at the 20th Congress, and things become understandable, or you see them just as a phase of “intra-bureaucratic strife”—and then you are well on the road to ascribing to the bureaucracy the capacity of liberalizing itself without inverted commas!

And of course the proletarian tendency *in the country*

has skillfully seized upon many slogans of Khrushchev, “filling them with their own content” like the SWP aptly says. It has filled the slogan of “collective leadership” with the revolutionary content of “fight against the one-man management” in the factories. It was “inspired” by the Polish and Hungarian examples to call for independence of the trade unions. It did all these things—the theses say—in actual life. That Sinclair did not happen to take notice is an argument against Sinclair—not against the thesis!

### The Leadership of the Political Revolution

But the question of the differentiations inside the bureaucracy has still another and more important aspect. *It is directly related to the reappearance of public, i.e., mass political activity.*

Seizing upon our statement that there are a proletarian and a consciously bureaucratic political tendency *in society*, and that these tendencies indirectly exercise pressure upon the warring factions inside the ruling clique, Sinclair inadvertently throws in a remark we made about a left faction appearing inside the “liberal” group, and then exclaims:

“What a welter of confusion is in these pages. What a terrible theoretical degeneration (sic). To what childish nonsense are those reduced who exchange eclecticism and impressionism for Marxist method. Pabloism however is something more than confusion. It theories would lay the Fourth International prostrate in face of historical opportunities, would drain away its firmness and confidence in a period when the forces are maturing which will destroy the Stalinist canker. It does this by creating illusions in a faceless ‘liberal section’ of the bureaucracy.”

Why we “create illusions” in a “faceless liberal section of the bureaucracy” simply by stating the fact that it exists, we do not grasp. Perhaps because we say that this “faceless liberal section” can be forced to make concessions to the masses? But isn’t that a historical fact, demonstrated, among other things, by the 20th Party Congress? What is so “eclectic” and “impressionistic” about it? Doesn’t the orthodox SWP call this fact “world-shaking”? They must have got a dose of “eclecticism and impressionism” much bigger than ours!

For the use of our readers—hardly for the use of professional distorters and slanderers—we should repeat, in passing, that nowhere, at no place, did we say that the “liberal” wing of the bureaucracy could victoriously lead the political revolution. To the contrary, again and again we have stressed that it is *counterrevolutionary*, only using other means and methods than the stalinoid wing of the Kremlin. Any “intuitions” to the contrary which Sinclair impudently presents in that respect, must be exposed for what they are: pure and simple lies and slanders. But the fact that the “liberal” wing of the counterrevolution cannot possibly head the revolution does not mean that it plays no role in bringing that revolution about, much against its will and intentions. People who talk like that have never seriously studied the history of any revolution and certainly not the history of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions.

The cynicism of Sinclair is revealed when, a couple of pages later, trying to give his version of events in Poland, he calmly states himself that “a section of this native bureaucracy began to lean on the masses to counteract the



demands of the Kremlin." Indeed it did. How would you call that "section"? A Stalinist one? Perhaps a "faceless liberal" one? But of course if *you* talk about such sections, your intentions are lily-white and pure, whereas when *we* talk about them our intentions are murderous and our theories "degenerate" . . .

"The role of Gomulka and Nagy, in fact, only assumes importance—and then temporarily, from the point of view of this whole period of political revolutions—because of the weakness of the Fourth Internationalist leadership." There you have the whole method in a nutshell! Gomulka and Nagy are "only" important because there is no revolutionary mass party.

Of course, we never thought of that. Bevan also is "only" important for this very same reason<sup>2</sup>. For the very same reason all mass working-class tendencies in the world are "only" important because the Fourth International has not yet taken their place. But tell me, Comrade Sinclair, do you think that there will be a revolutionary mass party of the Fourth International in Eastern Germany, Czechoslovakia, or the USSR say in the two or three years? Will it fall from the sky, without cadres, without leadership, without a long period of preparation and experience? Whom are you deceiving, yourself or your comrades?

"Only" because there is no revolutionary leadership of the mass movement, there exists a crisis of mankind since 40 years! The fact came to our knowledge quite some time ago. Now we are interested in another fact: how are we going to overcome this crisis of leadership? Not in the abstract and the general, but under the concrete conditions of Eastern Europe and the USSR? Sinclair's hollow phrases and generalities do not help any Polish or Russian comrade one inch forward towards the goal of building Trotskyist organizations. That you must have a program and organize your own underground group, of course they know; they don't need Sinclair's advice for that: if they did not know these simple truths they would not be Trotskyists, as they happen to be.

But what should they do in the meantime, before the revolution breaks out? Just make illegal propaganda? This is of course necessary, but if they limited themselves to that, they would be hopeless sectarians and hopelessly isolated when the revolution occurs. Contrary to Sinclair we have some experience of young illegal groups under severe dictatorship, and anybody who tells us that you can through them "organize masses" in "spontaneous organizations" *underground* only deserves to be called a fool, and a dangerous one at that! So either you remain inactive with regard to *mass work*, patiently waiting till the revolution occurs and in the meanwhile building your cadre and doing some individual propaganda and recruitment—a course completely justified in periods of reaction, but suicidal on the eve of the revolution—or you try to go where some beginnings of semilegal or legal activity of the workers is possible.

Now where is that place in Eastern Europe, e.g., in Hungary and Poland before the revolution, Comrade Sinclair? The "struggles" in Eastern Germany, Poznan, and Hungary were not expressed in the trade unions, says Ignoramus Sinclair. What a nerve! Why, the very delegation who called the meeting at which the Poznan workers decided their strike action, was the *officially elected trade-union branch of that factory*. The same thing happened in hundreds and hundreds of Polish and Hungarian factories. It also happened that way in Eastern Berlin. Of

course, once the revolution has broken out, these organizations were quickly bypassed by the workers' councils. But just now there is no revolution going on in the Soviet Union. We have to prepare it by learning from the way the Polish and Hungarian workers prepared theirs. Only a fool, let me repeat, does not understand that the legal (or semilegal) transformation of the existing trade unions played a central role in that process.

But the Hungarian example is even more revealing. Except the Stalinists who, for their own reasons, spread fairy tales about the role of "underground organizations" in preparing the revolution, all witnesses are unanimous in saying that no organizations of that sort played any role whatsoever in the October 23 demonstration. But there was one organization which played such a role. It was not illegal but legal. It was the Petofi club, which actually organized, through its student faction in the official student organization, the October 23 demonstration in Budapest. *And this Petofi club was essentially nothing else than the loosely organized Nagy tendency of the Hungarian CP!*

Isn't it clear then what we mean when we say that people like Nagy in Hungary, Gomulka in Poland, or anybody of the same kind in any other Eastern European country, by trying to express for their own purposes and in their own interests at least partially the discontent of the masses—"leaning on the masses to counteract the demands of the Kremlin" like Sinclair puts it—create in reality a *semilegal political mass current* in which framework a real left faction, i.e., left-centrists and revolutionary Marxists, might operate in order not to cut themselves off from the existing chances of mass actions? How can anybody doubt this after the Polish and Hungarian examples? Not only did things happen this way in these countries, but even after the great revolutionary struggles of October 23–November 4, the new leadership of the Hungarian working class, the Central Workers Council of Budapest, put at the top of its demands the reinstatement of Nagy as prime minister and the rights of discussion between him and that body, so much had the man remained a symbol of working-class opposition to the regime!

It is tedious but we have to repeat it again: We did not and will not think that Gomulka, Nagy, or any people like that will ever successfully lead the revolution. Its final leadership will be revolutionary Marxists elected in the workers councils. But what *we* think is not as important, when we look for a way to build the party, *as what the masses think*. We must start from their own consciousness in order to bring them to our conclusions. And how can we do this by deliberately turning our backs on the only real mass groupings they take seriously, the "trade unions" and the "liberal" tendencies of the bureaucracy?

"Nowhere, in this document, is there a mention of the necessity of building sections of the IVth International, in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union," says Sinclair, winking at his readers ("Didn't I tell you?"). Of course there isn't. It is stated at great length in that "infamous" bible of Pabloism, "Rise and Decline of Stalinism," and as our theses explicitly say at the outset, we do not think it necessary to repeat what is said there, as we incorporate every line of it, wholesale and retail, in our present document.

Let me give you a sample of Sinclair's method, applied to Sinclair: "Nowhere in Sinclair's document is there a

mention of the necessity of defending the Soviet Union against imperialism. It follows that Sinclair has abandoned this defense." Do you hear the answering howl reverberating against St. Paul's? So please apply some "Kantian morals" to your polemical methods and don't make slanderous assertions. What is mentioned throughout in our theses is the *concrete road to build* sections of the Fourth International in these countries. Sinclair perhaps does not like that road (although it starts from the very same principles he tried to apply to his own country), but it happens to be the only correct and possible one.

By criticizing our program for the political revolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe, Sinclair lets a very revealing sentence escape his pen: "A programme for the political revolution must begin (!) from the necessity of organising the masses independently of the bureaucracy . . . (it) must have as its central (!) aim the building of a conscious leadership."

Here we have a voice coming from the bottom of the heart: you must "start" from the organization; the organization is the "central aim" of the program. Isn't this a pretty—although rather outspoken and naive—definition of cliquism? Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky always taught us differently. The program of the *Communist Manifesto* did not start from the organization, nor did the program of Bolshevism, nor that of the Third International. And even the Transitional Program does not (although people who read it superficially think it does). Any Marxist program always *starts* from expressing general social needs, presented as such by millions of workers. It enumerates them, analyzes them in great detail, and then finally comes to the conclusion that in order to achieve these goals, you have to organize a revolutionary vanguard. To present this logic upside down is to make a caricature of Marxism, transforming the organization from a means into an end in itself. It is the expression of cliquism.

Sinclair has not yet learned to understand the difference between two things: the program of immediate and transitional demands with which you try to arouse the masses and prepare a revolution, and the demands you present to the masses once the revolution has broken out and you want to prepare for power, you want to assure its victory. The first kind of program, which must be specifically different from country to country, we cannot yet work out in detail on the basis of the limited experience of the movement. But the second one it is possible to formulate after the Polish and Hungarian events. And instead of cracking bad jokes about the "healthy workers' state," Sinclair should just throw a glance at the kind of questions which were—and are—passionately discussed by the Hungarian and Polish workers (and the communist workers all over the world are more and more discussing the same questions) and he would suddenly understand "the use of it" . . .

### The "Irreversible" Process

But why should Pabloites bother about "revolutionary leadership?" Sinclair insidiously begs the question. They are anyway convinced that the revolution is an "irreversible process." This is the Original Sin of Pabloism. It is a thousand times worse than our "belief" in the "evolutionary process" and than our "illusions" in the "faceless liberal wing" of the bureaucracy. It is Sin itself. Listen to the Grand Inquisitor:

"We are back to the essence of Pabloism. Teleology

replaces Marxism. History grinds onwards, irresistibly, to its predestined goal. And the role of the advance guard, the conscious revolutionary force? Can there be any place for it when the march of progress is *irreversible*? But wait! There *is* a task for it to perform—to persuade the Soviet bureaucracy not to resist the laws of history."<sup>3</sup>

Once again we cannot resist the temptation—begging their pardon—to quote our co-sinners in teleology, the members of the National Committee of the SWP. They write in "The New Stage in the Russian Revolution":

"The slogan 'back to Lenin!' is thus a proletarian slogan which the masses will inevitably fill with their own revolutionary socialist content. Naturally, this will not occur in a day. The workers are yet unorganized. The bureaucracy will fight desperately as it nears its doom. The entire process (listen to them, kneedeep in Pabloite sin!) will have its ups and downs and even reversals. The IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THE PROCESS HAS BEGUN AND IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS IT WILL PROVE TO BE IRREVERSIBLE."

Unrepentant sinners as we are, and confronted with a form of cynicism in distortion which has patently childish aspects, we shall now very patiently and in the simplest possible words explain the mystery, so that even a Sinclair could understand what it is all about.

Once upon a time there was a country ruled by a very bad man called Joseph Stalin. That country had witnessed three revolutions within 12 years but the people, far from witnessing the triumph of equality and soviet democracy they had dreamed of, were confronted with ever sharpening forms of inequality, privilege, and dictatorship. But a very wise man with a black beard called Karl Marx had taught us a long time ago that no dictator could rest his power only on terror. For some reason people did not think it possible to revolt: That was the only explanation for the lasting dictatorship. So an equally wise disciple of old Marx set out to find the reasons why the Russian workers passively tolerated Stalinist dictatorship for so long. And in the most important book he wrote on the question, called *The Revolution Betrayed*, he said:

"If in contrast to the peasants the workers have almost never come out on the road of open struggle, thus condemning the protesting villages to confusion and impotence, this is not only because of the repressions. The workers fear lest, in throwing out the bureaucracy, they will open the way for a capitalist restoration" (p. 285).

That is the main reason why that dictatorship lasted a long time, more than 25 years. Of course, these fears, historically correct to a great extent, were not completely objective. They also reflected the workers' demoralization, confusion, and hopelessness after the terrible defeats of the world revolution and the crushing blows they suffered from the bureaucracy in their own country. But these sentiments became thereby in themselves important objective factors, one of the main bases of support for the bureaucratic dictatorship.

Now these general conditions—called by a very difficult and scientific term, relationship of forces—started to change at the end of the second world war. The retreat of world revolution was finished. An advance set in, first in a contradictory way, with a single clear-cut victory in Yugoslavia, then in a tremendous way, after its victory in the most populated country of the world, China. At the same time, the workers became more confident because of

what happened in the world, they also felt more confident because of what they were witnessing in their own country. They had been quietly learning a lot. They now know their skills very well. They were working at huge machines, of which they felt the tremendous productive power. They saw great achievements, power dams, airplanes, factories, of which they were proud but which they compared to their own miserable standard of living. They saw capitalism weakening all over the world. And now they felt there would be no more danger of capitalist restoration if they struck out against the bureaucracy. So they started some skirmishes. They had astonishing success. They asked for more. They received more. Appetite grows with eating, French proverb says. So their pressure increases all the time. AND AS LONG AS THIS RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES IS NOT BASICALLY CHANGED—i.e., as long as the international working class has not suffered a crushing defeat which is absolutely improbable in the next decade—THIS PROCESS IS IRREVERSIBLE, because outside of that change in world relations, there is no reason whatsoever why the Soviet workers would suddenly stop hating the bureaucrats and wanting to get rid of them!

Does that mean that “there is no place for the advance guard”? Of course it does not mean that. But only people who have forgotten most of what they knew can ignorantly proclaim that it is the task of the vanguard [missing words] to see about the—yes, we remain sinners!—*irreversible objective process* which makes victorious revolutions *possible*. We always thought that the role of the vanguard only consists in transforming this possibility into a reality, i.e., in seizing the favorable opportunities in order to achieve revolutionary victory.

Let me quote a very timely example. Would anybody in his senses deny that in the present stage of imperialist decay the colonial revolution has become an irreversible process? Can anybody visualize, say, in the next ten years, the return of the British *Raj* to India, or the retransformation of North Vietnam into a French colony? Always conceding no fundamental change in the relationship of forces in the world (and there is no objective reason to predict such a change in the near future), one cannot but answer: No, Indian and Vietnamese political independence seem irreversible. But does that mean that “there is no more place for a revolutionary vanguard”? Of course it does not mean that. One thing is the return to full and complete imperialist domination, another thing is the final revolutionary anti-imperialist and anticapitalist victory. As long as there is no final revolutionary victory, many partial defeats (Guatemala, Iran) are inevitable, many unnecessary retreats and sacrifices will occur, many occasions will be lost for achieving final victory, most countries—though not all—will pass through many intermediary stages, in which they will have their own and painful experiences with inadequate bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, or Stalinist leaderships. *It is precisely such a period which is ideal for the building of a mass revolutionary party*. Were the process quickly reversible, and had we to witness rapid successions of counterrevolutionary coups and counterrevolutionary crushing victories of the type of Hitler's, the successful building of a mass revolutionary party would be nearly impossible. As history has given us an “irreversible process” towards revolution—with many *partial* defeats, but no final and crushing

ones—we stand at the contrary a fairly good chance of achieving our goal.

Having read all this, any objective reader will readily absolve us and our co-sinners from the alleged Sin of TELEOLOGY. Sinclair could not say anything different on the subject than what we have just said. But of course, his intentions are honorable, whereas ours . . .

### The Purpose of “Under a Stolen Flag”

We can now draw up our balance sheet. “Under a Stolen Flag” is a disgraceful document, we said. We have found out why. It substitutes abuse for argument, slander for analysis, distortion for polemics, and arrogant ignorance for Marxist inquiry. The dish strongly smells of King Street, with a flavor of Transport House and a tiny bit of hysteria added for spicing. There is not a single assumption on which it is based which is not a denial of what we really say and write. It is a completely artificial attempt of creating a panic about the nonexistent ghost called Pabloism which has to be exorcised at all cost.

The purpose of this unprincipled attempt is openly stated by Sinclair in the introduction of the internal bulletin. It is a “defense” against the attempt of some British comrades to “pressurize” Burns' [Healy] group into “unprincipled unity.” Therefore Sinclair must prove, by all means, that there are big principled differences between the Fourth International and his group. He goes to great lengths to “demonstrate” this. But we have demonstrated that his “evidence” is a tissue of lies and distortions. The “principled” differences dissolve in smoke. Like J. P. Cannon wrote to Goonewardene: positions are coming closer and closer. Sinclair instead states that “the gulf grows wider and wider.” The reason for such obviously false statements is very clear. It is of purely organizational nature. He fears that “someone” wants “to take away the leadership of the group.” For that he is prepared to fight tooth and nail, principles or no principles. As a matter of fact it seems to be the only principle he honestly follows all through his activity. This is cliquism in its purest form.

We have conducted our relations with the Burns group, as well as with all the groups who are members of the International Committee, in an entirely different manner. We have started from principled basis. We have followed the political lines and documents very carefully. We have seen that these lines come closer and closer together. We therefore have concluded: It is a crime to the movement to reduce the tremendous opportunities opened up to us by the death agony of Stalinism by remaining split in several countries. We therefore issued a call for unity to all these organizations. We were ready and are ready to make the greatest organizational concessions which facilitate such unity with the one exception of dissolving the International as an organized body. We have no cliquish, no maneuverist purposes whatsoever. We only want to strengthen the international movement. Only irresponsible people can take another stand, given the development of the crisis of Stalinism, e.g., in Britain.

Some comrades may ask: you say you want to unite with Burns yet you call him a cliquist and you condemn his methods in the strongest possible terms. We answer: Unity can never be the result of self-effacement or capitulation of any part of the movement. The provocative nature of the Sinclair article precisely lies herein, that the author knew

very well a sharp answer was inevitable. But we are confident that all Trotskyists who mean well for Trotskyism will not be taken in by that provocation. We explicitly restate that we want and desire unity with all groups who stand on the basis of the Fourth International program. We don't pose any specific organizational conditions; nobody is going to be excluded. We do not propose to "take away" the British Section from Burns or any section from anyone. Our movement is a healthy growing movement. Our cadres have withstood the test of the split splendidly in almost every country of the world. New and important sections have in the meantime joined the old ones. Under

these conditions of general growth we do not need to fear anybody's "maneuvers." The Trotskyist cadres in any country will know how to straighten out any "wild man" if the necessity therefor arises. They will not need "international intervention" in organizational matters, except when it is necessary to protect minorities against wanton repression. We can safely leave the future of the British Section to the united efforts of the British comrades. That section will grow and draw to it a strong part of oppositional Communists—provided we relentlessly continue the fight for unity and bring it to a good end.

E. Germain.

June 20, 1957

#### Footnotes:

(1) Sinclair sees a "contradiction" and "confusion" in the fact that we state, on the one hand, that the Eastern European CPs have still a majority of advanced workers in their ranks, and on the other hand, that its apparatus is completely isolated from society. But the CPs are "part(!) of the apparatus," Sinclair exclaims! Indeed? Would you say that the British Labour Party is "part" of Transport House? Can't you visualize a revolutionary situation in Britain in which Transport House becomes "completely isolated from society" without the Labour Party stopping to group a majority of advanced workers?

(2) For English comrades interested in the subject, we draw attention upon the article we wrote after the Fourth World Congress, and which was republished in No. 2 of the

British review *Fourth International*, article in which we analyzed the *centrist* nature of mass currents moving to the left and the inadequacy of that leadership which has to be replaced by a revolutionary Marxist, i.e., Trotskyist one.

(3) As we do not want Sinclair to get away with anything, may we just remind him that we could not "attach importance" in our document to the Chinese CP's statement "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," for the simple reason that our document was finished before that statement was published? We have of course not waited for Sinclair's advice to become interested in that statement and published a long polemic against it in the April 1957 issue of the review *Quatrième Internationale*.

## SECTION IX: DISCUSSIONS AT AN IMPASSE

With the rejection of parity by the IS and Healy's actions, discussions of reunification broke down in mutual recriminations. The IS and Sherry Mangan wrote letters demanding that the British Trotskyists repudiate the statement that differences had widened. Without such a repudiation, they indicated, reunification with the British Section would be ruled out. In addition, the IS threatened to take action to formalize the split unless further progress was made.

The IS also made some verbal concessions to Cannon's proposals. It endorsed the first point in his letter to Goonewardene (March 12, 1957), agreeing that the two sides should attempt to prepare a joint memorandum that would indicate the extent of programmatic agreement. The IS replaced the formulation of "concessions" with that of "organizational guarantees." Pablo may have felt secure in making limited concessions, since Healy was now playing an obstructionist role that paralleled Pablo's.

The letters and statements of IS leaders in this period strengthened the suspicion in the SWP leadership that the IS was more interested in splitting the IC than in uniting with it. (Pablo's letters in Section VI indicate that there was some basis for this estimate.)

The "Fifth World Congress" held by the IS in August 1957 declared the International Committee to be "outside the Fourth International." The IS declaration noted that political differences had lessened with the SWP, but made no such assertion with regard to the IC as a whole.

It was difficult for the SWP leadership to determine just where Healy stood. Was he attempting to block reunification? If so, why had he not frankly stated his differences with the SWP leadership on this, instead of endorsing the reunification effort and Cannon's proposals? Why did he reiterate his stand in favor of Cannon's proposals in the midst of the controversy over the Hunter article and the ultimatum to the Revolutionary Socialist League? In his letters to the IS and the SWP, Healy neither endorsed nor rejected the view that differences had widened.

Cannon made no secret of his opposition to Healy's "factional ultimatum" and his concern about the exaggerations in the Hunter document. But Healy showed no inclination to probe these differences. Despite his criticisms of the IS, he hastened to assure Cannon that he (Healy) was in agreement with the SWP's overall approach to the unity question. It began to seem probable that Healy only had differences of emphasis with the SWP, perhaps stemming from the necessity of confronting an IS formation in England. Healy missed no opportunity to convey this impression.

During the later stages of the reunification discussions and debates, Healy admitted that he had differed with Cannon's reunification proposals from the beginning, but chose to maneuver so as to prevent a political conflict with the SWP.

The documentary record lends credence to Healy's claim. The first admission by Healy that he had hidden differences in order to avoid a political debate occurred in the February 3, 1962, meeting of the National Executive

Committee of the Socialist Labour League. Joseph Hansen attended this meeting as a guest. The minutes issued by the Socialist Labour League (and reprinted in Volume III of the Healy-Slaughter documentary collection, *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*) include the following exchange:

"H N stated that in 1957 the SWP had the impression that we thought eye-to-eye about international Pabloism, etc. He said the present differences were a mystery to him.

"HEALY explained some of the history of the leadership of the SLL, their experience in the RCP and the struggle with Pabloism. In 1957 when the SWP claimed differences were growing less, we were undergoing an important theoretical development. The British section at that time was winning members from the Communist Party. We did not want a conflict with the SWP."

Healy's desire to evade a political discussion with the SWP may explain his failure to take the opportunity offered by Cannon's critical letters of July 3 and July 25 to present an alternative view of the desirability of reunification and of the issues in the Hunter-Germain exchange.

Far from discussing differences, Healy presented to the International Committee a resolution adopted by the SWP Political Committee. This resolution appeared to take a view different from those Healy now claims to have held on the need for discussion of the 1953 split before reunification could take place, on the Cannon proposals, and on the Hunter-Germain exchange. This resolution expressed the SWP's view that reunification was not possible at that time. It denounced Pablo's factional activities in England, and took the following stand on debates over past differences, like the exchange between Hunter and Germain:

"The tendentious and falsified polemics over past conflicts which cannot be resolved by argument at the present time, and which the letter to Goonewardene proposed to lay aside for future consideration in a calmer atmosphere, after unity had been effected on the political action of the day, obviously sharpen the situation and push the prospect of reunification backward. These actions, and the attitude expressed in them, plus the failure of agreement on the necessary organizational compromise, raise the direct threat that any formal unification effected in this atmosphere would provide only the springboard for another bitter conflict and split.

"The PC of the SWP does not believe that any good could come to our international movement from that and will not recommend it. Neither do we see how any constructive results can be obtained by a continuation of the discussion of unification unless and until these two roadblocks are removed." The resolution adopted by the IC reiterated support for Cannon's proposals as the organizational basis of reunification.

Why did Healy submit and vote for a resolution so at variance with the views he claims to have held? Perhaps Healy, acting as a pragmatic politician, felt that the "danger" of reunification had been successfully fended off and therefore felt no need for political clarification of the differences over this in the IC.

1. "A most disturbing development": letter from Sherry Mangan to George Novack (excerpt—June 21, 1957)

Paris

Dear George:

Meanwhile, there has been a most disturbing development in the reunification situation. We have received (I imagine your national office will already have sent you a copy) an internal bulletin of your British allies violently attacking our Fifth World Congress discussion document, "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism," in which the position is taken that *politically* "the gulf . . . grows wider and wider." In a letter dated June 13, Burns [Healy] demands repudiation of the document as a condition for reunification (I enclose a copy, as also a copy of the letter on the subject sent by the International Secretariat to the International Committee).

Now not only Jim and you, but practically every other responsible U.S. leader I talked to, were of the opinion that the political lines of the two international tendencies had drawn more and more parallel and close—to the extent that not only did political differences not preclude unification, but political closeness suggested it as an organizational conclusion to be drawn. Hence the whole discussion about the organizational side could go forward because there was general agreement on the political side.

And here come Burns and Sinclair [Hunter] with the

totally diametrical opinion that there is a deepening political gulf. Of course your English group has a perfect right to its opinion, but it seems to indicate a certain lack of political homogeneity in the International Committee, doesn't it? It strikes me, just personally, as an attempt, by putting you of the SWP before a *fait accompli*, to sabotage the reunification on which some progress was, I think we all agree, being made. I hope that you will not permit it to do so. Everything is doubtless being sent officially to New York, but because I have a special esteem for your and Jim's opinion, I am sending these copies of the letters direct; and I should very much appreciate having your opinion on this extraordinary and disturbing development.

We have not yet heard here the results of the discussion on unification at your National Committee plenum and convention, but doubtless a formal communication will soon be in from New York. The International Executive Committee is just meeting, so that we shall soon have official positions on both sides.

I hope that any of you who believe that reunification is possible and desirable, and who happen to have influence on Burns, will try to persuade him not to take further measures which will imperil unification and even render it impossible—at least with his group.

Yours fraternally,  
s/P.

2. Letter from the International Secretariat to the International Committee (June 19, 1957)

Comrades,

With profound astonishment, we have learned the contents of the internal bulletin of your English organization, which publishes our document, "Decline and Fall of Stalinism," intended for the discussion preparatory to the Fifth World Congress, accompanied by a preface and a critical article with the title, "The Struggle Against Pabloite Revisionism," signed W. Sinclair [Hunter].

It is clear—indeed, the preface declares among other things, "The gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider"—that Sinclair's article takes the official position of your organization which, if maintained, would naturally close the door to all serious discussion on reunification.

That it is the official position of this organization is equally clear from the letter—completely ultimatum—addressed by Comrade Burns [Healy] to the organization sympathetic to the International in England, the Revolutionary Socialist League. An exact copy of this letter is attached.

We will reply very soon to the criticisms, completely without foundation, which the said bulletin contains on the text of the International's "Decline and Fall of Stalinism." We will publish in an internal bulletin of the IS the criticisms of Sinclair as well as our reply, as is the custom of all members of the International. We hope that you will not fail to act in like manner in seeing that these documents are circulated among all the members of your organizations.

What we wish to emphasize in this letter is the gravity of taking such a position in the midst of negotiations on

reunification which are going on, as you know, in the United States between the leadership of the SWP, our representative Comrade Patrick [Mangan], and the IS. These negotiations were enabled to start and to continue after the letter addressed by Comrade Cannon to Comrade Goonewardene, a letter in which the opinion is explicitly expressed, which is also our own opinion, of an undeniable political agreement, especially after the 20th Congress of the CP of the USSR, between the SWP and the International. This position has been reaffirmed by all the leading comrades of the SWP to our representative, Comrade Patrick.

To say now that this not only does not correspond to the truth, but that "the gulf . . . grows wider and wider" signifies that it is a question of a "tragic misunderstanding" between us on the basis upon which the negotiations for unification have started and would be pursued.

Only people who have an interest in perpetuating the split and a lamentable ideological confusion could act thus, in order to exert pressure to stop the reunification negotiations and which again take up a "war to death" against the International.

We appeal to your sense of responsibility that this alternative may not be realized. The International has decided—as we have expressed it again and again—to make very great organizational concessions to your tendency in order to achieve unification of the Trotskyist international movement and to thus better exploit the formidable crisis of international Stalinism. But, on the other hand, strong as its awareness is that it must exhaust the possibilities of arriving at such an outcome, it will be obliged at the time of its next world congress to draw all the conclusions in the eventuality of a new check in the negotiations, and to act accordingly.

With our Communist Internationalist Salutations,  
The IS

3. *The factional ultimatum of the British*: letter from James P. Cannon to Tom Kerry (July 3, 1957)

Copy to Burns [Healy]

Los Angeles

Dear Tom:

I enclose herewith copy of a June 21 letter from Patrick [Mangan] to Warde [Novack] and copies of two enclosures he sent with the letter:

1) A June 13 letter from Healy to the Revolutionary Socialist League, and

2) A June 19 letter from the IS to the International Committee.

It is unfortunate that we have to receive this material from the Pabloites and not from our own sources of information. Ever since the May 7 letter of the IS, which presumes to ignore and bypass the considerations and conditions laid down in my letter to Goonewardene and my later letter of April 29 to Patrick, it has been clear to every one of us with a grain of political sense that the Pabloites are not at all concerned about a genuine unity on a workable basis with the orthodox Trotskyists. Their game is merely to maneuver with the slogan of unity and big-salesman talk about "concessions"—for which we have no need whatever and still less interest—in order to disarm and befuddle the unity elements in their own ranks and to provoke a new split among the organizations of the International Committee.

It is now also fairly evident that the British have decided to follow the example of the French and do everything they can to facilitate the Pabloite strategy. It is interesting to note how quickly the Pabloites leaped at the opportunity to throw the blame for the failure of unity, not on their own rejection of my reasonable proposals—which, in the existing situation, are the only possible formula for a workable attempt at unification—but on the factional ultimatum of the British.

As soon as I get the necessary factual information I intend to write the PC at length on this question with some

practical proposals for the next steps. Meantime, I would like to have the following information without unnecessary delay:

1. Copies of all the letters you have received from Burns relating to these matters since my letter to Goonewardene under date of March 12. Also copies of any other letters you may have received from international sources, or from NC members in the field, relating to this business.

2. Under date of March 12—nearly four months ago!—I wrote a long letter to the PC, with a copy marked for the International Committee, in which I outlined the concrete proposals we should make to the Pabloites in case they responded to the letter to Goonewardene. In that letter I suggested that Burns call a meeting of the International Committee right away to consider the proposals and inform us of its decisions in the matter. Was this meeting ever held? Were any reports of it ever received? I have not seen any such reports, although at the time of my April 29 letter to Patrick I had assumed that no objection had been raised to my suggested proposals; otherwise I would not have written the letter. But now it appears that the British organization has decided to act unilaterally along a contradictory tactical line without indicating to us what role, if any, the International Committee as such is playing in the matter, and what line, if any, it has decided to take. Has it been decided to blow up the International Committee and forget about it?

I am really anxious to get concrete information on this point before making further suggestions to the PC as to our policy. The break-up of the International Committee would be a major victory for Pablo, handed to him on a silver platter.

Awaiting your reply,

Yours fraternally,

/s/James P. Cannon

JPC:ra  
AIRMAIL

4. *Letter from Gerry Healy for the British Section to the International Secretariat (July 6, 1957—received in New York, July 9, 1957)*

Draft Letter

Dear Comrades,

We have now had the opportunity to discuss your letter, dated June 19th, 1957, addressed to the International Committee. One of the chief objections raised in this letter is that Comrade W. Sinclair [Hunter], a leading member of our organization, should have replied to your document, "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism." "If this position was maintained," you say it "would naturally close the door to any serious discussion on reunification."

After carefully considering these remarks, we must inform you that the British Section cannot share your opinion. Everyone should surely be aware that there are deepgoing political differences between the forces of the

International Committee and your organization. We feel that it would be a mistake to obscure these and to object when they are brought forward. If a lasting unification can eventually be achieved then it can only be on the basis of fundamental political agreement. We will therefore be pleased to circulate any reply you may wish to make to Comrade Sinclair amongst our members.

A realistic conception of unification must start from the very favorable situation before World Trotskyism on the one hand and the fundamental differences between our tendencies on the other. Provided this is understood and not sloughed over, then we can seek out ways and means to see whether the objective situation can help our movements over a period to arrive at basic agreement. To try to gloss over these differences as if they didn't exist, could only lead to the perpetuation of the split by increasing the genuine political mistrust that is already there.

We are of the opinion that you are tending to do this and your remark that after your Congress "you will be compelled to draw all appropriate conclusions and act

from then onwards accordingly" could in fact be interpreted as an ultimatum. The problems of the World Movement cannot be settled in this way, and we feel sure that all serious Trotskyist militants will appreciate this.

The Thirteenth Annual Congress of the British Section of the Fourth International, which was the most representative gathering our movement ever held in Britain discussed in the most objective fashion this problem. A resolution was unanimously passed which declared:

"Congress maintains that the immediate practical side of a political unification must be taken in stages. It proposes to the International Committee that a parity committee consisting of the International Committee and IEC representatives should draw up a memorandum of agreement on the issues where there is basic agreement. This joint body should constitute the leadership of the world movement and its primary task would be to prepare the Fourth World Congress of Unification. It would recommend to this Congress that for the next period the international leadership be a parity leadership on all committees which would lead by persuading individuals and sections rather than by invoking the discipline of statutes. Only in this way will possibilities of principled unity of the Fourth International be realized."

We feel that this is the best way to face up to the problems as they really are, and we hope that upon reflection you will agree with us.

We must however disagree with you when you maintain that our attitude towards Comrade Grant's group is ultimatic. Our movement in Britain discussed for many years the tactics and strategy for the construction of the revolutionary party. By an overwhelming majority the International movement as a whole decided with us that the entrust tactic was the best way to do this. As far as we are aware no decision has ever been taken by your bodies

to reverse this, and certainly the International Committee is fully in support of this policy. More than ever we are convinced that it is the correct road for our movement.

The Grant group are in favor of the ex-RCP policy of "open work," and we for our part have no desire to resume the old discussions of the forties. What happened to the RCP and the majority of its leaders should be instructive enough in this respect and we refer you in this connection to the report you presented to the Third World Congress which unanimously expelled Comrade Grant and Haston as members of the old IEC. (See Walter's report.) (See also your resolutions and documents of 1947-49 on the RCP.)

When we say that they must disband the RSL we are simply repeating that our movement rejects the tactic of "open work", and there is nothing ultimatic about this. It is simply a statement of fact.

We would say in conclusion that the Grant group is a very secondary question to the international problem as a whole. It was not connected with the FI during the Autumn of 1953 when the split took place. If there are still people who want to do "open work," we do not see why they shouldn't get on with it. We for our part will not tolerate any resumption of the old factionalism, and for this reason we are absolutely opposed to any forms of activity which will repeat the wasteful practices of the past, reopening old issues which have long ago been settled by history.

The contents of this letter reflect the opinions only of this section which is affiliated to the International Committee. The final decisions rest with that body.

Yours Fraternally,  
s/Burns [Healy]  
Secretary

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5. "We fail to understand how this approach impedes a unification": letter from Gerry Healy for the British Section to the IS (July 8, 1957)

Dear Comrades:

Further to our letter of July 6th and in reply to yours dated July 5th again addressed to the International Committee.

It would be useless for you to entertain illusions that it is possible to stampede this section into a unity which does not take into account the real political positions of the tendencies. This section was opposed to your document 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' in 1953, and it is opposed to your document 'The Decline and Fall of Stalinism' 1957. There is nothing you can do about that except to speed up your reply to Sinclair [Hunter].

We fail to understand how this approach impedes a

unification such as outlined in our letter of the 6th instant. If we are to make the best use of the present most favourable situation then we must know where we stand politically now. If you do not appreciate this, then you are, whether you like it or not, holding up a real unity.

Here in Britain your supporters Grant and Fairhead press home the attack against our organisation privately and publicly on every conceivable occasion. We do not protest to you because we believe that this is the type of unification procedure which the comrades consider necessary.

It will in no way prevent us from attaining a principled unity if such a thing is possible.

Anticipating an early reply to the Sinclair document, we remain

Yours fraternally  
Burns [Healy]  
Secretary



6. *Letter from Gerry Healy, Secretary of the International Committee, to the International Secretariat (July 10, 1957)*

Dear Comrades,

The International Committee has taken note of the visit of your representative Patrick O'Daniel [Sherry Mangan] to the SWP, and various suggestions which have been made towards reunification.

In our opinion a successful reunification is essentially a political question, and a realistic approach in this direction must take into account the important political differences which exist between our respective tendencies. The International Committee is absolutely opposed to the slurring over of these differences, and it believes it is entirely possible for the political issues to be studied in an atmosphere free from the antagonisms and bitterness of the past. We must face the situation as it is now, bearing in mind the very favorable period ahead for the World Trotskyist movement.

The International Committee is firmly of the conviction that there can be no return to the organizational relations of the pre-split period. It believes that the unification must be tackled in stages and considers the proposals of JPC and our English section a positive step towards this end. It regards, however, the counterproposals of Comrade Patrick O'Daniel and your IEC as unacceptable.

We have taken note of your request for a parity committee to discuss terms, but we feel that this is much too premature, until we obtain agreement at least in principle on the basis provided by the JPC and English proposals.

In conclusion, we believe that the contribution of Comrade Sinclair [Hunter] should be considered as discussion material, and your reply will also be circulated inside the sections affiliated to the International Committee.

Fraternally,  
Preston [Healy]  
Secretary, International Committee

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7. *"Rest assured, we will walk in step with you": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (July 12, 1957)*

Dear Jim,

I have just received a copy of your July 3rd letter to Tom and I am saddened by the tone and by the easily explainable misunderstandings that have arisen.

Copies of the RSL letter and all the other material were sent on to New York. You should by now have received copies of other material as well. In case you haven't, I am sending along everything up to date. The Pabloites send all their documents direct to the sections of the IC.

At last February's meeting of the International Committee it was decided to hold a World Congress of orthodox Trotskyists towards the end of this year and work out a political policy which could then be submitted as a basis for unification. The committee felt that this was the best way to sort out the position bearing in mind Goonewardene's letter to you, which was read at the meeting. Immediately the meeting was over, I conveyed this decision to New York.

Then came your reply to Goonewardene, together with your proposals. Upon receipt of a copy of this, I wrote to New York and asked that it be held up until we could discuss it, but it had already been sent. Our NC early in April accepted a resolution along the lines of your proposals, which were submitted to our pre-congress discussion. We did this so that our people could be thoroughly prepared. In addition we received a copy of Pablo's resolution "Decline and Fall of Stalinism" which was also sent out, with a reply, to our members. In the course of this a young Ceylonese passed a copy over to Pabloite sources—hence the screaming from that quarter. We believe we did right in placing this resolution before our members despite what happened. In any case our organisation rejects its line.

As soon as we received your proposals we sent them out

to all members of the IC, but a meeting could not be arranged at once. In any case we want to get our people clear first and the other sections were in the same boat. We made a big effort to get a meeting of the International Committee held just after our Whitsun Congress, but only the French delegate could attend. The Swiss and German were fully occupied with work in Germany and a referendum in Switzerland. The French were greatly impressed by our Congress which reflected important progress over the past year, and we managed to convince them about your proposals. We found it extremely difficult to get a meeting arranged and in the end we had to settle a reply to the Pabloites by sending someone to visit all concerned. We then got an agreed position which supports yours and our proposals. The IC will be meeting within the next few weeks, and will continue to discuss the situation.

There is general agreement not to waste any time and to proceed to take advantage of the position in a positive way. All this I explained in a letter to New York a few days ago. It is obvious from your letter that you have not yet seen copies of this material.

For almost a year now there has been a constant attack upon us by the Pabloites here. Pablo has formed an unprincipled alliance with the sectarian Grant and launched an open organisation called the RSL, opposing our entrism policy. Our organisation rejects this completely and the Congress decided unanimously to ask them to disband this as the basis for unification. The second point of this resolution flowed from the fact that our group rejects the Pabloite document. But this is not a barrier to your proposals although the Pabloites are trying to make something of it. We can always negotiate something here if the international position is settled. At the same time as Pablo talks unity in the USA, he goes to war against us here. We can only explain this in terms of his political line. He has launched an attack on us not only in order to manoeuvre but also because he opposes our political position. We must not forget this fact.

The Pabloites here immediately they receive something

from Pablo circulate it far and wide amongst our members and contacts. We are called upon to reply, since our people must have answers. We realise that this has conveyed the wrong impression to you that we want to "go it alone", but it is nothing of the sort. Pablo pushes the offensive all the time here, and we just cannot ignore this.

We cannot and will not accept his line. We are in favour of your proposals which offer us a positive basis as against his manoeuvres, but the political questions will and must go forward for discussion. If there is any attempt to slur these things over then it would be a black day for orthodox Trotskyism. We appeal to you to study his resolutions. These remain the key to the whole affair.

We have tried to proceed by clarifying our section and convincing other members of the IC. This has taken a little time and it has been made more difficult by the distances which separate you from us. We are certainly not factional

in any way, but you must appreciate that in a very new membership such as we have, we must speak out politically or else they will be confused. Pablo has been and is the main provocateur in Britain.

From now I feel we should keep regularly in touch direct, so that we can act promptly. Rest assured we will walk in step with you. All we ask is that you study Pablo's line now. We will send all the material directly at the same time as it is sent to New York.

A new issue of the "Revolution Betrayed" is now off the press. Could you ask Joe to let us have the proofs of the first half of your book at once. We are completing the remainder and they will be dispatched within the next three weeks. We want to finish this book next.

Warmest wishes,  
s/Jerry

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8. *"The only possible basis for getting agreement immediately": letter from Gerry Healy to Sal Santen, a leader of the Dutch section of the International Secretariat (July 12, 1957)*

77, Sternhold Avenue  
London, S.W.2.

Dear Sal,

I saw your letter to Peter Fryer this morning and am taking the liberty to send you a copy of our "Review". If you can take out a subscription it will be appreciated. The

rate is 14/-d for 6 issues *post free*. If you cannot, then we will in any case send it to you regularly on an exchange basis.

It would be very wrong for us to take for granted the question of unity. This will depend more than anything else upon basic political agreement. As a stage in this direction the J.P. Cannon proposals and our proposals here are the only possible basis for getting agreement immediately. I hope you will support us in these proposals. Where do you stand on Comrade Cannon's proposals for instance? If you have time, please let me know.

Comradely,  
Burns [Healy]

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9. *"As for the question of parity leadership, it is not a serious proposal": letter from Sal Santen to Gerry Healy (July 20, 1957)*

Amsterdam

Dear Jerry,

It was more or less a surprise for me to receive your letter, for which I thank you.

You are right when you say that the question of unity depends more than anything else upon basic political agreement. But, as Cde. Cannon posed it, our positions have grown very close to each other in such a way even, that there is basic political agreement. Therefore it would be a crime to continue the division of our international movement, especially in the actual favourable conjuncture of the death crisis of Stalinism.

It is, in such a situation, too bad that you flatly rejected the proposals for reunification, made by us, and that Cde. Sinclair [Hunter] thought it necessary to attack us in the way that he did, accusing us of all kinds of things existing only in his phantasy.

You do hope that I will support Cde. Cannon's proposals. To tell you the truth, they are not yet quite clear to me. Should they mean, however, that the International should

become a kind of international federation, with a parity leadership, I must reject them with all my force. As a youngster, already, I supported Trotsky in his fight against Sneevliet who was in favour of a kind of international federation instead of a centralised international movement. The events proved Trotsky to be right also in this respect. How could you expect me, in such a situation, to change my mind? The International will be centralised or it will be nothing, a kind of London Bureau destined to disappear.

As for the question of a parity leadership, it is not a serious proposal, I think, if we want to come to unity on a healthy, honest basis. It will not be difficult to establish the strength of both movements and we, on our part, are willing to make many concessions on the point of representation, in your favour. But parity is out of any proportion. I saw, e.g., the report in the Militant on your Latin-American movement, but, to tell you the truth, it is ridiculous. I was there, as you know, and I can tell you that the only real movement in Latin America is ours. The same applies for the European continental movement, with the exception of Switzerland and, to a much lesser extent, France. For Australia, Japan, Indonesia, Ceylon the same thing can be said.

There was made very clear and serious proposals to you, approved by the IEC. Why don't you take those proposals

as a sincere basis for discussion. In reality, the problem of reunification does not depend on us, but upon you. You have an enormous responsibility on this field which cannot be made undone by stating incorrectly, as Cde. Sinclair did, that the divergences are greater than ever, and by posing for reunification in England the "condition" that the document of the International "Decline and Fall of Stalinism" has to be repudiated.

To-day I'll leave the city for a fortnight, so I had to write this letter in a hurry, though I would have preferred to

10. *"Compare all this with the line of the International and Sinclair's article": letter from the International Secretariat "to the leadership of the British organisation" (July 18, 1957)*

Fourth International  
International Secretariat  
Pierre Frank,

Dear Comrades,

We have received two letters signed by your secretary, comrade Burns [Healy], dated respectively July 6th and 8th 1957. We should like to comment on them.

In that of July 6th you give the impression that Sinclair's [Hunter] article against our document "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism" represents only the opinion of a "leading member" of your organisation.

In that of July 8th you write, on the contrary, that your organisation is "opposed" to our 1953 "document 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' and opposed to (our 1957) document 'the Decline and Fall of Stalinism'".

Finally, in the letter of the International Committee in which your organisation participates, dated July 10th 1957, it is written that "the contribution of comrade Sinclair should be considered as discussion material." That is already in progress.

We have not failed to "speed up (our) reply to Sinclair" as comrade Burns asked us to do, and we hope that this reply will by now be known to all your members.

We further remind you that you considered the "repudiation" of our document "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism" as one of the two conditions for unification with the RSL, our sympathising organisation in Great Britain. The other was that they "dissolve the RSL as an open organisation and accept perspective of work in the LP."

After that, you are surprised that we characterised these conditions for unification as "ultimatistic".

In your present letters you refer to the condition of entry work, but you say nothing as to the other condition, to "repudiate the recent Pabloite document 'The Decline and Fall of Stalinism'" (According to the exact terms of your Conference Resolution).

We reject this affirmation that the RSL is supposedly for "open work" and is opposed to the entrust tactic. Nothing justifies this accusation. It is certainly not the International, that was the first to recommend this tactic in Britain, which would now be renouncing such a line.

But even supposing that the RSL were for the moment opposed to such a tactic, your way of posing the question of unification in Britain does not at all correspond at all to

write to you in a more detailed and extensive way. The IS, however, will send you one of these days a precise reply to the letter it received from you.

If anyone would be glad with a successful reunification, it is me. But it should be a honest one, with the purpose to strengthen the International to the utmost. A kind of federation would only have the opposite result.

Comradely,  
S. Santen

P.S. I gladly agree with your proposal to exchange papers.

the liberal way that you state the question of unification on the international level, or to the indications given in this field by comrade Cannon in his letter to comrade P. O'D. [Mangan], with which you are familiar and which you say you now endorse. Re-read point 4 of this letter.

Must one proceed in Britain in another way than for example in France?

If one is ready to admit several organisations per country, each belonging with equal right to the International, and a flexible procedure later to bring them into cooperation and fusion, as comrade Cannon proposes, then naturally one must admit this everywhere without exception.

As for our position on this question, it was clearly expressed in our answer to the leadership of the SWP, dated May 7th 1957, with which you are familiar.

As for your general position on unification with the International, such as it emerges from your letters, we have the following remarks to make:

You keep stating, and emphasising, that "there are deep-going political differences between the forces of the International Committee" and the International.

We must not, you say, forget this, and we must in a sense start out from it.

But if this were all, i.e., "deep going political differences", or as you wrote in the preface to Sinclair's articles "the gulf" between "the Pabloites" and yourselves "grows wider and wider", there would be nothing to be done, and it would be absolutely useless to speak of possible rapid unification, or to foresee any unification as possible on the basis of your propositions.

*It is only by starting out from the unquestionable drawing together of political positions that has been going on for a certain time between the positions of the Committee such as they have been shown in the line of the SWP, and those of the International, as the SWP leadership explicitly admitted, that the question of unification can be raised and solved.*

Reread in this connection the manner in which comrade Cannon poses the question in his letter of March 12th, 1957, to comrade Tilak [Goonewardene], a manner which we share. Above all, reread as attentively as we do The Militant and its line, and then compare it with the line of the International. Reread for example what was written in The Militant quite recently about the new crisis of the political leadership of the Soviet bureaucracy, and compare all this with, on the one hand, the line of the International, and on the other, with Sinclair's article.

Comrades, the question of unification is certainly above all political, and it is for this reason that we welcomed the

drawing together closer of the political line observed in The Militant and ours.

We unfortunately cannot say the same for your line, if it is that expressed by an article like that of Sinclair.

Under these conditions, we refer you to the reply that we

are making to the July 10th letter of the International Committee, a copy of which we enclose.

With our internationalist communist greetings  
The IS

[footnotes omitted]

*11. Letter from the International Secretariat to the International Committee (July 18, 1957)*

Dear Comrades,

We have received your letter of 10 July, 1957.

We regret that your reply was negative toward our proposals of unification, following upon the proposals contained in the letter of comrade Cannon to comrade Goonewardene and the negotiations which took place in the United States. We are particularly sorry to observe the step backward which your reply constitutes, compared to the previous stage, by putting the accent on "the important political differences which exist between our respective tendencies," making no reply to our request to learn whether you share the opinion of your British organization that politically "the gulf grows wider and wider," and by not mentioning at all the fact that comrade Cannon and the leadership of the SWP saw our political positions as drawing closer together.

The question of unification is indeed an essentially political one.

If you are not ready to recognize that our political positions have drawn close, how can you consider the subsequent functioning of the unified organization as possible, even on the basis visualized by the propositions of comrade Cannon?

Or do you believe that we should ever accept a de facto liquidation of the International by reducing the unity of its political line to practically nothing by rendering it

incapable of existing politically as an International and transforming it practically into a loose association of national groups, each following its own line?

The extreme organizational concessions implied by the acceptance of the demands of comrade Cannon would be meaningless except in case of a really broad political agreement, giving guarantees that the International could function as a International and not engage in a de facto liquidation of itself.

Convinced that the possibility of such a broad agreement may exist by the recognition of the fact that the political lines followed by the SWP and the Militant, and the International, have unquestionably drawn close together, we are prepared to accept point 1 in the letter of April 29, 1957, from comrade Cannon to comrade Patrick [Mangan], in order to try to draw up a joint "Memorandum of Agreement", covering the greatest possible number of current political questions. This memorandum would be destined to become the general basic platform guiding the action of the joint leadership of the unified International which would be named by the World Congress of Unification. For this reason, it should be as extensive and detailed as possible, in order to reduce to a minimum the questions on which divergences would continue to exist and, above all, in order to indicate the direction of the future action of the International's leadership.

We look forward to a prompt and positive reply to this proposition.

With internationalist-communist greetings,  
The IS

*12. Letter from James P. Cannon to Gerry Healy (July 25, 1957)*

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Gerry:

For your confidential information you will find enclosed a draft of the resolution on the unity question which the Los Angeles NC group is proposing to the Political Committee, along with my covering letter. It can be assumed that the PC itself will shortly inform you of its decision in the matter. Meantime, the material should not be copied or circulated.

Our opinion out here is that you made a mistake in accepting the Germain thesis as the central point of discussion. We should discuss our own documents and stand on them. As far as we are concerned, the documents of the Pabloite IS have no more standing than the resolutions adopted by our Plenum on the Twentieth Congress and the Hungarian Revolution, and other documents of our recent convention, and the resolutions adopted by your own recent convention, and documents

produced by any other section of the International Committee. We are governed by our own resolution on the crisis of Stalinism and the Hungarian Revolution and haven't the slightest intention of accepting the products of the Pabloites as the basis for our political line, or even as the basis for discussion. If, as now appears extremely unlikely, things should come to a discussion with the Pabloites in a joint committee to draw up a common platform, all the mentioned documents would be put on the table on an equal basis, and an entirely new statement of political points would have to be written.

Moreover, it is our opinion out here in Los Angeles that Sinclair [Hunter] made an extremely exaggerated criticism of the Germain document, misinterpreted it in some respects, and in other respects even appears to have misrepresented it, and thus laid himself open to a demagogic counterattack from Germain. Germain's answer, like all his polemics, is a lawyer's brief making a "case." We have not failed to notice that, under cover of a reply to Sinclair's exaggerations and misinterpretations, Germain attempts to defend the whole course of Pabloism

against us, to pass us off as "Pabloites" who have finally seen the error of our ways, and even to introduce Trotsky as a "Pabloite". This reference to us is a frivolous insult, but in his reference to Trotsky he carries frivolity to the point of obscenity.

Your problem in England, as we see it, is not to engage in daily or weekly exchanges with the Grant group or the IS in Paris, but to put your own ranks in order against the Pabloite gangster attack. *Your best argument there is the record.* Now that the Grant group, and also Germain, have opened up the question of the responsibility for the split, you have no choice but to educate and reeducate your

young cadres about what really happened in 1953, especially in England. All the truth and all the justice is on your side in such a discussion. I don't think you have much to worry about in regard to the international "unity" maneuver of the Pabloites. Once it becomes clear—as it will in the near future that the SWP is not going to be flattered into playing a divisive role, everything will fall into place.

Fraternally,  
James P. Cannon

JPC: ra  
Enc.

13. *"The Present Stage of the International Unity Discussion," resolution of the SWP Political Committee submitted to the International Committee (July 27, 1957)*

1. The recent correspondence about conditions for the unification of the divided forces of the Fourth International was initiated by the January 2, 1957, letter of Goonewardene, secretary of the LSSP, to Cannon, national chairman of the SWP. The answering letter of Cannon to Goonewardene under date of March 12, 1957, proceeded from the assumption that, while a number of important differences remain unresolved and cannot be resolved by argument at the present time—with good will on both sides, a unification of forces for common political action on the most important problems of the day might be accomplished, and was designed to further that end.

This letter, and the subsequent letter of Cannon to Patrick [Mangan], dated April 29, 1957, expressed the deliberate and considered opinion of the leadership of the SWP as to the only possible premise and procedure by which unification might be realized on a workable basis in the foreseeable future, with the necessary provisions incorporated in the agreement to guard against the danger of a new conflict and split. These two letters, both of which were approved by the Political Committee of the SWP at the same time, constitute a single entity—the first letter setting forth the general premise for a serious discussion of a possible unification, taking all the realities of the situation as they are—the unresolved differences, and the hostility and distrust which have accrued from the conflict—and the second letter outlining the organizational proposals which follow unavoidably from the premises.

2. While it is possible, of course, that the five proposals of the letter to Patrick could be modified or changed in some matters of detail, or that other points could be added, it is the opinion of the PC that any substantial change, contradicting the nature of the organizational compromise aimed at by the proposals, would nullify the general premise set forth in the letter to Goonewardene and leave us without an acceptable basis for the continuation of the discussion. Similarly, any actions deliberately taken by one side or the other in opposition to the premise laid down in this letter would have to be understood in the same sense.

3. The conversations between National Committee members of the SWP and P[atrick] O[Daniel], which have been represented as "unity negotiations," were in reality not negotiations at all and could not have been, since the basis for joint consideration of a possible unification had

not yet been agreed upon. These conversations were necessarily restricted, as stated in the Cannon letter to Patrick under date of April 29, to an "informal exploration of the possibilities of unification." (Moreover, the SWP hasn't the slightest intention to conduct "negotiations" independently of the International Committee.)

Since these conversations led to nothing and could lead to nothing in the circumstances, Patrick was asked (in Cannon's letter of April 29) to get a direct answer from the IS as to whether the Cannon letter to Goonewardene "is acceptable as a basis for discussion of concrete measures to bring about unification." And this was followed by the statement that "if the answer is 'no,' then it would be useless to continue discussions until a counterstatement is proposed."

4. The reply of the IS, addressed directly to the leadership of the SWP under date of May 7, avoids a direct answer to this direct question. Instead of that, proceeding as if the letter to Goonewardene did not exist, or was of no consequence, the IS simply offered some "concessions" to the forces of the International Committee, for which they have no need and still less interest; plus a gratuitous lecture on the principles of international organization, and the Socialist International and the London Bureau—which was not needed either, since all concerned have long ago been instructed in these matters by teachers of the highest authority.

The May 7 letter of the IS, in the opinion of the PC, implicitly constitutes a total rejection of the basic premise laid down in the letter to Goonewardene, according to which a possible unity could be realized only by way of *an agreed upon compromise* on the organizational question. The essence of such a compromise which could be acceptable to the forces of the International Committee, as stated in the April 29 letter to Patrick, would have to consist not of "concessions" which have no meaning and no value, but of "*organizational guarantees.*" The May 7 letter of the IS contains no guarantees whatever and consequently provides no acceptable basis upon which negotiations for unification could proceed.

5. Subsequent communications from the IS to the International Committee, including the latest letter under date of July 18, offer nothing to change the stalemate. Consequently, as far as correspondence is concerned, the discussion of the question of unification has not moved forward by a single step since March 12, the date of the Cannon letter to Goonewardene. Moreover, on the field of action, it appears to the PC that several steps backward have been taken. The unrestrained and disruptive faction-

al campaign launched against the British Section of the Fourth International by the improvised group headed by Grant, the former associate of Haston, simultaneously with "unity" propaganda, stands in flagrant contradiction to the latter and calls into question the good faith of its proponents.

The tendentious and falsified polemics over past conflicts which cannot be resolved by argument at the present time, and which the letter to Goonewardene proposed to lay aside for future consideration in a calmer atmosphere, after unity had been effected on the political action of the day, obviously sharpen the situation and

push the prospect of unification backward. These actions, and the attitude expressed in them, plus the failure of agreement on the necessary organizational compromise, raise the direct threat that any formal unification effected in such an atmosphere would provide only the springboard for another bitter conflict and split.

The PC of the SWP does not believe that any good could come to our international movement from that and will not recommend it. Neither do we see how any constructive results can be gained by a continuation of the discussion of unification unless and until these two roadblocks are removed.

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14. *Letter from the International Secretariat to the International Committee (August 25, 1957)*

Dear Comrades,

We acknowledge receipt of comrade Burns' [Healy] letter announcing that your committee is meeting at the beginning of September to take a position about our last proposals concerning unification. On this occasion, we should like to give you some additional specific information in order to facilitate your taking a position favorable thereto.

We state once more our decision to accept point 1 of comrade J.C.'s proposals and to consider the other points as a basis for discussion.

We repeat that, in our opinion, once the political basis has been laid for reunification, the difficulties about organizational questions could be easily smoothed out.

We are completely in agreement with the viewpoint expressed by comrade J.C. according to which it is a question of reaching, in this field, a sort of *organizational compromise*, giving you, more than *concessions*, genuine *organizational guarantees*. Such was, indeed, the meaning of the proposals made by Comrade P. O'D. [Mangan] to Comrade Cannon.

As for political questions, we are also in agreement avoiding, for the moment, discussions on controversial points from the past, and leaving them for later, as soon as a propitious atmosphere will permit an objective and calm discussion of a genuinely educational nature, as well as

concentrating essentially on what can bring us together and unite us at the present stage, in order thus to make possible the functioning of the International as a democratic centralist world organization.

From this point of view we are sorry to see comrade Sinclair's [Hunter] article which both reopened the polemics about the past and questioned in the most violent terms the fact of the convergence of our politics (most especially those of the SWP and the International). The reply made to this article by Comrade Germain in the name of the entire IS was in no way motivated by a desire to rekindle polemics nor was it particularly aimed at your British organization. That reply had as its essential purpose to demonstrate that the main thesis of comrade Sinclair's article, insisting on "wider and wider" divergences, was erroneous and obviously raised an obstacle to unification.

Our policy toward both the British organization and the other organizations of your committee is sincerely pro-unification. We profoundly hope that it is the same on the part of your organization toward the international and its sympathizing organization in Great Britain.

Hence, comrades, we sincerely see no obstacle to your accepting a commission which would immediately begin to draw up "a joint draft of political agreement" and to discuss the other terms of unification on the basis of both the proposals of comrade J.C. and those presented by Comrade P. O'D and the IS.

With our internationalist-communist greetings,  
The IS

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15. *Letter from Gerry Healy for the International Committee to the International Secretariat (September 9, 1957)*

Dear Comrades,

The International Committee at its meeting which has just concluded endorsed the July resolution of the SWP on "Unity" (see enclosed copy).

This resolution therefore constitutes our official reply to

your letters dated July 18th, August 1st, and August 22nd.

The International Committee wishes me to inform you that it considers the compromise proposals of Comrade Cannon remain the only real basis for unification and that it rejects the counterproposals contained in your letters dated July 18th, August 1st, and August 22nd.

Yours fraternally,  
Preston [Healy]  
Secretary

16. *Letter from Gerry Healy to Tom Kerry (September 9, 1957)*

Dear Tom,

The International Committee has just concluded its meeting and herewith is a brief report.

a) It endorsed the SWP resolution, and a copy of the letter which has today been mailed to the Pabloites is enclosed.

Comrade Peng abstained on the vote and motivated his reasons by proposing that we should accept Pablo's counterproposal on point one of the JPC proposals. The French voted for the resolution.

b) The International Committee discussed a draft resolution on International Perspectives submitted by the British Section and the political line was *unanimously*

endorsed. Copies of this will be sent out as soon as it is ready, for discussion in all the sections affiliated to the International Committee.

c) The World Congress of orthodox Trotskyists will be held during June 1958. The main documents will be this draft resolution on International Perspectives, a document on 20 years of the world Trotskyist movement (i.e., since the founding congress of 1938) which is to be prepared, and a document dealing with the situation in France. In addition we are planning to produce four international Internal Bulletins which will contain material dealing with experiences from our work in the various sections.

The next meeting of the International Committee which will be held early in December will decide on the size of the delegations as well as a special appeal for funds to cover the cost of the Congress.

With best wishes,  
Jerry

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17. *"Resolution on Relations with the 'International Committee,'" adopted by the "Fifth World Congress" of the International Secretariat (October 1957)*

Comrades,

The Fifth World Congress takes cognizance of the fact that the organizations of the "International Committee," since even before the Fourth World Congress, have placed themselves in practice and voluntarily outside the Fourth International.

It entirely approves the campaign for reunification of the world Trotskyist movement tirelessly carried out by the IEC and the IS since the Sixteenth Plenum of the IEC, which took note of the factual drawing together of the line of the International and that of the SWP on the question of the USSR and of Stalinism.

It takes cognizance of the fact that the "International Committee" has for the moment rejected the unification proposals formulated by the IEC and the IS.

Nevertheless, the Fifth World Congress instructs the leading organisms of the International to continue the line concerning reunification on the basis of the proposals contained in the last letter of the IS, August 25, 1957, restating the International's desire to grant the broadest organizational guarantees to the organizations affiliated to the "International Committee" within the framework of the democratic-centralist structure of the International.

The Fifth World Congress issues a solemn appeal to all Trotskyists who accept the programmatic bases and the organization of the Fourth International and who find themselves in fact outside the international organization, to rejoin it in order that the world Trotskyist movement, which has already been considerably strengthened during these last years, may be able to exploit even further the exceptionally favorable conjuncture created by the aggravation of the crisis of Stalinism and the new leaps forward of the colonial revolution, so that it may be able in the shortest time to build the new revolutionary leadership which the international proletariat lacks.

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18. *Letter from Sherry Mangan to the SWP National Committee (November 12, 1957)*

Dear Comrades,

Now that the Fifth World Congress of the Fourth International has completed its labors, and we are caught up again on the numerous matters therefrom arising, I should like, as the one who engaged in the exploratory talks and first steps in negotiations with you last Spring, to write you on the subject of unity.

It is hardly necessary to say that your absence from the Congress was generally much regretted. It had been originally hoped that the proposed successive steps toward unification might have been steadily taken in the ample intervening time so that the process might have been

successfully completed at the congress itself. And even though you did not take even the first step in this direction, we had hoped that you would at least have accepted our invitation to send an observer to what was the most numerous, most representative, and most dynamic World Congress ever held by the Fourth International. The figures and facts of the attached communique speak for themselves; and you need only talk with anyone fortunate enough to have been present to sense the revolutionary enthusiasm and redoubled energy with which it filled all its participants. Had one or more fraternal delegates from the SWP been present, I think you would now have a more accurate idea of the International's world scope, solidity, and seriousness than you can possibly form in your wishful-thinking isolation. Even so, the significance of the Congress, in terms of historic progress, political cohesion, and relationship of forces, can

hardly have escaped your attention even at the distance you insist on keeping between us.

The occasion for this letter is our receipt of a communication, dated September 9th, from your International Committee, informing us that it had endorsed the July resolution of the SWP's Political Committee, which was attached for our information. Both the communication and your PC resolution are profoundly disappointing to all of us who sincerely wish to see ended the present deplorable division of Trotskyist forces because both documents seem to reflect a basic unwillingness to face up to the desirability of unification and take refuge instead in stalling behind an obfuscating screen of confused pretexts.

The September 9th letter of your International Committee is particularly absurd when it insists that "Comrade Cannon's proposals remain the only real basis for unity," as if we rejected them out of hand, whereas on the contrary our immediately precedent letter of August 25th to that committee had particularly specified:

"We state once more our decision to accept point 1 of comrade J.C.'s proposals and to consider the other points as a basis for discussion."

Indeed, there are "none so deaf as those who will not hear."

I must say that the July resolution of your Political Committee is also somewhat less than candid. In all conversations I had with the principal SWP leaders, the point of departure was agreement on two basic points. First, I made it perfectly clear that most of the conceptions expressed in Comrade Cannon's letter to Comrade Gunawardene closely paralleled our own thinking—particularly on the need of proceeding by stages, the advisability of postponing examination of the causes of the 1953 split to a later educational discussion after the unification had been solidified, and the necessity of what JPC's letter defined as "a sweeping organizational compromise, which would permit the formal unification of the international movement before the dispute is settled." Second, there was unanimous recognition on both sides that the political lines of the International and of the SWP had drawn closer and closer together, removing any major *political* obstacle to unification. About these points there was no question; they were, to use a term from geometrical theorems, the "givens" of the problem. The remaining differences requiring negotiation thus concerned neither political conceptions nor political programs, but the technical organizational modalities of the fusion, especially "guarantees."

How then can your PC's resolution honestly say that we of the International act as if the letter to Gunawardene did not exist? We have been, on the contrary, operating on its basic assumptions even before it had been written. I made perfectly clear our agreement with it and the May 7th IS letter specifically stated that we had carefully studied it. As for its point about procedure by stages, it was agreed before I left New York that as a first stage you would internationally consult with the other members of your International Committee while nationally discussing and taking decisions on our proposals in first your National Committee and next in your National Convention, then soon to be held; and it was hoped that as a second stage you would, if passport possibilities permitted, send a serious and qualified representative to attempt to compose the differences between Comrade Cannon's proposals in his letter to me and my proposals complemented by the IS

letter of May 7th, in order to bring about factual unification—if possible before the Fifth World Congress which would then crown the work. Instead, I regretfully note in passing, rather than giving an opportunity to your entire NC and to the membership in convention to study and discuss the question, your PC, after waiting two months, decided on this not very seriously motivated "brush-off," and even that we did not receive until another two months had elapsed. As for the point about postponing discussion of the causes of the 1953 split, the IS has continued to avoid polemics on the subject (a basic fact which is unchanged by your attempting to blow up some obscure marginal discussion in Britain into world-wide proportions as a major obstacle). And as for the "sweeping organizational compromise," we carefully studied your proposals, made our own, and asked nothing better than to continue negotiations to iron out the differences between them in precisely the form of a "sweeping organizational compromise."

To the second point of basic agreement, on the closeness of political lines, your PC resolution makes no reference whatsoever, an absence which seems to us amazing and indeed rather suspect, particularly since your principal ally in your International Committee, the British group, has taken a position diametrically opposed to yours, stating that the political divergences are "wider and wider" and the gulf "deeper." Where do you stand on this? Have you completely reversed your opinions on this point? And if not, what does your silence mean? For the question of basic political agreement is the starting point of everything in this situation. As one of you soundly had succinctly stated to me: "For any principled politician, the drawing together of political lines logically and pressingly raises the question of organizational unity." It seems to me that you owe, not only to us, but to the world movement in general, a clear answer to the questions: "Do fundamental political differences preclude unification? Or does fundamental political agreement exist, and the only obstacles are organizational?"

I hope that your answers to these two questions will be respectively, No and Yes. And that you will draw therefrom the serious and responsible conclusion that efforts must be renewed to remove these organizational obstacles. Our position thereon is unequivocally stated in the IS letter of August 25th to your International Committee as follows:

"We repeat that, in our opinion, once the political basis has been laid for reunification, the difficulties about organizational questions could be easily smoothed out.

"We are completely in agreement with the viewpoint expressed by Comrade J.C. according to which it is a question of reaching, in this field, a sort of *organizational compromise*, giving you, more than *concessions*, genuine *organizational guarantees*. Such was, indeed, the meaning of the proposals made by Comrade O'Daniel to Comrade Cannon."

May I remind you that another point of widespread agreement that I found in my talks with you was that both sides must avoid being ultimatic? We have repeatedly indicated that we take your proposals as a basis for discussion; have you done the same about ours? Your PC's resolution states that the IS letter of May 7th "implicitly constitutes a total rejection of the basic premise laid down in the letter to Goonewardene, according to which a



possible unity could be realized only by way of 'an agreed-on compromise.'" "Implicitly"—what a weasel word! And what a (I am sorry to have to use so strong a term) dishonest statement. There was no rejection whatever, implicit or otherwise. Far from it—in that letter, as in all of our other efforts, it is precisely an *agreed-on compromise* that we are seeking. And compromises are reached, comrades, not by presenting a series of demands and banging the door if they are not integrally accepted but by negotiators sitting down with two sets of parallel proposals and trying to iron out the differences between them. That is all we ask. But we ask it with all the more insistence and urgency at this moment when, filled with deep revolutionary enthusiasm by what the Fifth World Congress demonstrated concerning the International's political maturity and organizational progress, we feel more than ever, amid the rapidly increasing opportunities for the Trotskyist movement on a world scale, the tragedy of needlessly divided forces and organizational rivalries that cannot but waste part of our strength and confuse in several important countries the vanguard elements among the masses that are turning toward us. We feel a historical responsibility to try to overcome this politically unjustified division of

forces, and we hope that your attitude is equally serious, as would be shown by your willingness to resume negotiations.

You have in fact put yourselves outside the International, as its Fifth World Congress at last formally recognized. But that does not necessarily mean an end to negotiations for reunification. On that matter let me quote the specific proposal incorporated in the August 25th letter of the IS to your International Committee:

"Hence, comrades, we sincerely see no obstacle to your accepting a commission which would immediately begin to draw up a 'joint draft of political agreement' and to discuss the other terms of unification on the basis of both the proposals of comrade JC and those presented by Comrade P. O'D. and the IS."

I sincerely hope that you also see no obstacle to this proposal and will act accordingly. We are very desirous of hearing from you on this matter.

And let me add one additional thought, comrades: the problem of unification will not be solved by pretending it does not exist.

With internationalist-communist greetings  
s/Patrick O'Daniel

**SECTION X: HEALY IS PARALYZING THE  
IC AND BLOCKING REUNIFICATION:  
LETTER FROM PENG SHU-TSE TO  
JAMES P. CANNON (APRIL 20, 1958)**

Dear Comrade Cannon,

I feel it is now necessary to write you this letter to discuss with you the question of reunification of our movement. I am afraid that, unless very great attention and effort is given to this question to bring about rapid and rational solution, our whole movement will inevitably suffer incalculable damage and even disaster.

In your reply to Comrade Goonewardene's letter of March 12, 1957, you clearly pointed out the preliminary condition which would make reunification possible: the drawing closer of the political views of both sides. In your letter addressed to the IS representative, Patrick [Mangan], at the end of April 1957, you made further concrete proposals for reunification. This shows that you have paid very great attention to this question and have expressed a responsible opinion on it. I was then in complete support of your views and propositions. (Ref. my letter to the members of the IC, June 1957)

But your views and propositions have encountered objections from certain comrades, particularly strong opposition and resistance from Comrade Burns [Healy] (ref. his letter to you last May), which resulted in a complete breakdown of the process of reunification, or at least a temporary setback.

In view of the historical interests of our movement, I feel deeply that any more delay in reunifying the movement is inadmissible.

Our movement has gone through thirty years of the most painful struggles, and today it comes to an historical turning point: Since the 20th Congress of the CPSU declared the liquidation of the "cult of the individual" of Stalin, his "personal dictatorship," and other crimes, and particularly after the revolutions broke out in Hungary and Poland, an unprecedented crisis has been unfurling throughout the Stalinist parties and has resulted in a general and profound movement of polarization and disintegration. This new situation opens up for the Trotskyist movement an entirely new and favorable objective condition. This is recognized by all of us.

But under this favorable objective condition, a most serious obstacle lies in the way of progress, and this obstacle is subjective: the split of our movement throughout the whole world. This state of things has already had a very bad influence in a number of countries and is preventing a real development of our movement there.

Now let me enumerate a few concrete examples to show how the situation has become intolerable and necessitates immediate change.

In France, within the Stalinist party (the strongest one outside the Soviet bloc), an organized left opposition has been created for the first time in over two decades. This opposition has published its bulletins, putting forward the demand for democratic discussion within the party, openly

criticizing the bureaucratic leadership of the party, and examining the origins of Stalinist ideology. Most important of all: A great number of the members of this opposition are seeking and reading Trotsky's works and Trotskyist publications, and some among them have come to complete agreement with Trotskyism in its ideology. But on the other hand, owing to the division among Trotskyists, it is not only impossible to coordinate Trotskyists' action in a systematic intervention in the crisis of the Stalinist party; on the contrary, confronting the mutual attacks between hostile Trotskyist groups, especially in face of the Stalinophobic tendency (represented by the group led by Lambert) many belonging to the left opposition who agree or sympathize with Trotskyism become confused or even troubled. For instance, a militant of the left opposition once said to another militant who already adhered to a Trotskyist organization: "Disputes and splits have been occurring among the Trotskyists themselves, so even if we agree with Trotskyism, what shall we do? In which Trotskyist organization should we enter?" This feeling and hesitation is quite natural and rather general. Consequently, although there are a number of young militants who have already entered Frank's organization, the result of the active work done by the latter in the movement of left opposition, yet there are still many CP militants, who are in ideological agreement with Trotskyism and could easily be in our movement, who adopt an observer's attitude, and even become demoralized. This constitutes not only an obstacle for the development of our movement, but objectively helps the bureaucratic leadership of the Stalinist party to ease the tension of its crisis.

The crisis existing in the Italian Stalinist party has of course its own characteristics, but its dimension had attained a greater proportion than in the French Stalinist party. Numerous oppositional factions appeared in the party. Despite the fact that great confusion reigns in these groups, ideologically and politically, there exists a unanimous demand for democratic discussions within the party, criticism and opposition to the bureaucratic leadership. This situation is undoubtedly the best ground for the development of our movement in Italy. But unfortunately, owing to the division of our movement, it has not been possible to intervene effectively, this intervention being most necessary. In view of this, not only Livio's group belonging to the IS has been in favor of reunification, but the group who supports the IC is also firmly for reunification.

In Latin America, Chile is a country which is at present in a prerevolutionary state, and moreover, the crisis of the Stalinists there is most profound. The Trotskyist movement was divided among four organizations: One belonging to the IC and one to the IS, whereas the other two were neutral. I have met the representatives of the last three

organizations. They unanimously affirmed that the objective conditions in Chile were very favorable to our movement, but the splits we had among ourselves were a great obstacle to their work. Therefore they all agreed that unity is absolutely necessary and very urgent. The representatives of the two originally neutral groups, not being satisfied with the leadership of the Latin American Bureau of the IS and even opposed to certain views and practices of this leadership, were nevertheless in favor of unity in the interests of the movement. Therefore, they have now fused with the organization belonging to the IS and strongly demand that both the IS and the IC proceed immediately to reunify the whole movement, so that the four Chilean groups could be completely absorbed in a really unified party, capable of exploiting the present favorable situation, which first of all consists in intervening systematically in the crisis developing within the Stalinist party, to win over the best revolutionary elements to our movement.

I also met a delegate of the Japanese organization belonging to the IS. This organization was officially constituted after the Polish and Hungarian events, and a majority of its members came from the Stalinist party. It has already started to publish *4th International* in the Japanese language. Hence there exists today two Trotskyist organizations. This Japanese comrade told me that the present situation in Japan was rather good for the development of our movement, and the existence of two Trotskyist organizations was an obstacle. He therefore demanded imperatively the unification of the whole movement so as to eliminate the subjective obstructing factor and to seize every opportunity for the progress of our movement.

I believe you know that in India, the objective conditions are also favorable for the development of the Trotskyist movement, but since there exists several autonomous Trotskyist organizations, it is vain to talk about exploiting such favorable conditions for the benefit of our movement. The unification of all Trotskyist organizations in India is conceivable only with the help of a unified international Trotskyist movement.

These concrete examples of a number of countries described above are sufficiently demonstrative of the absolute necessity for the reunification of our international movement under unprecedented favorable historical conditions, and delays can be tolerated no longer.

Now the central problem is: whether there is a lessening of the differences between the political positions of both sides, or the distance remains the same as in 1953, the year of the split, or even "the gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider." (ref. "The Struggle Against Pabloite Revisionism," published by the British comrades.) If the second assertion is the correct one, of course, there cannot be a question of reunification. Yet, the facts shown in the last two years only prove the correctness of the first assertion.

In this regard, in your reply to Goonewardene's letter, you pointed out a tendency toward the coming closer of the political positions of the two sides since the open anti-Trotskyist activities of Cochran, Collins [Lawrence], and Mestre, etc., and under the pressure of the evolution of events in the recent years. Precisely for this reason, you made further concrete proposals for reunification negotiations. According to some documents of the IS which I have read, including the "Decline and Fall of Stalinism"

criticized by Comrade Sinclair [Hunter], particularly the impressions which I have drawn from my contacts with a number of representatives of sections of the IS and my discussions with them on some important political questions. It is possible for me to show that your judgment is objective and correct.

The British comrades, when asserting that "the gulf . . . grows wider and wider," have not furnished convincing arguments and proofs. This is reflected in Sinclair's criticisms on the "Decline and Fall of Stalinism." If we try to read this document, "Decline and Fall of Stalinism," calmly, though we can easily discover certain ambiguities and mistakes, and especially in Germain's academic approach, in general this cannot be considered as a document going farther away from our position, but rather more progressive in comparison with the contents of "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism," and therefore closer of our position. The fact that this document stresses and affirms that the political revolution in the USSR and the East European countries is inevitable and is more and more approaching its explosive point, shows an rapprochement on a principled question, such as the question of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, since Germain retorted to Sinclair's criticisms, there has been only silence, which also reveals the fragility of the assertion of a "gulf growing wider and wider."

In reality, the best explanation can be furnished by turning to the tactics adopted by Frank's group in France in their work within the Stalinist party. As you know, according to the "entrism" discovered by Pablo, we Trotskyists, in integrating ourselves into the Stalinist party, have only to push the leadership of this party to the left, to respond to the pressure of the masses; then it would enter on the road of revolution. But in the last two years, the tactics employed by Frank's organization in their work within the Stalinist party is rather the opposite. Their influence of Trotskyist ideas has caused the rank-and-file masses in the Stalinist party to struggle against its bureaucratic leadership, and their principal objective is to win over all revolutionary militants and to crush this party. It is precisely so that they have played an important role in the movement of left opposition within the Stalinist party and have influenced and drawn a considerable number of young militants into their organization. This is precisely the traditional position of Trotskyists towards the Stalinist party. Unfortunately, our Lambert group, having adopted an extremely sectarian attitude towards the left opposition within the Stalinist party, have gained very little from the crisis of Stalinism.

Comrade Burns, in his letter to you, particularly underlined that Pablo had not changed his "political method" as the main argument to reject and refuse negotiations for reunification. As to this, I expressed my views in my letter addressed to the members of the IC last June in the following words: "I personally deem it most difficult for Pablo to change his revisionist viewpoints based on impressionism and his bureaucratic methods and maneuvers in organizational matters. Nevertheless, we cannot refuse or delay the unification. Our object is not a few individuals like Pablo and etc., but the majority of the comrades in the national sections remaining with the IS who are loyal to the Trotskyist movement."

Comrade Burns in his reply to my letter, posed the question as follows: "If the majority within Pablo's

movement are Trotskyists, how does it happen he gets away with his policies so easily?"

No political discussions were held before the split except in the SWP for over a year and a brief dispute in the British Section, and hence no dividing line was traced between orthodox Trotskyism and Pablo's revisionism. In France, the principal factor which led to the split was that: A great majority of the leading comrades of the international, including some of those who later joined and participated in the movement of the orthodox Trotskyists, gave their full support to Pablo's views and measures, both politically and organizationally. Consequently, there was a lack of clear political understanding among the rank-and-file militants in the sections which the IS was able to control. Moreover, the extraordinary measures adopted by us (such as the "Open Letter" of the SWP and the constitution of the International Committee), though at that time compelled by the circumstances and even necessary, were, however, not easily understood by all the comrades of the International. It was under such very particular conditions that Pablo has been able to "get away with his policies so easily." These facts must be patiently explained to the members of all sections.

I can give you a few examples in relation to the above. At first when the Chinese comrades received the "Open Letter" of the SWP, a great majority among them agreed with the political positions of this letter. But at the same time, they thought: To publish the "Open Letter" before any documents were submitted to the sections of the International and before any political discussions took place was not in conformity to the principle of democratic centralism and was therefore wrong. Regarding this, we have written long letters, enumerating in detail how Pablo controlled the International's leading organ by bureaucratic methods and excluded, at his will, opponents, which rendered impossible any normal democratic discussion inside the organization; it was under such unusual circumstances that we were forced to adopt exceptional measures, such as the "Open Letter." The Chinese comrades were then convinced of the necessity of the "Open Letter" and entered into the struggle. If there had not been a comprehensive explanation based on our own experiences, they would certainly have approved the political positions of the "Open Letter," but remained skeptical or even in opposition to the organizational measures.

An old German militant, Comrade Hippe, who was liberated from a concentration camp in East Germany in 1956, also expressed political agreement with the IC, but was skeptical on the organizational tactic (on the same ground as the Chinese comrades: No democratic internal discussions before the publication of the "Open Letter"). Consequently, he has adopted a neutral attitude organizationally and hopes to participate actively in a unified organization. I had a conversation with him on this question in February 1957 and pointed out a number of facts from my personal experiences with Pablo's bureaucratic arbitrariness and his violation of democratic centralism in organizational matters. He seemed to be ready again to take steps organizationally.

These two examples show us that even some loyal Trotskyists and old militants who agreed politically with us, still have had difficulty understanding and accepting the exceptional action in publishing the "Open Letter" and

have expressed doubts or objections (Comrade Dowson of Canada had a similar attitude at the beginning). I am therefore quite convinced that, if the great majority of the comrades of the sections of the IS could not follow the appeals launched in the "Open Letter" and still remained with the IS, it was mainly because they could not understand why we adopted this "exceptional measure" before submitting a document criticizing Pablo's revisionism for internal discussion, to let them have an opportunity to discuss and to gain a clear idea about the differences in positions, and hence they became resentful.

If the document on Pablo's revisionism had been submitted to the whole International before the split and a thoroughgoing discussion had been engaged in to enable a clear and fundamental demarcation between orthodox Trotskyism and revisionism, such as during the fight against Burnham and Shachtman's revisionism, the result would have been quite different. As Marxists, we have to deal with this kind of question the same as with other problems: to make objective analysis and evaluation, so as to avoid a purely subjective judgement that all those who agreed with us (on the exceptional measure of the "Open Letter") are orthodox Trotskyists and those who were skeptical or did not agree with us are all Pabloites.

On the other hand, since there had been internal discussions in the U.S. and England beforehand, there had been a certain degree of political differentiation, the Cochran and Collins tendency was led in the logical development of their revisionist thought, initiated by Pablo, to the ultimate anti-Trotskyist and pro-Stalinist conclusions, and have since completely dropped away from the Trotskyist movement. It was precisely for reasons to the contrary, that is, no political discussion had been begun before the split, that the great majority of the comrades in the sections, although remaining with the IS, continue to fight under the banner of Trotskyism.

There is another important point: those comrades who remain in the sections of the IS have for a long period been under the influence of Pabloism. There has been certain ideological confusion. The iron facts of historical events, the 20th Congress which proclaimed a liquidation of the "cult of the individual" and Stalin's other crimes, the Polish and Hungarian revolutions, clearly expose Cochran's, Collins', and Mestre's anti-Trotskyist thoughts and validated the entire Trotskyist tradition, principle, and program, particularly analysis and prognostications on the Stalinist bureaucracy. It is precisely for this reason that they unanimously and insistently demand reunification with us—this tendency is reflected in the motion unanimously adopted by the "Fifth Congress" organized by the IS in favor of reunification.

From the above explanations, I am able to affirm that the great majority of the comrades in the sections of the IS are not "Pabloites," but they are the same as us, in general loyal to Trotskyism, and are making a great effort in their struggle for our movement. There are a quite considerable number of cadres formed by our movement during long years, who are a part of the precious property accumulated by our movement, and will play the important role of a motor force in the future progress of our movement in different countries. We should not simply blot them out under the name of "Pabloite" simply because they remain in the sections of the IS, and to refuse to unify and to collaborate with them.

Comrade Burns, in his letter to you, referred to a telegram of congratulations addressed by the trade-union organization led by the Ceylon party to the trade-union leadership of the Soviet Union on the occasion of May Day, and made the following assertion: "They are now further away from us politically than at any time previously." This implies that there can be no possibility for our reunification with them.

A nationalist conservative tendency and a certain reconciling tendency towards the Stalinist parties which exist in the political attitude of some in the leadership of the LSSP is reflected not only in this congratulatory telegram for May First, but more in the open talks of their official delegation to China. Not long ago, I wrote an open letter to Comrade Goonewardene criticizing them for this. But we cannot, however, draw the conclusion that the Ceylon comrades have left Trotskyist positions and are further away from us politically. There is one thing that we have to recognize: The LSSP is not only a party which has a long history of struggles but also a party with real mass support. Especially in the last few years, it has actively and courageously led a great number of mass struggles of considerable importance, and has won the support from large layers of the population. It is today approaching the door of power. Although a few in its leadership have manifested a quite serious conservative and compromising tendency, the great majority of its cadres and militants are faithful to the revolution and to Trotskyism. (This has been clearly shown in the mass struggles led by them in the past years). Our role is not alienate them from us, to abandon them, but on the contrary, to secure close collaboration with them, to make necessary criticisms appropriately, to try to correct certain wrong tendencies in its leadership, so as to facilitate their taking power. This will not only have a decisive significance for the movement in Ceylon, but for the whole Far East, particularly the movement in India, it will play a very important role. This is possible only when our whole movement is reunified, and we are reunited with the LSSP, and under a leadership of a unified international organization. To reproach the Ceylon comrades behind their backs or to reject any attempt of reunifying with them is a negative and silly attitude, and irresponsible to our movement.

In a word, from your analysis and assertions, and the examples and explanations given by me above, it's quite clear that no matter what differences may still exist between the two sides politically, in general, we can say there is a tendency toward drawing closer together; especially we can see that the great majority of the comrades of the sections of the IS are loyal to the Trotskyist movement. All this proves that the preliminary conditions for reunification already exist.

There is also the important organizational problem of Pablo's bureaucratic method and maneuvering.

When discussing the parity committee at the IC meeting during the autumn of 1954, the French comrades stressed distinctly the horrible bureaucratic methods of Pablo, which was one of the reasons for them rejecting acceptance of the parity committee. And when discussing the unification at the IC meeting last September, I proposed an attempt at negotiations based on your "concrete proposals." Comrade Burns again stressed Pablo's bureaucratic maneuvers to prove that we could not negotiate with him. Therefore, I feel this question should be examined

objectively. Because it is a key question not only as to whether the unification parley can be or not, but also as it closely relates to the internal system of the future International leading body.

Needless to say, I have specifically opposed and condemned Pablo's bureaucratic control and his maneuvers. But the formation of such bureaucratic control and maneuvers cannot be explained by his individual character and ambition. Of course, Pablo is the typical arbitrary bureaucrat and is ambitious. But at that time, if the leaders of all the sections, especially the leaders of the European sections had maintained and practiced the traditions and principles of democratic centralism and given the International leading organ and its leaders supervision such as the necessary criticism for misconduct and incorrect speeches, then Pablo's character and ambition would have had no chance to develop. At least it would not have reached such an uncontrolled degree. Unfortunately, just the contrary course developed.

When I first arrived here in the summer of 1951, I was told by a Chinese Comrade H. that the most authoritative person in the International leading organ was Pablo. (At that time I was not even familiar with this name). He further quoted Livingstone's [Clarke] words, that Pablo can match Trotsky politically and surpass the latter organizationally. When I protested to A., the representative of the IS at the Far East Committee of the 3rd World Congress, for breaking of my report on the Chinese question, Burns came to talk with me for Pablo. Besides attributing all the responsibility to A, he said: "Pablo is my intimate friend. He is a genius politically and organizationally and is capable of accepting others' views." Later, he said to my daughter: "Pablo should think of himself as the successor of Trotsky." Such propaganda for Pablo we often heard from other channels. Therefore, you can see that Pablo's "authority" and "individual cult" was fostered like that.

As Pablo had already gotten the worship and support of a part of the International leadership, particularly from the U.S. and England, naturally he felt his prestige was high and above all criticism and control, and that he could arbitrarily suppress and attack any opponents. So when Frank & Germain disagreed with him on some issues in the early part of 1951, he threatened to expel them from the IS and tried to get the support of the SWP through Livingstone for that action. On the dispute between the French majority and minority, Pablo suppressed the majority on his own by forbidding the democratic discussion with the party and arbitrarily suspending the functions of the sixteen members of the French Central Committee. Around this time he was supported by the leaders of some strong sections, especially the English section. These events I saw personally. For instance, when Germain, [Jungclas] from Germany, [ivio] from Italy, and I all opposed his arbitrary action in suspending the functions of the French sixteen majority members of their Central Committee, Burns firmly supported Pablo. And when Pablo rudely and tyrannically attacked and suppressed me, not one among all the leaders of the International criticized him, and even more or less defended or excused him.

If there had not been this "personality cult" propagated by Livingstone and an English leader, if on many important political issues and organizational measures, particularly on the despotic measures of suspending the

functions of the French sixteen members of the Central Committee, Pablo had been criticized and punished, then he could never have practiced his arbitrariness and maneuvers, and he would have been deprived of his position in the International leading organ. Then the later split could have been avoided. This would have proved that the correct and persistent practice of the principles and traditions of democratic centralism can prevent the grotesque growth of arbitrary bureaucracy and ambition.

In fact, Pablo's "authority" and "personality cult" was attacked fatally by the exposure of Pablo in the "Open Letter" and in many articles and the leaving of the movement of his cothinkers, such as Cochran, Livingstone, Collins, Mestre, and etc. He can continue to maintain his post in the IS mainly because he craftily takes advantage of our "extraordinary procedure" (such as the publication of the "Open Letter" and the formation of the IC without any internal democratic discussion), and there has been no political activity shown by the IC and also its unwise attitude towards the parity committee. But in spite of this, Pablo's "prestige" and "influence" has greatly declined among the sections under the IS. The numbers of his opponents and critics have increased greatly. (This showed clearly in the so-called 5th World Congress convened by the IS). He can never again act arbitrarily to expel others and maneuver.

Under such a situation, if we proceed with the unification parley with the IS, we need not fear Pablo's maneuvers. Because as soon as one is discovered, we can reveal it to the rank and file on both sides. He will then have no place to hide from the light of criticism of the rank and file.

Also, we have to understand that the reason that the IS has appealed to us over and over again, and even sent a delegate to negotiate with you, is not because of Pablo's simple individual maneuvers, or Burns said, "A Pabloite trap under the patch quilt of false unity," (in the letter he sent to me) but the pressure of the imminent demand for unity by the rank and file of sections belonging to the IS. The conditions are such that Pablo does not dare maneuver. In case he does, he will be attacked indignantly by the rank and file of all sections, and they will blame him for breaking up the unity movement.

Therefore, I consider that those who refuse to negotiate for the unification by stressing Pablo's bureaucratic measures and maneuvers or "traps," either don't fully understand the situation mentioned above or attempt to maintain the split condition in our movement in order to benefit their own aims.

Because of the control of the International leading organ by Pablo in the past, which led to the split, certain comrades now suspect that it would happen again after the unity. I consider that this problem is not very hard to solve. If we understand the cause of Pablo's "authority", his "personality cult", his arbitrary actions and maneuvers (as pointed out above), then from now on, all the sections will share the responsibility and collective leadership within the leading organization according to the tradition and principle of democratic centralism. And there will be no room for individual arbitrariness and maneuvers to exist. Also, it is very important, after the bitter lesson and experience of this split that the candidates for the future international leading organ will necessarily be selected carefully. And those who abuse or

are incapable of fulfilling their functions, can be criticized or even recalled according to the International constitution. (If the existing constitution is not adequate, we can revise or implement it.)

In a word, there is no material basis for our International to become bureaucratic. If we strictly observe and practice the principles and traditions of democratic centralism, we will not only avoid bureaucratic arbitrary actions, but also unprincipled splits.

As to what Healy said: "We are completely opposed to the return to the old Pabloite conception of International organization: The draining of national section resources, so that some globe trotter could stiffen up Pablo's faction in some small groups thousands of miles away; the constant spate of meetings in Paris which meant sections raising funds to send representatives; our International work must be organized on a realistic basis in line with the resources of sections and not along lines which tend to imitate the old Comintern." (His letter to you of May 13 last year.)

It is true, "we are completely opposed to the return to the old Pablo conception of international organization", that is the over-concentrated power in the general secretaryship (not simply limited to the "draining of national section resources"). And at the same time, we should refuse absolutely to have our international organization become a loose and inactive organization similar to the 2nd International, and which has been the true picture of the IC during the few years it has existed.

During the four years of the existence of the IC, it has accomplished almost nothing except in the earlier period when it engaged in the anti-Pabloist movement. On the other hand, it is far from a position of political leadership. For example, it issued no proclamation or resolution on such important historical events as the Russian 20th Congress revelations. (A French comrade was assigned to write a draft of the resolution at the IC meeting of March 1956, but it has never been written.) What a "conception of the International!" It was formally decided at the IC meeting of Nov. 1956 that the World Congress would be convened in the summer of 1957, (I was assigned to draft the political resolution, which was sent to England in Jan. 1957, but they delayed publication till Aug. 1957), but was cancelled by the IC secretary without announcing any reason. Again, what a "Conception of International Organization!"

The Italian section is one of the most important sections among the European countries. In spite of the numerous suggestions to invite the Italian comrades to the IC meetings made by me to the English comrades, there has not been one single Italian representative invited to the IC meetings during the past three years. The reason given was the financial difficulty, and yet there had been no difficulty in sending two British delegates to every IC meeting. (In fact, the IC has never made a financial statement, and I know nothing about its financial status.)

In a word, the IC is not a workable set-up but is very slovenly; there is no office like the IS to work in collectively; no publications in which to issue propaganda material and put forward our slogans; no internal bulletin to exchange opinions and information among all the sections. As far as IC meetings are concerned, they are not only always held late but there is also little discussion of political questions. The resolution for preparing the World

Congress was not even formally discussed. And worse yet, there is no preparation work done before meetings (especially the preparation of the political documents), and very often the resolutions passed in the IC meetings are never carried out. (For instance, several discussion drafts written by the SWP for the IC have neither been discussed by the IC itself nor has a decision to translate them into French and German for discussion among all the sections which was made at an IC meeting been carried out. The IC neglected this matter completely.)

The arbitrary action in dealing with some matters by the secretary of the IC inevitably rose from the slovenly and irresponsible situation of the IC as I mentioned above. For instance, the cancellation of the resolution of calling for the World Congress and the rejection of the suggestion to invite the Italian delegates to the IC meeting on the pretext of financial difficulty. If our international organization is not a decoration, but one to serve our movement and the world revolution, this extremely slovenly and even paralyzing situation within the IC during the recent few years is inadmissible.

It is a pity that Comrade Burns completely forgot or did not understand the deplorable working conditions within the IC developed in recent years: its extreme slovenliness and inactivity, when he criticized Pablo's "Conception of International Organization." This proves that his understanding of the "International Conception" by stressing "Our international work must be organized on a realistic basis in line with the resources of the sections. . . ." is in doubt.

In the letter Burns sent to you, he said: "For some time now the propaganda resources of Pablo and Germain have been assiduously spreading the story that they can only negotiate directly with Cannon. Our section and the IC are looked upon as some sort of hangers-on to the SWP. The visit of P.O'D. [Mangan] is designed to strengthen such gossip. This 'big boss' conception of negotiations is typical of the 'cultism' in general. Because of this the IC and the SWP must march in step together. Nothing can or must be decided without the fullest discussion." I feel that when one uses distortion to evade one's duty, it is imperative that the facts be made known.

In the first place, I should point out that P.O'D. was assigned by the IS to negotiate directly unity with you, not because "the British Section and the IC are looked upon as some sort of hangers-on to the SWP," but as a result of the ignoring of the appeal for unity by the IEC and the irresponsible attitude shown towards the parity committee by the IC and particularly by Burns himself.

The parity committee originated from the "direct unity parley" by Burns and the Ceylon delegates in July 1954 as an important proposal which Burns put forward in the IC of Aug. 1954 and was then rejected vehemently by the French comrades. However, after a vehement discussion, his motion was passed by the great majority. To be cautious, the IC decided it should be discussed and approved by all the sections. When the IC rediscussed the parity committee in Nov. the same year, Burns put forward the concrete conditions of participating in the parity committee, which was approved by the great majority: For general political discussion by the rank and file of both sides through the parity committee, I was assigned by the IC to write a draft of "Criticism of Pabloism" and the British comrades to write the political drafts, which

were written by the U.S. comrades later at the request of Burns. Finally three representatives to the parity committee was elected from the IC. Comrade Bloch of France, Secretary of the IC, was one of them. Bloch refused to accept, and Burns even asked for his resignation as secretary of the IC. Hence, Burns became the secretary of the IC. This shows that the parity committee arose after very serious consideration and discussion by the IC with the approval of all sections.

A first meeting of the parity committee was held in Nov. 1954. The IS request of early 1955 for a second meeting was ignored by the secretary of the IC. At the IC meeting April the same year, Comrade Burns proposed to abolish the parity committee. The only reason he gave was that it was an error for the IC to accept the p.c. at its very beginning. But why it was an error, he didn't explain. Thus the parity committee was abolished without any reason and by this it became impossible to negotiate unity. Later, Burns attributed the responsibility of abolishing the p.c. to the Ceylonese, because the latter did not fulfill their promise of sending delegates to the parity committee (see his letter sent to me last June). Neither had he pointed out that the participation of the Ceylonese delegates to the parity committee was the condition for us to accept it in the two IC meetings of August and November 1954, when discussing the question of the parity committee nor had he included it in the few conditions, he drafted, for the IC to participate in the parity committee. This shows that he tried to shift his responsibility to the Ceylonese.

The inconsistent, contradictory and irresponsible attitude of Burns towards the parity committee (I pointed this out in my letter to him April 15, 1955) caused the IS to lose all hope of trying to negotiate unity with the IC. This feeling extended to the great majority of comrades of the IS, that the IC was not seriously interested in unity. (Also, it helped to stabilize Pablo's position in the IS). Thus, the Parity Committee has become a joke to sections under the IC, because before accepting the Parity Committee, they were asked for approval.

Although the IC blocked the road to a unity parley by abolishing the Parity Committee unilaterally, it does not negate the desire of the majority comrades under the IS to unify with us. Particularly after the unprecedented crisis of the Stalinist parties in every country caused by the 20th congress of the CPSU, and the Polish and Hungarian revolutions. They feel the imperative necessity for unity. So the IEC of the IS was pressed to appeal for unity to us at its meeting of Nov. 1956, which was ignored by the IC. Under such circumstances, the IS sending a representative directly to you to negotiate unity was forced, on the one hand, by the strong pressure of its rank and file demanding unity; (this kind of pressure was manifested distinctly by Frank faction) on the other hand, because the IC had fully blocked-off the unity parley. According to this, I cannot see any tendency within the IS to look upon the British Section and IC as "some sort of hanger-on of the SWP," but rather in order to achieve unity, they look for a serious and responsible person who is capable of representing our movement in negotiations.

Comrade Burns scorned this imperative act of the IS as "this big boss conception is typical of cultism in general." But scorn cannot cover the fact, which is that after abolishing the parity committee advocated by him and rejecting any unity parley, he tried to use these loathesome

phrases to prevent you from pushing the unity movement forward, and thus kept alive a split when the historical situation was favorable for unity.

His statement "because of this the IC and the SWP must march in step together" means that the SWP must reject any unity parley with the IS. The resolution concerning the unity was passed by the convention of the SWP last June. Burns took it up in the IC meeting in September and had it passed, instead of discussing the letter sent by the IS to the IC last August, in which, it was clearly stated that they had accepted the first proposal mentioned by your letter to Mangan which is to arrive at a mutual political agreement as the condition for beginning the unity parley. It seems that he will use any opportunity and method to block the unity parley. Although he said in his letter sent to me that "we are in favor of a unity that will work," he affirmed privately to me in the meeting last September that "it is impossible to unite with Pablo's faction." So, what he said in his letter to me is a diplomatic phrase.

Comrade Burns also said in the letter he sent to you: "The movement here has been largely educated on the experiences of the SWP and its long struggle for principle. We would like to believe today we are reaching a position where we can help our American comrades as a result of the favorable conditions under which we work. . . . for the first time in our history we are assembling a first-class intellectual cadre, alongside a trade union fraction which is steadily increasing its influence, . . . we shall, we believe, in time win over most important dissident elements from the CP.

In here, Comrade Burns particularly enumerated the achievements of the British Section which "can help our American comrades." This is fine, but he neglected to say that the one who desperately needs help is not the "American comrades," but those of Europe, especially the Trotskyist movement in Italy and France. Also, though the achievement of the British is very valuable, it is only in a preliminary stage. Tremendous time and effort remains to be spent before they win over the great majority of militants from the British Stalinist party, especially the worker militants (not only "the most important dissident elements"). Before the British can achieve this, our international movement, especially the French and Italian sections must intervene effectively in the crisis of the Stalinist party everywhere. But Comrade Burns neglected this aspect to which our International should give special attention and effort.

We must understand that France and Italy are in a real prerevolutionary stage. The Stalinist parties there are the most important backbone of the Stalinist movement outside the Soviet bloc. As far as the members of French Stalinist party is concerned, there are 300,000 of them (10 times more than the British Stalinist party), controlling the trade unions of 3,000,000 members and supported by 5,000,000 voters. In case this party disintegrates (the refusal of the majority of its members to participate in the demonstration of September 17, 1957, clearly reflects that the crisis of the party is developing intensely and extensively) the Italian Stalinist party will follow the same path and hence the Stalinist parties of all the capitalist countries, especially those in Europe (including England) will be fatally struck. Also it will stimulate the anti-Stalinist sentiment of the masses in the Soviet bloc and the Soviet bureaucracy will be more and more

isolated and shaken. So from the international viewpoint, our movement must pay special attention to the Trotskyists in France and Italy by concentrating all their efforts to intervene effectively in the crisis of the Stalinist parties there, and win over their militants to our movement. This will not only solve the crisis of the revolutionary leadership in France and Italy and will lead to a victorious revolution, but also will be the important preliminary step to solving the crisis of world revolutionary leadership. To achieve this, the Trotskyist organizations in France and Italy must first be unified for the purpose of exploiting the present favorable situation and the coming more favorable situation; to correctly, systematically, and resolutely work in the Stalinist parties. By stubbornly opposing the unity (first the unity of France and Italy), it is shown that Comrade Burns either does not understand or completely neglects the important and decisive role of our movement in Italy and France.

From the above analysis and explanation, it is my opinion that the attitude and opinions of Comrade Burns toward the unity question as the secretary of the IC rises from a narrow cliquish base or sectarian viewpoint and is inconsistent with the historical interests of our movement. If he persistently maintains his viewpoint, I consider that it is necessary to let all the sections under the IC know, discuss, consider, and express their opinions on the question of unity. It is feasible to quote Burns' words here: "Everybody has the right to speak out and get things clear" (in the letter he sent to you).

"Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind." This sentence written by Trotsky in our program is more emergent in the present nuclear epoch. "The crisis of proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International." These words, under the present unprecedented crisis of the Stalinist parties in every country is particularly realistic. The question remains: Can we, subjectively, fully recognize the "emergent" and "realistic" situation, which is, in the first place the unification of all Trotskyist strength and systematically intervene in the increasing crisis in the Stalinist parties and win over their militants to be our basic cadres to help solve the crisis of revolutionary leadership, and further unify all the revolutionary strength and the masses to form a revolutionary party to prepare for the coming revolutionary situation.

I believe you understand the trend of the world situation, the historical role and the present imminent tasks of our movement. So I, particularly, hope that you, due to your long experience and participation in the revolutionary movement, and your knowledge of the history of the three internationals, and especially your collaboration with Trotsky, will contribute to our international movement by giving more attention and effort to help the international solve this important and imperative issue, which is, at present, to solve the problem of unity in our movement. This is not what Burns scorned as "big boss" and "typical cultism," but the prestige of an individual formed by long experience in the general revolutionary movement, particularly in our Trotskyist movement.

You knew that Trotsky had been engaged in building a unified revolutionary international from the time he was forced to leave Russia in 1929, particularly after the defeat of the German revolution of 1933. For this, he not only



wrote a most perfect program but spent a lot of effort patiently convincing the sections in all the countries to unify so as to form the foundation of a united revolutionary international (in his many letters to all the sections). If he was still alive, seeing the movement split under the present favorable situation, I believe he would try his utmost to unify it without delay.

Our anti-Pabloist movement successfully proved our political correctness, as is shown by the open resignation from the movement by Pablo's intimate cothinkers: Cochran, Collins, Clarke, Mestre, and etc. and the retreat of Pablo himself in ceasing to openly express his revisionism, and the strong demand for unity by the great majority of comrades of the sections under the IS. But organizationally, we have achieved almost nothing, because of our "extraordinary measure" which was not easily understood by the majority of comrades and the mistakes (its attitude towards the parity commission) and inertia of the IC. This is shown irrefutably by the fact that a great majority of comrades remain in the IS with Pablo as general secretary.

Therefore, the nub of the matter is, it is imperative to unite all the Trotskyist strength by maintaining our political position (which has been successful), that is, the orthodox Trotskyist position based on our Transitional Program, in order to meet the immediate needs of the historical movement in this most favorable objective situation. To achieve this, I propose: (a) To deal with such an important question as unity, we should actively,

instead of passively, as formerly, adopt a responsible attitude. Ask the IS to give us a more concrete answer to all proposals concerning unity mentioned by your letter to Patrick. (b) At the same time, we should accept the IS request that a representative from the U.S. participate in the unity parley. This request is not only rational but is a necessity if unity parley is to be effective. Because of the irresponsible attitude towards the parity committee shown by the IC in the past, any unity parley without the participation of the U.S. representative will have no good result.

Finally, I would like to see you propose that the leadership of the SWP reconsider their stand on the unity question based on the fact of the imminent demands of the Trotskyist sections of every country and take a strong position. Although the SWP is not affiliated to the IC because of the Voorhis Act, but due to its contributions to our movement and its prestige in the International, its advocacy of unity will have an important and decisive influence. On the other hand, since the SWP openly mobilized the struggle against Pabloism, it has a responsibility to help our movement reunify organizationally.

Due to the extraordinarily favorable objective situation, our movement is at the historical turning point. I urge you to pay special attention to the time element which will have a decisive significance in solving the important question, at present, the question of unity.

With the best fraternal greetings,  
S.T. Peng

## SECTION XI: CRITICISMS OF THE CEYLONESE TROTSKYISTS

During the ten-year split in the Fourth International, the world movement was far too weak to exercise strong political influence on many of its sections. Strong centrifugal tendencies developed. This was true in both the IS and the IC, despite the great emphasis placed by the former on a strong central apparatus.

In Ceylon, the powerful Lanka Sama Samaja Party began to adapt to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist currents. A political softening was also reflected in the stance adopted by the LSSP toward the Mao regime in China.

The political decline of the LSSP was gradual, and was combined for a time with leadership of militant working-class struggles and adherence to the main programmatic positions of Trotskyism. A more detailed analysis of the evolution of the LSSP will be found in *Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part VI: Revolutionary Marxism versus Class Collaboration in Sri Lanka* (Education for Socialists, \$.60).

Although Peng Shu-tse and the SWP were willing to cooperate with the LSSP in reunifying the world movement, they criticized some of its weaknesses sharply and publicly.

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1. "Chou and the Chinese Revolution" (editorial from the March 11, 1957, issue of the Militant)

The February 7 issue of the Samasamajist, English paper of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party of Ceylon, announced that Chou En Lai, the Chinese premier, had invited a delegation of that party to visit China. The invitation was accepted by decision of the Central Committee of the LSSP.

A tour of China by Ceylonese Trotskyists could do a great deal to aid in the defense of the Chinese revolution against the imperialist powers by providing reliable reports on the problems confronting the workers of China. An invitation for this purpose would be welcome. But an invitation given and accepted under conditions that obscure the LSSP position of intransigent political opposition to the Stalinist misleaders of the revolutionary people of China is an entirely different matter.

### PRAISE CHOU

The acceptance of the invitation was preceded by an editorial in the January 31 issue of Samasamajist. The editorial is entitled "Tribute to Chou En Lai." It said, "Despite our political differences we recognize the tremendous sacrifices made by these men who led the Chinese Revolution to victory." The editors criticized the local Ceylonese Stalinists because they "wave flags for their heroes; it has not been given to them to understand the achievement and to follow the example of Chou En Lai."

This is a sudden and surprising shift of the Samasamajist from its clearly expressed traditional view that Stalinism is an international force of class-collaboration, emanating from the economic interests of the privileged bureaucratic caste in the Soviet orbit. It is precisely the subordination of Communist parties in the capitalist world to these policies of opportunism that constitutes the main danger to the world socialist revolution.

We would like to remind our comrades of the LSSP of Ceylon of fundamental conceptions that Trotskyists have always been careful to make clear:

Chou En Lai and the Chinese Communist Party did not lead "the Chinese revolution to victory," nor can they legitimately be identified with that victory. For many years during the civil war after 1945, the Chinese CP tried to conciliate Chiang Kai-shek, offering to subordinate the

revolutionary forces to the Chinese dictator, the puppet of U.S. imperialism.

Chiang Kai-shek's refusal to compromise and his prosecution of war to the finish against the Chinese revolution left the Stalinist leaders with no other alternative but to yield to the pressure of the revolutionary masses and take power. Even at that time, however, the Chinese Communist Party prohibited revolutionary action by the small but militant Chinese working class for fear of losing control of the insurgent mass movement.

Thus, the leadership of the Chinese CP is no more to be credited with the inspiring victory of the Chinese revolution than the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union is to be credited with the great industrial progress in that country. In both cases the revolutionary achievements were made despite the leadership and its false policies.

### CHOU DEFENDS KREMLIN

Chou En Lai came to Ceylon following a visit to Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest. The purpose of the tour was to bolster up the crumbling structure of Stalinist power in the Soviet orbit. Using the prestige of the Chinese revolution, Chou lent himself to the ignoble task of justifying the Kremlin's repression in East Europe. The tour followed adoption by the Chinese CP of a document, calling for all Communist parties to accept the leadership of the Kremlin.

Doesn't a "tribute to Chou En Lai" at this very moment when the workers are challenging the rule of the bureaucrats in the Soviet orbit aid in the cover-up of Stalinist crimes against the political revolution of the working class?

And finally, the Chinese Trotskyists are imprisoned and tortured by Mao Tse Tung's regime. On this score, the Samasamajist editorial greeting Chou as a "revolutionary" was completely silent. How will a "tribute" to their jailer be greeted by genuine Marxist-Leninists from their prison cells?

The Ceylonese Trotskyists should, in our opinion, lend strong support to the demand for the liberation of our Chinese comrades and for full democratic rights for the Chinese working class. Only workers' democracy can make the victory of the Chinese revolution secure, assure its progress, and serve to advance the struggle for socialism in the whole of Asia.

2. "An Open Letter to Leslie Goonewardene, Secretary of the LSSP," by Peng Shu-tse (December 27, 1957)

Dear Comrade Goonewardene,

When I heard that your party was officially invited to visit China by the government of the People's Republic of China, I, representing the Chinese Trotskyist organization, wrote you a letter on February 22 of this year. In that letter I hoped that the delegates of your party would "utilize this opportunity to express the genuine Trotskyist position to the Chinese masses in order to clarify some misunderstandings of the Chinese government toward us." I "especially hope that your delegates, while visiting in China, would propose the following demands to the Chinese Communist Party:

"Release all imprisoned Trotskyists and restore their reputation (because they were arrested and imprisoned as 'reactionaries')."

"Permit the legal existence and activity of the Trotskyists' organizations."

But I and all the Chinese Trotskyists (including hundreds of comrades and sympathizers who are now in the concentration camps of the Mao regime) have not received any answer to this urgent and rightful "hope" and "demands" since then.

In spite of that, I was still expecting that perhaps your delegation to China might reply to us by their words and deeds.

At the beginning of last July, I began to learn the attitude and opinions of your delegation in China as

reported in the May issues of *People's Daily*. These attitudes and opinions didn't even correspond to my expectations and the hopes of Chinese Trotskyists, but just the opposite. At that time I intended to write to you again to criticize the positions taken by your delegation. But a comrade said to me, "You'd better wait for a while. Perhaps some delegates will publish their views of the tour afterward, just as Comrade Colvin De Silva did after his return from the USSR." He confirmed, by his on-the-spot observation, the inevitability of political revolution in the USSR (*Militant*, August 5, 1957).

I accepted the suggestion of this comrade and waited till the end of last September, but I still didn't see any publication by your delegation. So I started to write this letter. At that time, incidentally, another French comrade told me that you were traveling in Europe and intended to see me. Then, I again halted my writing, expecting to meet you. Although you had been traveling in Europe for nearly two months, you still didn't save a little time to realize your promise of meeting me!

Especially, I learned from English comrades lately that one of your delegates, Comrade Bernard Soysa, in answering questions about China when he was reporting his Chinese tour in a meeting held in London on September 17, 1957, said: "The Chinese Trotskyists have no official contact with the LSSP." Because of this attitude, I cannot force myself to keep silent anymore.

All the above is to explain why I delayed writing you this open letter.

Now allow me to pick on some excerpts from the *People's Daily* which reported the attitude and opinions of your delegation during the Chinese tour and to give some necessary criticism.

The news about the activities of your delegation appeared in the *People's Daily* four times (see *People's Daily*, May 16, 17, 19 and 31, 1957), the more important and noteworthy of which are the reports of May 19 and 31, 1957. The headline of the May 19 issue was that "Liu Shao-chi, as Chairman of the Standing Committee of the People's Council, invited the delegation of the LSSP of Ceylon to a dinner party to "exchange many opinions" with your delegates. The headline of the May 31 issue read, "Farewell banquet to the LSSP delegation" and pointed out that "Premier Chou En-lai was also present."

At the dinner party of May 19, the conversation between your delegation and Liu Shao-chi was reported as follows:

"Chairman Liu Shao-chi expressed his hearty welcome to the guests and said 'our countries should cooperate.'

"Perera said: '. . . The more important thing is that China is the stronghold of Asia to meet any aggressions.'

"Liu Shao-chi said: 'China is a big country but not a strong nation.'

"Perera said: 'But Asian countries are looking up to China.' He had the opinion that China and India ought to be the countries to protect the Asian countries from any aggressions.

"All had the same opinion that our oriental people should prevent any rebirth of imperialism. Perera said: 'The U.S. imperialists, having learned many lessons from the British and French imperialists, have been more tricky.' Liu Shao-chi said; 'The U.S. is much stronger, therefore we should unite together and concentrate our strength to carry on this struggle.'

"The guests also mentioned that economic development

in most Asian countries is now turned in the same direction. As a result, we should have economic cooperation. The host expressed the same opinion. Both the guests and host had the opinion that trade between Ceylon and China is based on the principle of equality and mutual benefit. The guests expressed their thanks to China for her generosity in trade, especially about China selling rice to Ceylon. . . .

"Perera spoke on the neutral foreign policy of the Ceylonese government and said that the LSSP supports this policy.

"The guests said that since China has achieved such a huge success within a short period, they would like to study the Chinese experience and learn from it. Liu Shao-chi replied that they should observe both the good and the bad side in China. He said: "There are many weak points and errors, and the bureaucratism is very serious.'

"Liu Shao-chi said: 'Criticisms of errors and mistakes is spreading to every corner of China, including factories, farms, schools, and other organizations. The main target is the leadership. . . .'

"Perera presented gifts to Liu Shao-chi and expressed the respect and friendship of the Ceylonese people and the LSSP for the Chinese people. Liu Shao-chi thanked them."

Reporting the farewell banquet on May 31, the *People's Daily* said:

"Chou En-lai was present at the banquet.

"Perera representing the LSSP expressed his thanks for the hearty entertainment and warm welcome of the Chinese people. He said: "The delegation has had a very pleasant visit, we have learned a great deal, and feel greatly interested.'

"Perera said: "The delegation's visit to China has increased the mutual understanding, promoted mutual good will, and consolidated the friendship between our two countries.'

"Perera said: 'Ceylon, like China, is longing for peace and, with India and China, is opposed to imperialism and war. . . .'

From the above rather lengthy excerpts of talks between your delegation and the two leaders of the CCP, second only to Mao Tse-tung (Liu Shao-chi and Chou En-lai), we fail to learn of any inquiry being made by your delegates about the fate of the Chinese Trotskyists. Your delegates did not even appear as Trotskyists in spite of the fact that they were invited to visit China as the representatives of the Trotskyist LSSP, in order to show the Chinese masses a genuine revolutionary attitude and to reveal to them that the revolutionary will of the exploited and oppressed Ceylonese workers and peasants was represented in the delegation.

All the opinions expressed by the spokesman of your delegation as I pointed out above, are clearly based on the self-interest of your country and nation. It seems to me that your delegation just represented the present Ceylonese ruling class for diplomatic exchanges of opinion with the official Chinese government, and to praise them. This does not differ from the opinions expressed by the delegation of the Japanese Socialist Party during its Chinese tour, and does not differ essentially from the attitude and opinions expressed by the delegations of Nehru, Sukarno, and U Nu during their Chinese tours.

When Comrade Perera, spokesman of your delegation, talked about, "China and India ought to be the countries

to protect the Asian countries from any aggressions," he just forgot the essential difference in character between Nehru's India and Mao Tse-tung's China, the former a country where the bourgeoisie is still the ruling class. It is a surprise to me that India would be relied on as a hope of "protecting Asian countries from any aggressions." When he said that "the economic development of many Asian countries is turned in the same direction and those countries should have economic cooperation," he entirely neglected the fact that Ceylon and India still remain in the reign of capitalism. How can capitalist-ruled India and Ceylon have economic cooperation with China which is on the way to socialist construction?

Especially when Perera talks about the "positive and neutral diplomatic policy of the Ceylonese government"—which is supported by your party—he does not understand that the so-called "positive and neutral diplomatic policy" of Nehru and Bandaranaike is just the cover which the native bourgeoisies of their countries employ to paralyze the proletariat and peasantry in order to prevent them from taking the revolutionary road of emancipation.

When Perera said that "Ceylon, like China, is longing for peace, and, with India and China, is opposed to imperialism and war," he never mentioned, did not even indicate slightly, that the revolutionary will and necessity of seizing power by the workers and poor peasants in India, Ceylon, and other capitalist countries is the only way to fight against war effectively and to achieve peace. This proves that he entirely forgot Lenin's and Trotsky's fundamental concept of war and peace, that is: In the epoch of imperialism, if the working class of the advanced countries and the oppressed masses of backward countries do not unite together to destroy imperialism, the bourgeoisie in their own countries first, and destroy private property by their revolutionary action, war will never be stopped and genuine peace will never come true. Your delegation proposed to win "peace" and "to fight against war" together with Bandaranaike's Ceylon and Nehru's India. I would like to ask you what is the difference between this attitude and that of the Kremlin-controlled Stalinist parties in various countries?

Moreover, it is of satirical significance and surprising that, when your delegation flattered China's "huge achievements" and expressed the intention of "studying and learning from the Chinese experience," Liu Shao-chi taught them that "you should observe both the good side and the bad side." He even said: "China has made many errors and mistakes, and the bureaucratism is very serious." But your delegates did not utter a word on this question.

Did not your delegates understand or recognize that China is under the rule of a Stalinist bureaucracy? Even if they did not understand or recognize that before, at least Liu Shao-chi was forced to tell them that. Moreover, at the moment when your delegation was visiting China, the tide of criticism and opposition of the workers, peasants, and intellectuals toward the CCP's bureaucratism had risen to its highest stage, as admitted by Liu Shao-chi in his conversation. Had your delegates not forgotten that they were Trotskyists fighting against the bureaucracy of Stalinist parties, they would have seized this very good opportunity of showing the Chinese masses the opinions of Marx and Lenin—even though not using Trotsky's—how to save a workers' state from bureaucratism. Workers'

democracy, all administrative, economic and cultural organizations managed or supervised directly by the soviets or committees elected freely by the workers and peasants, salaries of all administrative and economic organizations not to exceed that of technicians. They would have shown Liu Shao-chi and also the Chinese workers, peasants, and revolutionary intellectuals that only according to Marxist-Leninist principles can we struggle "effectively" and "properly" against bureaucratism until it is destroyed. The real implication of the caution "not to overdo it" is that Liu Shao-chi, speaking from a bureaucrat's standpoint, tried to use the accusation of "overdoing" to suppress workers' democracy and to maintain their bureaucratic rule. We should expose it. Had your delegation done it this way, they would then have exerted a great influence on the stormy "contend and blossom campaign" whose main purpose was to criticize the bureaucratism of the CCP. They would have won the vast Chinese masses to a respect and desire for Trotskyism. But it is a pity your delegation gave up such a good chance!

Furthermore, the attitude and opinions expressed by your delegation in China will certainly arouse not a little doubt and confusion among the workers, peasants, and revolutionaries. First of all, they will think that there is no difference between the standpoint of Ceylonese Trotskyists and that of Chinese Stalinists. As a result, this will cause embarrassment about the program of Chinese Trotskyists. On the other hand, Mao Tse-tung, Liu Shao-chi, and Chou En-lai would utilize this opportunity to tell the Chinese masses: "Look! This is a delegation of the LSSP, the Ceylonese Trotskyists. They agree with us in every respect. They praise us and 'want to learn from our experience.' What a great difference between them and the Chinese Trotskyists who are still occupied in counterrevolutionary activities under the name of 'leftism'!"

The strangest thing is: Your delegates and Liu Shao-chi and Chou En-lai talked about many matters, even about "China selling rice to Ceylon," but did not say a word about the imprisonment and suppression of Chinese Trotskyists. Did your delegates think the imprisonment and suppression of Chinese Trotskyists too trivial to pay attention to, not worthy of your concern and putting forward your inquiries and demands to the CCP?

I think you have not forgotten the fact: When Khrushchev and Bulganin visited Britain in April 1956, even the most conservative leaders of the British Labour Party demanded of the visitors that their comrades, members of the Socialist parties in Eastern European countries, be released. Why did your delegates in China lack this kind of comradely concern which even the leaders of the British Labour Party expressed?

Had your delegates not given up or forgotten Trotskyist internationalism, they had sufficient reasons and in fact should have formally posed to the leaders of the CCP, Liu Shao-chi, Chou En-lai, and even to Mao Tse-tung (it is said that your delegation was personally received by Mao) the question of the imprisonment and suppression of Chinese Trotskyists, and should have demanded their release and permission for the legal existence and activity of the Chinese Trotskyist party. First of all, your delegates could have told them that your party, the Ceylonese Trotskyists, though under the rule of the bourgeoisie, is not suppressed and imprisoned in Ceylon, but has legal existence and

activity, has participated in elections, and some of your members have been elected to parliament, and a delegation was even formally invited by the Chinese People's Government to visit China; and then could have asked them why, in China, which is on the way to socialist construction, the CCP still suppresses and imprisons the Chinese Trotskyists—your cothinkers—and would not allow their legal existence and activity. The CCP even allows the legal existence and activity of various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democratic parties and allows them to share in the regime, then why particularly suppress the Trotskyists who speak for the interests of workers and peasants?

Suppose the leaders of the CCP refused the demand of your delegation and told them that “the Chinese Trotskyists committed the crime of counterrevolution,” then your delegates could have grasped this chance to demand that the Chinese People's Government give the Chinese Trotskyists a public trial and let your party and workers' organizations of other countries send delegates to observe this trial in order to find out the truth. This would not only have a tremendous influence over the vast Chinese masses and public opinion and be a powerful help to the suppressed Chinese Trotskyists but would also be a bold and glorious contribution to the Trotskyist movement all over the world. Why did your delegates abandon such an honorable duty?

One of your delegates, Comrade Bernard Soysa, contended: “The Chinese Trotskyists have no official contact with the LSSP.” Maybe he just used this reason to defend the standpoint of the delegation during the Chinese tour. But in fact, on February 22, that is, two months before your delegation left for China, I, representing the Chinese Trotskyists, wrote a letter to you “to have an official contact with you,” and hoped your delegation while in China would demand that the CCP “release all Trotskyists” and “permit the legal existence and activity of the

Trotskyist organizations.” This demonstrates that your delegation intended to neglect these things. How do you explain this unconcerned and despicable attitude of your delegation toward such an important matter as the imprisonment of hundreds of Chinese Trotskyists?

A comrade here who has “formal contact” with you, defends the attitude of your delegation and says, “Ceylon's party is preparing to take power in the near future. Since her country is very small, she has to win the support of big countries such as China. Therefore she does not want to express, before the CCP, the revolutionary attitude and opinion and to argue or break with the CCP on the question of the suppression of Chinese Trotskyists.” If this defense reflects your tendency, I would have to give you the following advice: Just because of the small size of your country, if your party wants to take power and especially to maintain power, you should particularly stand on the basis of revolutionary internationalism and win the support of the working class of every country of the world (including China and the USSR), especially the support of the Indian working class. To rest your hopes upon the ruling castes of the Chinese or Russian Stalinist parties will only give a negative result. This is a decisive problem which deserves your serious consideration.

As far as I am concerned, I always respect the achievement your party has gained for our movement. But when I see the wrong concept expressed by your delegation during the Chinese tour, the tendency of national conservatism which is away from internationalism, I have to give you the above criticism. If your party could review the words and actions of your delegation, even the orientation of the whole party, according to the criticism of comrades, I believe, it will be very helpful to your party and to our whole movement.

Fraternally,  
S.T. Peng

## SECTION XII: "THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION: AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MILITANT," BY SHERRY MANGAN

One of the areas of difference that still remained between supporters of the IS and IC was over tactical orientation in the Algerian revolution. The IC and its supporters backed the Algerian National Movement (MNA), led by Messali Hadj. The IS became deeply involved in support and assistance to the struggles of the National Liberation Front (FLN). In the years after 1954, the FLN emerged as the main force in the armed struggle against French imperialism. The factional struggle between the two groups was bitter and violent, with both sides using assassination as a means of settling differences. As the rural and urban struggles came increasingly under FLN influence, the MNA began to adapt to French imperialism and finally capitulated to it, while the FLN fought on.

The experience brought home to the SWP the importance of giving full support to all anti-imperialist struggles in the colonies, without becoming overly committed in the obscure power struggles that can erupt among competing petty-bourgeois nationalist formations. Such a policy would have led to a course similar to that of the IS, which supported the group with the broadest mass support and the most active policy of struggle.

The following letter by Sherry Mangan, writing under the pen-name of Patrick O'Daniel, was a reply to a series of articles by Shane Mage (under the pen-name of Philip Magri). Mage's articles appeared in the December 16, 23, and 30, 1957, and January 6, 1958, issues of the *Militant*. Mangan's open letter was printed, along with a reply by Mage, in SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 19, No. 2 in 1958. The open letter was also published in the Spring 1958, issue of *4th International*, the quarterly English-language journal published by the IS under the editorship of Mangan.

Events in Algeria, and also consideration of some of the points made by Mangan, led to a correction in the posture of the SWP. By 1960, the SWP press was fully and clearly supporting the struggle of the FLN against French imperialism. The SLL and the French Trotskyists of the La Vérité group also recognized their error (although the French did not do so publicly until some years later). They tended to react to their disappointment in the MNA by shifting towards a sectarian attitude to the Algerian revolution.

Healy made the correction in a typical way. His historiographers simply tried to deny that their chieftain ever made the error. Thus in the 1961 document, "A Reply to Comrade Peng," the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League stated: "We conditionally supported both wings of this movement in so far as they fought the French, but we reserved our right to criticize them from a

Marxist point of view if we considered this necessary. . . .

"Of course we greeted Messali in his struggle in 1955 as a national leader. We published his declaration of policy in English. But we never gave him whole-hearted support as if he were a Marxist leader."

Such a position would have been commendable, but it was not the position of the IC or of Healy, as a reading of the resolution of the IC on Algeria (reprinted in Section I of this collection) will show. To avoid confusing their readers with facts, the editors of Healy's documentary collection, *Trotskyism versus Revisionism*, omitted this resolution.

Healy's position was stated succinctly in his June 1, 1956, letter to James P. Cannon (reprinted in Section IV) where he stated:

"As you know, there are two forces involved in the national struggle in that country [Algeria]; the forces of Messali Hadj, which include the vast majority of Algerian workers living in France, as well as extensive support in Algeria. . . then there are the forces of the 'Liberation Front,' armed, financed and equipped from Cairo. This consists of some former Messalists, which include several army officers trained by the French together with a sprinkling of corrupt politicians like Ferhat Abbas. Bringing up the rear of this ragged crew are the Algerian Stalinists and the Pabloites.

"The class issues in this struggle are quite pronounced. Messali is a splendid supporter of our movement and as you will see from his pamphlet which we have just shipped, reasons things out as a socialist. The 'Front' represents a typical petty-bourgeois formation who desires 'a deal' with the French (they accept the Nehru proposals)."

This policy was restated, in slightly modified form, in an article by Michael Banda in the March-April 1958 issue of *Labour Review*: "Whereas the FLN in its social composition is predominantly petty-bourgeois, the MNA, because of its overwhelming proletarian composition and its long traditions of struggle, is, though not a socialist party, the *precursor* of a revolutionary socialist party of the future. . . ."

"This much is certain. The future of Algeria does not rest with the FLN and its apologists but with the working class and landless peasantry. Only they can carry through the political and economic liberation of the country." Whatever its merits, this stance hardly resembles "conditionally" supporting "both wings of this movement in so far as they fought the French."

This example, not too weighty in itself, is typical of the reliability of Healy's factionally-motivated "histories" of the Fourth International.

# THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION

## *An Open Letter to "The Militant"*

### PREFATORY NOTE

At the date of writing, we observe with regret that the editors of *The Militant*, New York weekly, usually reflecting the views of the Socialist Workers Party, to whom the following open letter was sent on February 3rd, have not seen fit to publish it either in whole or in part. We have thus been forced to the decision to publish it here in Fourth International. For it is quite impermissible that the factually false information and politically incorrect position expressed in the series of Magri articles on Algeria should be presented as a Trotskyist position, either in the United States itself or in semi-colonial countries, especially those of the Middle East, without

an open call to order and public correction of these extremely misleading errors, that can seriously discredit Trotskyism.

We seize this occasion, further, to repeat a request made in the article «*Où en est le M.N.A.?*» by Jacques Privas in the January issue of *Quatrième Internationale*:

"The Militant [...] states that the MNA has disavowed Bellounis. We can only hope that its good faith has been imposed upon (as with so many other statements in its articles), and ask it to quote the source of its information."

This key question also remains unanswered.

14 April 1958

### TEXT OF THE OPEN LETTER

COMRADES,

Your paper published in its issues of December 16, 23, 30, and January 6, three articles on the Algerian revolution and the Algerian nationalist movement by a casual collaborator, one Philip Magri. These articles are full of false or distorted information, and the conclusions at which they arrive are incompatible both with factual truth and with revolutionary Marxism. The continuing defense of these incorrect ideas would do great harm to the Trotskyist cause among the revolutionaries and rising masses not only of Algeria itself but also of all the countries of the Middle East.

For that reason I have felt it necessary and urgent to send you this letter, which presents the balanced opinion of the great majority of the world Trotskyist movement about the Algerian revolution and the Algerian nationalist movement. I hope that you will live up to the Leninist tradition of telling the truth without restraint by publishing in *The Militant* the whole or extensive parts of this letter, thereby correctly the false positions of Philip Magri—which I hope are not those of the SWP.

**"POLITICS OF ASSASSINATION" —IN RECENT MONTHS OR FOR THREE YEARS?**

Philip Magri's thesis, in a nutshell, amounts to the following. The National Algerian Movement, MNA, led by Messali Hadj, is the left wing of the

Algerian revolution; the National Liberation Front, FLN, is its right wing. The struggle between the FLN and the MNA is something like a class struggle between the "bourgeois" and the "proletarian" wings of that revolution. The point of departure for this thesis is that "in recent months, many supporters of the Algerian liberation struggle have been profoundly disturbed by crimes against Algerians committed, not this time by the French, but by other Algerians participating in the struggle against French imperialism."

As the victims of these murders have been "a large number of Algerian trade-unionists," the inference drawn is simple: "reactionary bourgeois" forces within the FLN have murdered honest socialist revolutionaries of the MNA.

Unfortunately for Philip Magri and other defenders of this thesis, it is not only in "recent months" that "crimes and murders" have been committed against Algerian revolutionaries in France. These crimes have been going on without interruption since the end of 1955. Philip Magri does not mention these assassinations for a very simple reason: they were, with few exceptions, committed by the MNA: the victims were militants and leaders of the FLN (among them, the leader of the FLN organization of the Algerian workers in Belgium).

The then Minister of the Interior, Bourguès-Maunoury, speaking before the French National Assembly, declared recently:



The attacks multiplied during the year 1956. The victims were mostly FLN people: there were 80 murdered, most of them of that faction, during that year. At the beginning of 1957, the FLN, having consolidated itself, started to counter-attack by increasing its activity. And it also began a terrorist campaign and tried definitively to exterminate its enemies.

These actions and reactions are becoming more and more violent, and the two nationalist parties are today carrying on a real struggle of mutual extermination on our territory.

*(Journal Officiel, November 12)*

But we do not need this testimony of French imperialism to confirm the correctness of our thesis. Philip Magri himself says that the MNA solidly controlled the Algerian workers in France at the moment of the outbreak of the revolution. How could the weak, if not inexistent, FLN have in a short time organized sufficient arms and people to kill 80 persons? All French revolutionaries know how desperately the few FLN cadres were searching for arms to defend themselves during the whole year 1956. Why does Philip Magri keep silent about the 80 murders of that year? Certainly not because they were committed by the "bourgeois" FLN: he indicts them only for the crimes of 1957. Very significantly, the "solemn" public appeal made by Messali himself to the Algerian workers in France to stop murder and bloodshed was made... in the summer of 1957, not in the spring of 1956. Is it not because it was his own supporters who were killing FLN militants in 1956 before the tide turned?

The truth is that the MNA had the complete support of the Algerian workers in France when the revolution broke out. It tried to keep that support by pretending that it was the MNA that led the revolutionary struggle in Algeria itself. But as this was an obvious falsehood, and as the Algerian workers in France started to receive news about the actual struggle in their homeland from their families and friends on the spot, first a few, then more and more, militants left the MNA to set up an FLN organization among the workers.

Messali was furious and desperate. He had lost his control over the revolution in Algeria. He began to fear that he would lose also his control over the Algerian workers in France. So he gave orders that militants leaving the MNA in France to found FLN organization should be executed as "traitors." Philip Magri well characterizes this action when he writes:

What more need to be said to characterize a political movement than that its preferred method of political discussion is the assassin's bullet?

Finally the FLN, having consolidated its organization and receiving more and more help from the Algerian workers in France when it became clear

that the armed struggle in Algeria was FLN-led, started to answer back to assassination by assassination. And as the relationship of forces changed radically between the two organizations around the beginning of 1957, soon the majority of the people killed became MNA people. And it was only then, after they had been forced to swallow their own bitter medicine, that Messali and the MNA began to protest about "murders"...

Let me make our position clear from the start. We are opposed to methods of physical violence inside the labor movement, inside the international revolutionary movement, in which we include the liberation movement of the colonial peoples. Just to the extent that violence is inevitable in the fight against imperialism, to the same extent it should be banned within the revolutionary forces. We have consistently defended that position in the past, we defend it today, and we shall defend it tomorrow. It applies in the Algerian question quite apart from the change in the relationship of forces between the rival nationalist organizations. Only such a principled position can be consistently defended. It is completely unprincipled, nay, cynically hypocritical, to let out a great shout of moral indignation about the killing of Messalists by their opponents while keeping complacently silent, whitewashing, or justifying for reasons of "self-defense," the numerous murders of FLN militants by MNA people.

These murders, by the way, continue, especially in the North of France where the MNA still has some strength. The latest incident was during the night of January 27-28, when five armed Algerians broke into a workers' dormitory of the Bouchain factory, near Valenciennes, and savagely sprayed the room with shots, killing one worker and gravely wounding another; a third saved his life by simulating death. Three hours later the murderers were arrested. According to all newspapers, they belonged to the MNA: the leader among them had already been arrested on December 18 for "reconstitution of a dissolved league" (the police definition of the Algerian nationalist organizations), and—significantly—later on set free. It is particularly to be noted that it is a matter of public knowledge that those cases where whole cafés are machine-gunned without regard to the individual identities of the people in them are exclusively MNA jobs.

#### *THE ORIGINS OF THE FLN AND THE MNA*

The second reason why, according to Philip Magri, the MNA is the "left" and the FLN the "right" wing of the Algerian nationalist movement is to be found in the origins of both organizations. The story he tells in that respect is highly colored. He writes about the split which occurred inside the old *Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques* (MTLD) in 1954, between the right-wing

"centralists" and the "orthodox" Messalists. He himself admits that the insurrection of November 1st 1954 was launched, not by these centralists (who wanted to collaborate with French imperialism, according to Philip Magri), but by "impatient" militants of the MTLD. But he then hastens to conclude that at present it is these right-wing people who lead the FLN, whereas the MNA continues to be led by the old intransigent revolutionary group around Messali Hadj.

There is something slightly ridiculous about the "leader Messali" "carefully preparing the revolution," and suddenly "taken by surprise" by the "action of a small group of men" somehow "stealing" the masses from the "true revolutionists" by launching it. The truth of the matter is that the Messali leadership had been for years procrastinating and increasingly passive, that it was that passivity and lack of perspectives—I shall return later to the *political* reason for this—which had led some opportunistic leaders of the Messalist party to incline toward a policy of winning reforms from the "moderate" imperialists, that at the same time however the rank and file and the lower cadres in Algeria became exasperated by the passivity of the leadership, especially when they saw how armed struggle was spreading over Tunisia and Morocco and winning important victories for the revolution in those countries, and that it was these rank-and-file militants who started the insurrection of November 1st 1954.

It is very sad for self-proclaimed "leaders" that the revolution doesn't follow their timetable. But if they are responsible people they acknowledge the fact and try to reintegrate themselves into it. When on the contrary they subordinate the objective processes of history to their own narrow sectarian purposes, the revolution simply passes them by. That is what happened to Messali.

But, says Philip Magri, the nature of the FLN "changed" when right-wing politicians like Ferhat Abbas and the former reformists of the MTLD (the so-called "centralists") joined it, and when its initial leadership around Ben Bella was kidnapped from a Moroccan plane by the French army. Now the FLN leads a revolutionary army of tens of thousands of people, spread over thousands of villages. It has the active support of hundreds of thousands of poor peasants and agricultural workers, organized in village committees. It is hard to see clearly how the nature of that mass movement could have been changed by the kidnapping of a couple of its leaders.

Contrary to what Philip Magri affirms, the whole world press has reported the fact that the real leadership of the FLN is in the hands, not of the Cairo or Tunis politicians, but of the leaders of the

armed underground. These, on the other hand, are described by the bourgeois press as "the hard ones," the "intransigents," and "the extremists." They lead the army: they collect the money; they control the apparatus; and they are under the tremendous pressure of the uprisen revolutionary masses of Algeria. It is not very clear why they should turn the leadership of their movement over into the hands of a couple of turncoats.

But, some bright boy will argue, didn't we see in Spain how the leaders of a revolutionary mass uprising abdicated and turned their power over to the shadow of a bourgeoisie? Well, in the first place, there is no comparison between the capitalist class inside the Republican camp in Spain and the "Algerian bourgeoisie" in Algeria. The former, though very weak, did have factories, banks, landed property, big merchant capital, innumerable links with its class brothers in Wall Street, the City, and Paris; the latter is economically, socially, and politically non-existent, as Philip Magri himself indicates. Wealthy lawyers, physicians, and state functionaries are not capitalists, but rich petty-bourgeois.

In the second place, the Spanish "shadow of a bourgeoisie" got the power back, notwithstanding its weakness, for the sole reason that the recognized leaders of the mass movement, i.e. the Stalinists, the Social-Democrats, and the right-wing Anarchists, *handed it back to them voluntarily. By their own strength*, the Spanish capitalists could never have expropriated the revolutionary masses in the Republican camp. Even Philip Magri himself does not dare say that the leaders of the Algerian revolution in Algeria, the heroic figures who lead the armed struggle against the sanguinary French imperialists, voluntarily handed over the power, which they created through innumerable sacrifices, to a (non-existent) bourgeoisie. This "bourgeoisie" "captured" that power somehow by... taking a plane to Cairo and Tunis? The absurdity of this thesis simply knocks one's eye out.

It is true that some opportunist petty-bourgeois leaders of nationalist groups to the right of the old Messalist MTLD have joined the FLN. But if it is "historical precedents" that are being sought for, the correct one would be that of some bourgeois and petty-bourgeois politicians joining Tito's "Popular Front" during the war. At that time also, many comrades feared that these forces would lead the Yugoslav revolution back to capitalism: history showed those fears to be unfounded. There is a decisive difference between workers or revolutionary leaders being the "hostages" of the bourgeoisie, and petty-bourgeois politicians being the "hostages" of revolutionary or Stalinist forces. The Algerian case seems much closer to the Yugoslav than to the Spanish one.

## THE CLASS NATURE OF THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS

In order to determine the social nature of both the FLN and the MNA, it is necessary to sketch the social structure of the country, to analyze the objective role which both organizations play toward the different social classes and layers of Algeria, to examine their programmes and see to what extent their day-to-day politics are consistent with those programmes. This is the Marxist method of analyzing the social nature of an organization in the past; it is the same method which has to be applied to the case of Algeria, and for which we cannot substitute Philip Magri's method of gossip and fairy-tales about "intrigues," "murders," and some people taking planes to strange places with strange passports.

As Philip Magri himself admits, there does not exist any capitalist class in Algeria. There is not a single Algerian industrialist or banker of any importance. There is no compradore class linked to French capital in foreign trade. The French capitalist class, which tried to destroy the Algerian nation, has completely monopolized the leading economic and entrepreneurial functions in all ways of life. The only better-off layers of the Algerian population are some landowners and the upper strata of the petty-bourgeoisie (local merchants, intellectuals, and state functionaries).

At the other end of the social ladder, the broad mass of the Algerian population is composed of semi-proletarian layers of landless peasants, who work as agricultural laborers and as wage-earners for private bosses or the public administration, whenever they find work, which is not very often. Above them stands the class of more or less permanently employed city-dwelling wage-earners, the proletariat in the true sense of the word, which is not very broad. The rest of the Algerian people is composed of a mass of small peasants, eking out a dubious existence for themselves and their many unemployed relatives on the unfertile land which the French colonialists did not grab, and in the primitive Algerian village where a strong bond of collective solidarity still reigns.

Under such conditions, it is clear that no bourgeois or even petty-bourgeois mass movement is possible. The incredibly miserable and highly explosive social conditions imply an instinctively revolutionary mass movement, plebeian and semi-proletarian in nature, led by more or less educated petty-bourgeois elements. That was the nature of Messali's MTLD. That is the nature of the MNA. That is also the nature of the FLN. Inasmuch as the basis of the FLN is today much broader than that of the MNA, the relationship of forces is more favorable to the plebeian masses than to the petty-

bourgeois elements in that movement than in the MNA. And as a matter of plain fact there are more conservative religious landowners in the MNA than in the FLN.

Again I should like to make our position quite clear. We do not say that the FLN is a socialist or a revolutionary Marxist movement. We say that it is a broad mass movement of a revolutionary anti-imperialist character, in which the crystallization of distinct political currents, defending distinct social interests, has only begun, reflecting parallel tendencies within the society itself. It is the task and duty of revolutionary Marxists to aid that process by defending and unconditionally helping the Algerian revolution and its organizations against imperialism, by developing a clear Marxist programme for Algeria, North Africa, and the whole Arab world, by advocating an independent organization of the working class. Such an independent organization is a matter of principle for Marxists; but not the independence of one petty-bourgeois nationalist organization from another, and especially not in armed struggles against imperialism.

Concerning the programme of both the MNA and the FLN, it can be in general said that they remain mostly on the line of the old MTLD programme. It should not be forgotten that Messali was in origin a Communist, and that the old pre-war Algerian Popular Party (PPA), of which the MTLD was an offspring, had strong socialist elements in its programme. In the MTLD's own programme these socialist slogans were much less put in the forefront; in the MNA's propaganda they are never mentioned. It is true that both organizations, being petty-bourgeois nationalist groupings and not revolutionary Marxist class parties, are trying to solve their problems also by internationalizing the Algerian conflict and thus avoid any formulation which would antagonize American imperialism. The only distinction is that the FLN, from time to time, reasserts these socialist elements of its positions, whereas the MNA has descended to such depths of opportunism as calling upon Washington to save Algeria... for NATO!

For instance, on 24 January 1957 Moulay Merbah, secretary-general of the MNA, sent a telegramme to President Eisenhower which said among other things:

The Algerian people and Messali Hadj greet with favor your policy on the Middle East and approve it as a generous and positive contribution to the well-being, the peace and the liberty of the Arab people... The truly colonial war which is being waged in Algeria weakens the security of Europe [!], as 500,000 French soldiers, among which 4 NATO divisions and NATO arms, are being engaged in it.

(*Le Monde*, 25 January 1957)

And in an interview with a Social-Democratic weekly, *Demain*, Messali Hadj declared:

We are convinced that a solution of the Algerian problem will consolidate peace in North Africa, will reinforce the camp of freedom [!], and consolidate Franco-Arab friendship... Islamic North Africa will develop by taking into account its Western neighbors, their economic interests and relations with Mediterranean states. Let us meditate about the examples of India and Pakistan. Pakistan, this great Islamic power, while enjoying freedom [!] and independence, has maintained links of sympathy and relations of interest [!] with Great Britain.

On the other hand, the FLN leaders, in an interview with the radical French weekly *France-Observateur*, made the following statement of policy:

European property which has been honestly acquired will be respected. But the Algerian government will claim the right, if public interest makes it necessary, to nationalize for example the great means of production which are today in the hands of a few colonialists. It will be the same for the agrarian reform.<sup>1</sup> No Algerian government worthy of the name could tolerate that a single family exploits tens of thousands of hectares while the immense majority of Algerians stagnate in dismal misery.

Again I repeat that in our opinion the FLN is not a socialist organization, although there is a Marxist proletarian current which is crystalizing in that organization. The one thing I do want to point out is that there is no objective basis in the matter of programme for handing the palm of virtue for socialism or "leftism" to the MNA while refusing it to the FLN. What remain are two radical plebeian organizations, which represent the same class forces and present substantially the same written programme. It is precisely under these conditions that the concentrated attacks of the MNA upon the FLN, which leads the revolution, lose all principled character, and become purely cliquish, destructive, and gravely harmful.

Philip Magri proclaims that the MNA is for a "general uprising of the people" whereas the FLN is for "blind terrorism." These accusations smack somehow of the slander campaign which the French

imperialists are conducting day and night against the heroic Algerian revolutionaries. This "blind terrorism" is being carried out by a revolutionary army of tens of thousands of poor workers and peasants, swelled month after month by new recruits. The official programme of the FLN, adopted at the Congress held in the liberated Valley of the Summam on 20 August 1956, proclaims that the FLN is preparing the general armed uprising of the whole Algerian population and the general armament of the whole people. A strange slogan indeed for "bourgeois" forces trying to come "to an agreement" with French imperialism!

#### THE STRUGGLE FOR ALGERIAN INDEPENDENCE

"Certain" newspaper correspondents have found the MNA more moderate than the FLN, says Philip Magri: nothing, he considers, could be more ludicrous. May I point out that this opinion has been voiced not only by "certain" newspaper correspondents but by such responsible bourgeois organs as the *London Economist* and the *New York Times*? I should further like to point out to him that the International Latex Corporation, the most fanatic defender of French imperialism within American monopolist circles (because it owns great plantations in South Vietnam), is paying thousands of dollars to put ads in newspapers like the *New York Times*, in which all the attacks are concentrated upon the FLN, and the MNA is also declared to be "moderate." And I should like finally to point out that French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau, a staunch partisan of the imperialist Atlantic Pact and a staunch supporter of the Algerian War, who should know what he is talking about, declared at the United Nations on 4 February 1957:

What is the difference between the MNA and the FLN? The MNA appears to us to be more Westernized [!], more realistic [!], especially more independent [from whom?], which does not mean that its claims are less vivid.

(*Le Monde*, 5 February 1957)

Be this as it may, the essential difference in day-to-day policy between the FLN and the MNA is the fact, as Philip Magri states, that the FLN stands for unconditional independence which France must recognize prior to any negotiations, whereas the MNA stands for a round-table conference between all representatives of Algerian opinion and French imperialism, in order to prepare free elections which would lead to self-determination.

Now, says Philip Magri, the FLN position is only "verbally radical." What the FLN really wants is "to persuade the French to allow them to share in the government of Algeria and in the profits to be derived from its exploitation." Why do they really want only such a "share" and not total independence? Because, Philip Magri writes, the FLN,

<sup>1</sup> Just as this issue was going to press, there arrived the March-April issue of the British publication, *Labour Review*, with an article by Michael Banda, "Marxism and the Algerian Revolution," which is as factually inaccurate and politically erroneous as that of Philip Magri. Taken in connection with the above declaration, there is a particular lack of candor in Michael Banda's phrase, "Since the programme of the FLN does not involve land reform or nationalization..." Both Philip Magri and Michael Banda would do well to study the programme adopted by the FLN in its 1956 Congress in the liberated Valley of Summam, particularly its quite advanced provisions for agrarian reform.

"representing the Algerian capitalist class [?]," cannot dream of standing alone against the Algerian masses. Its privileges [?] have been derived from coöperation with colonialism, and their perpetuation requires the continued "French presence" in Algeria as a counterweight against the Algerian revolution.

According to that thesis, one would then expect the MNA, that authentic representative and leadership of the "Algerian revolution," to stand for unconditional independence. Alas, against the "verbal extremism" of the FLN, the MNA asks—I quote—"that the war be ended by means of a round-table conference at which all French and Algerian tendencies involved would be represented," *without* prior recognition of independence by France.

What does that mean? It means that the representatives of different Algerian parties *plus* the representatives of French settlers in Algeria will start "discussing" its future status with French imperialism, i.e., repeat the sterile policy of stagnation and practical passivity which Messali has consistently followed for many years and which provoked the crisis and split in his organization! It means that the French imperialists will be allowed to play the cards of communal and national differences among the various sectors of the Algerian people, instead of a united front of anti-imperialist struggle being built. It means giving up the tremendous advantages won by the armed revolutionary struggles through countless sacrifices of thousands and thousands of the best sons and daughters of the Algerian people.

It means more. The actual slogan launched by the MNA for many months was the slogan, "For an Aix-les-Bains on the Algerian question." Now the Aix-les-Bains round-table conference to which this slogan alludes was the conference which granted formal independence to Morocco *while* "safeguarding" the economic interests of French imperialism in that country. (In the December 1957 issue of the newspaper *La Voix du Travailleur Algérien*, organ of the MNA-controlled trade-union federation, the USTA, Ahmed Bekhat, its secretary, since killed, published an article on the Bamako Conference, that brought together most of the political militants of the French colonies of Central Africa at the end of September 1957. In this article he wrote: "We have seen that the African people are whole-heartedly ready to build a union with France on a basis of equality." Terrible words if we recall the moment when they were written. At the moment when the Algerian people had gone into open insurrection, whose example has been inspiring and will continue to inspire the revolutionary movement in Central Africa, the so-called "left-wing" leader of the Algerian nationalist movement calmly takes the opinion of the reformist collaborationist tendency among the petty-bourgeois politicians for the opinions

of "the people"! And then they condemn the FLN for "collaborationist" tendencies?)

So now we have the following ludicrous picture painted by Philip Magri: the FLN, which stands flatly in so many words for unconditional independence, and refuses to stop the civil war until the imperialists formally recognize that independence, is accused of really wanting "to share power" with French imperialism; but the MNA, which actually launches the slogan for a conference leading to a share-the-power compromise, is presented as the staunch defender of unconditional independence! It is hard to imagine a more grotesque distortion of truth and facts than this completely upside-down picture.

### NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND PERMANENT REVOLUTION

Philip Magri tries to make some capital out of the fact that the MNA defends the "consistently democratic position" of self-determination by means of free elections for a sovereign Constituent Assembly. But the FLN recognizes the same principle. The whole question here is, *who and under what conditions will call for these elections?*

The Algerian people have had a bitter experience with "general elections." Philip Magri himself describes how "all the elections in Algeria were outrageously falsified" after 1945. Now at that time there was relative "peace" in Algeria, whereas today there are 500,000 French soldiers and tens of thousands of armed European "militiamen." Under these conditions could "elections" be anything but a sinister farce? The position of the FLN is that only a provisional Algerian government could call for general elections *after* the recognition of Algerian independence and *after* the withdrawal of French troops.

It might be said that democratic guarantees for elections under these conditions would be found insufficient. The right for all Algerian national parties, all shades of Algerian national opinion, to participate in these elections, could and should be demanded. We ourselves would always defend the right of the MNA to participate in the elections. But is it not clear that the FLN position is far more anti-imperialist, revolutionary, and democratic than that of the MNA which, *in the midst of a war*, calls for a "democratic election" without saying one word about the presence of the sanguinary occupation troops!

This is all the worse because it has been the political programme of that reformist stooge of French imperialism, Guy Mollet, to counterpose "democratic elections after a cease-fire" to the FLN's demand for unconditional recognition of Algerian independence. The MNA slogan came dangerously close to that *imperialist* one; and what

is implied in the latter has been made clear by that French Noske called Robert Lacoste, who openly stated last week in the French National Assembly that a "cease-fire" implied *disarmament* of the rebels, and that no elections could be held without those rebels being disarmed.

The position now becomes quite clear. In the armed uprising of the Algerian people against French imperialism, the FLN, leaders of the revolution, whatever may be the insufficiency of their doctrine or the opportunism of their tactics, call for unconditional independence and for the withdrawal or disarming of the imperialist troops: the imperialists, for their part, logically stand for the disarming (ie, wholesale murder) of the revolutionaries, and "free elections" afterwards. And what does that "vanguard" organization called the MNA stand for? For a round-table conference of both camps and "free elections," without mentioning the few hundreds of thousands of people busy cutting each other's throats in the war! One could make a definition of that position. But it would certainly not be the definition "Bolshevism" or "socialism."

The question of the winning of national independence by an armed uprising of the masses is a decisive question in the unfolding of the revolutionary process in a colonial or semi-colonial country. It is no accident that the colonial or semi-colonial bourgeoisies, from Ghana to India, and from Argentina to Iran, have always shied away from the perspective of an armed mass uprising against imperialism. Their way to "win independence" has always been that of negotiation, of haggling, of compromise, of "round-table" conferences, which enabled them to keep the masses from violent action and to maintain important economic links with imperialism. On the other hand, the strategy of proletarian parties in the national-liberation struggles of colonial countries has always consisted in developing the mass struggle, culminating in the armed uprising, to its logical conclusion, because the theory of the permanent revolution teaches us that the process that begins as an armed mass struggle for national independence ends as a civil war for proletarian dictatorship.

The hesitations, weakness, and betrayal of the Indian bourgeois national Congress leadership prevented this process from working out completely in India in August 1952; the same characteristics of the bourgeois Mossadegh leadership in Iran, of the bourgeois Arbenz leadership in Guatemala, of the bourgeois Perón leadership in Argentina, enabled imperialist or pro-imperialist counter-revolution in each of these cases to triumph temporarily without organized armed mass resistance. But the example of Jugoslavia shows that where a revolutionary leadership, even an opportunist Stalinist one, consistently tries to develop the mass uprising for national independence, it is forced by the logic of the situa-

tion and the pressure of the masses to trespass on the fields of social revolution. There are many signs that the same process is taking place in Algeria, with incalculable consequences for the whole of North Africa. The confirmation of that revolutionary process would shatter the shaky compromises in Tunisia and Morocco, would bring about a new stage of the North African revolution, and would give a tremendous impulse to the revolution in all Arab countries.

Already today the relations between Bourguiba and that part of the FLN revolutionary army stationed on Tunisian territory are very strained. They are indeed strained to the point where American imperialism felt it wise to send some arms to Bourguiba to enable him to defend himself against the much stronger Algerian forces. In Morocco the FLN partisans openly collaborate with the Liberation Army, against the pro-imperialist stooges around King Mohammed V.

It is true that the FLN leadership as a whole cannot be said to work consciously for a socialist Algeria. But by developing the mass uprising more and more broadly, by preparing and putting into effect regionally the general arming of the whole population, it is objectively preparing the socialist Algeria and socialist Middle East of tomorrow. It deserves unconditional support in its fight against imperialism, and friendly criticism in working out its politics. It does not deserve irresponsible attacks and slanderous gossip, copied from the imperialist yellow press which, like Philip Magri, speaks of them only as "gangs of killers" and "assassins."

### THE BELLOUNIS CASE

In the last weeks, however, at the very time that Philip Magri's articles were being printed in *The Militant*, the real situation in the Algerian national movement has been made even clearer by the dramatic betrayal of Bellounis.

Bellounis was the only important underground leader heading a large group of armed fighters in Algeria in the name of the MNA. The Algerian "maquis" visited by the French journalist Claude Gerard, whom Philip Magri quotes, was precisely the "maquis" organized and led by Bellounis. After many months of very strange and shady goings-on, Bellounis, at the beginning of December 1957, signed an agreement with the French imperialist army. In the first public declaration, published by the French newspapers, he declared:

If I should be recognized as representing the national army of the Algerian people and the Algerian National Movement, and if Messali Hadj were recognized as the "valid negotiator," I am ready to participate in the pacification [!] of Algeria with my army.

As there are differences among the imperialists,

and most of them do not think it useful to "play up" the MNA and Messali, Bellounis a few days later made a speech over the French radio of Algiers, in which, without mentioning the name of Messali, he denied having any links with the MNA.

Some provinces of Algeria were covered with his "proclamations," in which he defends the position of "free elections" in his somewhat special manner:

I hereby solemnly declare that my army is struggling against the anarchistic [!] forces of foreign obedience represented by the FLN, in order to liberate the population of this country from their [!] cruel rule. My goal is essentially to allow everyone to express himself freely on the day when the destruction of the FLN will allow the people of Algeria to define freely [!] their destiny in a harmonious framework *indissolubly linked with France.*

I have undertaken this struggle in close collaboration and friendship [!] with the civil and military authorities of France. My army is engaged in the struggle which France wages against the killers of the FLN, who spare neither women nor children nor old people.

Bellounis, of course, has become a vulgar traitor. After his proclamation and the open collaboration of his armed forces with the imperialist army, there can be no doubt about this. But Bellounis was defended by Messali and his friends till the very last moment; *why do they keep silent today? Why don't they openly and publicly dissociate themselves from this traitor?* (In its issue of 6 January, *The Militant* states that "the MNA has disclaimed any connection with Bellounis or his action." I believe that *The Militant* published this statement in good faith, and that some "informants" have deliberately provided incorrect information to its editors. Because in fact, *no such declaration of the MNA has been published anywhere:* and several French left newspapers have repeatedly declared that Messali Hadj, while refusing himself to come to terms with imperialism, has also refused to denounce Bellounis, because the majority of his followers in Algeria approve Bellounis.)

We do not want to identify the MNA or Messali with Bellounis; neither do we identify with the MNA that irresponsible split-off group of French Trotskyism led by Lambert. But what should one say about these people when one reads the following sentence in their newspaper, *La Vérité*, of 14 November 1957?

With regard to the objectives of Bellounis and the situation in the zone he controls, most fantastic and contradictory information has circulated and still circulates. On the other hand, the assertions of those who pretend that Bellounis has gone over "to serve France" are brought into question when one reads [...] *l'Action*, the official paper of Bourguiba, which,

in its issue of 28 October, says that Bellounis has reached a "modus vivendi" with the French troops, that is to say, an armistice, which is a purely military situation [!] and which does not presuppose any particular policy.

The "purely" military situation which involves collaboration with the French army against "anarchistic," "communist" assassins—doesn't that remind one of the behavior of the Mihailovitch forces in Yugoslavia making "armistices" with the fascist forces against Tito's "gangs of assassins"?

Furthermore, after Bellounis's political betrayal became public and he went over into the camp of imperialism, a trial was being held in Algiers of some MNA militants. According to *Le Monde* of 15 January 1958 they claimed that they were MNA people and that they had fought under the leadership of Si Lahoucine and Si Mohammed Bellounis. Two days later, *Le Monde* gave the following excerpt from the speech for the defense made by Lawyer Dechézelles, a close friend of Messali Hadj:

Today my task could be easy; for if these men had not been captured in 1956, they would be part of an army which seems to have been recognized [!] by the French government. I do not wish to penetrate into the mysteries of government affairs, but I am forced to state that the civil and military authorities have come to an agreement with the chief of these accused: Bellounis.

Some sophists have tried to compare the "desperate situation" of the Bellounis forces to the situation of the POUM and Trotskyist armed forces on the Spanish Civil War front, when Stalinist repression closed in on them from behind. I have already explained why the social and political characterization of the FLN makes such a comparison absolutely slanderous. The Stalinists in Spain strangled and killed the revolution; the FLN for the moment organizes it and pushes it forward. But even if the parallel were correct, can anyone for one moment visualize the POUM or the Trotskyists making "purely military" or military and political agreements with Franco for common struggle against the Stalinists? Only the Stalinist slanderers of our movement have ever advanced such possibilities. It will be to the eternal honor of the Trotskyist movement that never and nowhere did it for one moment subordinate the general interests of the revolution and the abyss separating hostile class camps, to its own self-defense. There were no such traitors or turncoats in our movement, no people making "military armistices" with fascism! We must defend the POUM and all honest revolutionaries against slanderous comparisons like this one. And we must openly denounce the unprincipled irresponsibility of people like the Lambert group, which puts the label of "Trotskyism" on sentences like

the above-quoted, which come very near to open betrayal.

Comrades might say: in Spain and in Jugoslavia there was fascism; in France, there is bourgeois democracy; this makes a difference. These comrades are quite wrong. It was not in France that Bellounis made his agreement with the army of imperialist butchers; it was in Algeria. And in Algeria there is not only no bourgeois democracy, there is a regime of terror and wholesale assassination worse than Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1938 and beyond comparison with fascist Italy. The horrors of the imperialist repression in Algeria can be compared only with the worst traits of the Nazis in Poland, Jugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. Conservative figures of the number of innocent civilians slain by the imperialist bandits are around 500,000. In such a situation one chooses one's side without a moment's hesitation. One is the camp of the revolution, whatever may have been the errors or even the crimes of its leaders, and the other is the camp of counter-revolution. And that's where Bellounis is today. Any honest revolutionary who has mistakenly identified himself with that traitor should today show the moral courage of acknowledging his mistake. And an organization like the MNA, which has consistently and proudly identified itself with Bellounis, should dissociate itself all the quicker because of the extent of its past mistake in the matter. History tolerates no misunderstandings on questions of such importance.

#### A DANGEROUS REVISION OF LENINISM

But, it might be asked, how do we explain the bitter fight between the two Algerian nationalist organizations, if there are no class differences between them?

One of the reasons for this fight is, of course, cliquism, which has often and will often in the future play a role in young and rapidly growing revolutionary movements. Messali was the acknowledged leader of the Algerian nationalist movement. At the Hornu Congress of 1954, he had himself nominated "president for life" (a strange proposal for a socialist, don't you think?). When he saw that control over the mass movement and the revolution was escaping from him, he tried to recapture it by all means, abandoning thereby all principled positions and becoming cynical and demoralized.

But of course there is a question of "profound political difference" between Messali and the FLN, and that question trickles through Philip Magri's articles, although it is nowhere explicitly stated. Magri many times alludes to the "necessary solidarity between the French proletariat and the Algerian masses." This seems OK, of course. But what is behind this correct phrase is Messali's conception that, because of the presence of a million

French settlers in Algeria and the strength of resistance of French imperialism toward the national liberation movement in that country, *the victory of the Algerian revolution is impossible without a revolutionary upsurge in France.* As there is no immediate prospect of such an upsurge, the Algerian revolution cannot achieve military victory.

During the last session of the United Nations General Assembly, according to the newspaper *Le Monde*, the MNA issued a communiqué stating that "the end of the Algerian conflict cannot be the result of military victory. The only democratic and just solution can be the organization of free elections under the effective control of the United Nations."

And the irresponsible Lambert, acting like a mouthpiece for Messali, faithfully echoed in *La Vérité*:

As a result of its relative isolation, essentially from the French proletariat [...] the Algerian people cannot achieve a military victory.

(Issue of 7 November 1957)

Such theories are wrong in principle and unproved and irresponsible in practice. It is true that the proletarian vanguard in a national-liberation movement of a colonial country must be internationalist in theory and action, that it must call on the oppressed people of its own country not to identify the rulers of the metropolitan country with the exploited toilers of that country. It is also true that the victory of the colonial revolution will be the easier and the quicker, the more energetically the proletariat of the metropolitan country joins in the fight against imperialism. But it is absolutely wrong that the armed uprising or the revolution of the oppressed people must be subordinated in any way to the "favorable timetable" for revolution... in the metropolitan country. On the contrary, the revolutionaries of the colonial country must audaciously forge ahead, conscious of the fact that by the blows they are striking against imperialism, *they are preparing* the revolutionary upsurge in the metropolitan country.

Philip Magri comes close to formulating this wrong and dangerous theory of the "impossibility of a victorious *revolution* in a single country" when he writes in the 6 January *Militant*: "Exhaustion of the Algerian revolutionary forces is a serious danger," when he speaks of a "deadlock," and when he concludes:

But the French workers will have to act soon, for the war of attrition has begun to tell on the Algerians. As Messali has emphasized all his life, the fate of the Algerian revolution rests in the hands of the French working class.

This thesis of the "exhaustion" of the Algerian revolution was feverishly developed by French imperialism on the eve of and during the session



of the United Nations General Assembly, in order to prevent an "internationalization" of the Algerian conflict. All bourgeois and pro-imperialist newspapers in France were talking about this "exhaustion." Alas, no sooner was Philip Magri's article printed than the news from Algeria caused great alarm in French imperialist circles. Butcher No. 1, Robert Lacoste himself, was forced to admit that the "rebels" were now so strong and so well-armed they they could go over from "terrorism" to full-fledged "guerilla warfare." And Bourgiba announced to French public opinion, without being contradicted, that the Algerian revolutionists control "large parts of the Algerian territory."

Under these conditions, talk about "exhaustion" and "attrition" is irresponsible, to use a very moderate term. Working-class and Marxist revolutionists should always be the most enthusiastic and intransigent soldiers in the struggle for national liberation, who should tell the downtrodden masses that *they are able to liberate themselves*, and not constantly shed doubt on the future of the colonial revolution and repeat the defeatist and anti-Leninist thesis that without action of the metropolitan proletariat the colonial revolution is doomed to defeat.

Lambert even dares reproach the FLN leadership for its "adventurism" which "favors" the climate for war in France! This is Leninism turned upside-down. When the exploited people of the colony rise, it is the task of the vanguard of the metropolitan proletariat to call tirelessly on the masses to come to the *defense and active help* of the colonial revolution, irrespective of the "errors" and "mistakes" of its leaders. To correct these "errors" is primarily the task of the proletarian revolutionaries of the colonial countries, rather than of the workers of the metropolitan countries. They must first *win the right* to "correct the errors" of the colonial revolution by showing in practice their capacity to help this revolution.

Now in practice the French proletariat, owing to the betrayal of the Stalinist and reformist leaderships, and to the hesitations and procrastinations of the most influential centrists, has *done nothing* to help the Algerian revolution. There has not been one strike in a harbor; there has not been one ship transporting soldiers or loaded with munitions

which was held up 24 hours; there was not one general strike on an all-city level anywhere in France against the Algerian war. Under these circumstances, it is not very becoming for a French revolutionist to reproach the heroic leaders of the Algerian revolution for their "nationalism"; he would do better to address these reproaches to the leaders, cadres, and even sometimes militants, of the working-class organizations of his own country.

It is significant that the FLN is not only far to the left of bourgeois-nationalist parties such as Bourgiba's Neo-Destour or the Moroccan Istiqlal. Its criticism of Stalinism is also criticism of a *left* nature. CP leader Léon Faix was forced last week in the Stalinist paper *France Nouvelle* to get into public polemics with the FLN over its accusations that the French CP leadership is criminally inactive with regard to the Algerian war. He timidly reproaches the FLN for its "ingratitude," saying that French Communists have "done much" to help the Algerian revolution. In reality, the bitter FLN criticism of the criminal passivity of French Stalinism has found broad echoes inside the French CP, and especially in the international Communist movement (Moroccan and Tunisian CPs, Yugoslav CP, Polish CP, Chinese CP, etc.).

There is no imperialist war in Algeria; there is a war of liberation by an exploited people against imperialist slavemongers. Under these conditions, no honest revolutionary can "wage a war on two fronts." Leninism teaches us that under such conditions the only correct position is the united front, not made conditional on politics within the colonial revolution, between the working class of the imperialist country and the colonial revolution. *for the defeat of imperialism*. The MNA, Messali, and the Lambert group have never said this in so many words. Our International and its French section are proud to be the only working-class organizations that have consistently defended that position. *The Militant* would do well to defend it also.

Fraternally,  
PATRICK O'DANIEL

Paris  
3 February 1958

### SECTION XIII: TIM WOHLFORTH'S INITIAL VIEWS ON REUNIFICATION

Tim Wohlforth was the central leader of the grouping that was recruited to the SWP from the Shachtmanite Socialist Youth League during the regroupment period. This grouping opposed Shachtman's decision to lead the SYL and its parent group, the Independent Socialist League, into the Socialist Party.

Wohlforth played a role in helping to rebuild a Trotskyist youth movement in the United States. At the time of this correspondence, he was the editor of the *Young Socialist*. Later he became the first national chairman of the Young Socialist Alliance.

As a new recruit to the Socialist Workers Party, Wohlforth found it difficult to understand the continuing split in the Fourth International, given the apparent narrowness of the differences. He sought to establish contact with the IS in a series of letters to the editors of *4th International*, the quarterly magazine published by the IS. In addition, he made known his disagreement with the

bitter factional tone which the British Trotskyist press was wont to adopt toward the IS.

Discussions with party leaders and a new outburst of factionalism initiated by Pablo led Wohlforth to terminate this correspondence.

Later, Wohlforth changed his mind about the desirability of reunification and became the leader of the American contingent of the international faction opposed to reunification. After Healy split from the reunified Trotskyist movement, Wohlforth became the leader of the American Committee for the Fourth International (later renamed the Workers League). After ten years of persistent effort to build this organization, Wohlforth was driven out in a Healyite witch-hunt against "CIA agents."

This experience led him to rethink a number of political questions—including the reunification—and Wohlforth rejoined the SWP in 1976.

1. Letter from Tim Wohlforth to Pierre Frank, editor of 4th International (April 7, 1958)

The Young Socialist  
new address: 144 Second Ave.  
New York 3, N.Y.

Dear Comrade Frank,

Enclosed is the current issue of our publication, the *Young Socialist*. I am sending by separate mail a set of back issues and some other relevant material.

I would appreciate it if we could establish an exchange of publications with you. I will be happy to send you a small bundle of YSs regularly if you need them or if not will simply enter a single exchange sub for you. We would like to receive the *4th International* in return. In addition I would like a list of publications of groups affiliated to the Executive Committee so that I can write to them for similar exchanges. I appreciate any help you can give me in this.

The *Young Socialist* is a new publication, having published its first issue last September. Today it is America's only socialist youth paper. Its supporters come from a rather diverse political background. I myself was formerly on the national committee of the Young Socialist League, the Shachtmanite (more or less) youth movement in this country. I, together with others led a left-wing struggle against Shachtman who was in the process of moving even further to the right by melting into the all-but-defunct Social Democracy. The net result was that we got ourselves expelled. We put forward within the YSL the concept of an orientation toward the Stalinist youth which were and are in flux and that, instead of joining the SP, we work to build an independent youth movement including these kids.

Following our expulsion we set up the YS and formed clubs throughout the country including the left-wing

YSLers, SWP youth, ex-LYers [Labor Youth League] (Stalinist youth) and others. So far our efforts have been successful and we are the largest youth force in the U.S., having effectively penetrated deeply into the CP youth ranks, and have made it extremely difficult for the CP to reinvigorate its former dominance of American radical youth. You can gather from the issues of the YS its political nature. We aim to make it a broad revolutionary-socialist paper and not a strictly Trotskyist paper though a Trotskyist point of view does get through pretty well.

I liked the *4th International* very much though I have not had time to read it all. The treatment of Stalinism was quite excellent, especially Germain's speech. However, I do feel the statement, "thus the true and full voice of Trotskyism is no longer heard in the U.S.," is a little absurd. Whatever the differences you may still have with the SWP, at least let us all realize that we are putting forward a Trotskyist, as opposed to a Stalinist, centrist, or Social Democratic point of view.

Also, by the way, I happen to have read your article on "The Third Camp" in a 1951 or so *Fourth International* and found the section on Shachtman very good. The West Coast members of the left wing of the YSL first went into opposition with Shachtman around the war question. I hear that currently they are even thinking of revising their views on WWII along the same lines. If you are interested you might take a look at the current *New International* which contains a long diatribe by Shachtman changing his views on the Leninist party, the split in the SP in 1919, etc., etc., ad nauseum. When we were in the YSL we accused Shachtman of being willing to submerge his politics once in the SP. Now however, it's clear he won't have to as he is changing them even before he gets in.

I would be interested in your opinion of the YS, etc.

Fraternally,  
Tim Wohlforth  
Managing Editor

2. Letter from Tim Wohlforth to Sherry Mangan (May 21, 1958)

Dear Comrade O'Daniel,

This is in answer to your two letters of recent vintage. I am sorry for not writing right away, but I was waiting for your promised letter on the YS. I guess that the current turn of events in France have been enough to keep you busy these days!

I greatly appreciated hearing from you and getting the addresses. I am looking forward to hearing from you at greater length and getting the Spring issue of the *4th International*.

Since I first wrote you I have read the current issue more or less cover to cover. The documents on Stalinism were especially impressive. They had an all-over sweep and consistency which show a very high level of theoretical work as well as a testament to the advancement of Marxist thought over the last few years, taking into account the developments in Poland, Hungary, etc. Except for one or two minor formulations I cannot see any differences that I have with them.

In addition I have been looking into the controversy over

the MNA business. I have studied your letter and Magri's [Mage] reply that was printed in a bulletin that you have no doubt received. In addition I looked over Banda's article in the current *Labour Review*. While I am not fluent in French and therefore have little or no actual material to go on, I generally feel that a position of support for the FLN is the correct one. I feel that the FLN's position on the all-important question of recognition of independence before negotiations is superior to the MNA's complicated pseudodemocratic formulations which leave a hundred and one openings for imperialism, not the least dangerous one being the UN supervision gimmick.

However I feel the real danger in the Banda-Lambert-Magri position is the attempt to glorify the MNA as a socialist tendency, seeing the struggle with the FLN as a sort of class struggle. Far better to recognize the petty-bourgeois nature of both groupings than to allow wishful thinking to dominate over political reality.

The most serious aspect of Banda's article was his uncalled-for slurs against you people. Not being one for particularly "soft" formulations, I do feel that we should not use our terminology as swear words. Regardless of the differences we have, let us recognize that we are all Marxists and Trotskyists. Thus I must object to the

attacks on you as vigorously (really more vigorously) than yours on the SWP.

In any event I hope that the present differences existing on the Algerian question will not be utilized and intensified as a block to unity.

You will probably notice in the current issue of the YS some articles at rather wide variance with a revolutionary-socialist outlook. This is especially the case with the Turner-Max article on peace. However this problem has been resolved with the resignation of these two editorial board members who to whatever degree that they were at variance with the Stalinist position, were to that degree moving in a reformist direction. We hope that from now on the paper's line will be clearer even though we will still have discussion articles from a wide range of political points of view, and put out a paper that will help us reach further into the ex-LYL milieu.

By the way, if you have any extra copies of the first issue of your magazine, please send them as we could use them here. You may shortly hear from one or another of our youth groups requesting to carry your magazine—

along with the *ISR*, *Labour Review*, etc.

Hoping to hear from you,

Fraternally,  
Tim Wohlforth  
Managing Editor

P.S. Excuse the copy paper but I am writing you at work. I am working at the *National Guardian* presently for a while.

PPS—Please send the promised address of the Belgium youth as we would greatly like to get in touch with them as I am sure we can be of assistance to each other. My brief acquaintance with the European youth situation indicates some tremendous opportunities in some of the Social Democratic orgs. like the Falcons in Germany. Any information you can give me on the European youth situation would be greatly appreciated. Also I would like it if there is a French youth I could correspond with for information and/or an occasional article. Enclosed is a copy of a letter to *Labour Review* which is not meant for publication.

### 3. Letter from Tim Wohlforth to the editorial board of the British Trotskyist magazine *Labour Review* (May 21, 1958)

118 W. 90th St  
New York 25, N.Y.

Dear Comrades:

This is a private letter to you (not for publication) to express both my warm gratification in reading your publication as well as some thoughts on one article you have printed.

Let me state at the outset that I feel your publication is the finest Marxist publication in English and that it is a remarkable achievement. The current issue (March-April) is about the best all-around issue, though the best article you have printed was Fryer's on Lenin. The sharp editorial on Thompson seems to be perfectly in order and points to the necessity to polemicize with those who have broken with Stalinism only to travel to the right, while going as far as possible to reach those moving in our direction. The Redman historical material is also very fine. Your magazine so far has been very well received among young people who come in contact with it. Its total seriousness about Marxism is its greatest virtue and most appealing feature.

However, I feel compelled to take issue with one article—Michael Banda on the Algerian revolution. Aside from the political point of view expressed in it, with which I have some differences, I must object strongly to the formulations on the Pabloites. I have read their material as printed in the *4th International*, and I am sure any serious Marxist would be forced to admit that these people are "Marxists" and "Trotskyists". Therefore Banda's remarks about their "spurious claims" to be Marxists and Trotskyists are completely out of touch with reality.

In this world we have many enemies, many hostile tendencies and forces. It is necessary to polemicize against these. But let us not confuse those who are in our camp, although we have important disagreements, with the opponent forces like Thompson, etc. Such an approach can

only impede a genuine regroupment of revolutionary-socialist forces on a world scale. Such a regroupment is our main international task if we are to be in shape to exert a real influence in the future—and we must be in such shape for humanity's sake.

I would like also throw out a few thoughts on the MNA-FLN controversy itself for what it is worth. I am no expert in the field but I have read O'Daniel's [Mangan] open letter to the *Militant*, Magri's [Mage] answer, the *Militant* articles, Banda's articles, and various material printed in the *Militant* and *Labor Action* here.

There seem to be four main factors in the argument: 1. the assassination question; 2. the programs of the groups; 3. the composition and strength of the groupings; and 4. differing attitudes toward negotiations and a solution to the Algerian question.

1.) There has been too much of a tendency of the revolutionary socialists to attempt to rationalize the shootings by defending one or the other group that has been shooting. It is clear that both the MNA and FLN have engaged in this practice and that therefore both have resorted to petty-bourgeois, antisocialist terrorist actions. Our tack is to clearly attack such tactics regardless of who uses them. However, we are willing to defend a national revolution against imperialism led by a group or groups that use such tactics even against ourselves.

2.) Both groupings have formulated social programs of one sort or another to win over working-class support. The MNA may have an edge in this matter but it does not seem to have a qualitatively better program than the FLN. In any event it is clear that neither grouping can be correctly characterized programmatically as "socialist"—certainly no more than Nehru can be. In addition, while the FLN has difficulties explaining away the past of the majority of its present leadership which has been compromised with imperialism, the MNA is not itself "clean." First there is the Bellounis business. No matter how you look at it, the selling out of an army 3,000 strong to the French was a blow to the MNA and compromised it in the eyes of the Algerian masses. Secondly, the refusal of the MNA leader-

ship to dissociate itself publicly from Bellounis also cannot be rationalized away. It was an opportunist act and must be labeled so. Finally, Hadj's letter to Eisenhower was as compromising, or even more so, than anything the FLN has done. Thus we see that programmatically there is no qualitative difference between the two groupings.

3.) As far as strength goes no one will challenge the statement that the FLN is *the* force in Algeria that is actually conducting the struggle against the French. After the desertion of Bellounis the MNA has literally no troops of its own in the field. The mass of Algerians in Algeria who are actually fighting are in the FLN or in FLN-led armies. This means that the national revolution is in effect being conducted for all intents and purposes by the FLN. In France the MNA still has strength but even this is slipping and the FLN is gaining among the Algerian workers.

4.) Finally we come to the crucial questions: differing attitudes on negotiations with the French. Here I am afraid I must part from the "both are just as bad" formula for the MNA comes out worse. The FLN program would insist on recognition of independence before negotiations. Then it would have the FLN establish the new relations with France. This means that the cease-fire would wait until independence is recognized, and that then power would be turned over to the armed people which is the base of the FLN in Algeria. The MNA, on the other hand, has all sorts of what sound like nice "democratic" formulations but which really have a number of dangerous loopholes in them. To start with the MNA *does not* insist on prior recognition of independence, thus in effect leaving the fundamental question of independence up for bargaining at the conference table instead of simply the implementa-

tion of independence. Second, it calls for UN-supervised elections. As Marxists we know that the UN is a tool of American imperialism, and that such "supervision" would be a mechanism for replacing French imperialist power with American imperialist power. Just as we opposed all formulations of UN intervention in Hungary, so we should do so in Algeria. No matter how you look at it the FLN's is the more radical, the more consistently nationalist, anti-imperialist position. What about the democratic character of the MNA proposal? I think this is a little beside the point. The future of Algeria depends on winning over the minds of those who hold the guns—they will be the state and the power—until someone tries to talk them into disarming so that the nice little UN can supervise the elections. I will trust the FLN any day over the UN, not because I trust the leadership of the FLN, but because I trust the masses and the objective social forces impelling them onward.

Regardless of your views on my above remarks, you must admit two things: *a.* The question in dispute is not a simple one and a Marxist could come out with a position of support to either grouping, and *b.* Therefore let us not dirty the name of Trotskyism by carrying on our feuds in an irresponsible manner.

Fraternally,  
Tim Wohlforth  
Managing Editor  
*Young Socialist*

P.S. I am sending this as a private letter because I believe the discussion over this question should take place in a private fashion so as not to weaken our public front to our opponents.

#### 4. Letter from Tim Wohlforth to Sherry Mangan (July 18, 1958)

144 Second Ave.  
New York 3, N.Y.

Dear Comrade O'Daniel,

Forgive my delay in answering your last letter but the pressure of work brought on by the continuing youth work plus the additional burden of working full time on the *National Guardian* (it is a rather new period when a Trotskyist can work on that particular paper) has made it impossible to find time for correspondence. Now I am back on full time for the youth.

Thank you for sending us the copies of both issues of the *4th International*. They created a good deal of interest here. In fact I am all out of the first issue and only have a couple of copies of the second issue left.

I sent out the first issue to our leading youth comrades throughout the country as I have suggested the Germain report on Stalinism as discussion material for a Russian question discussion that we will probably start at our coming youth conference Labor Day. In fact I could use a few more copies of this as I did not have enough to send a copy to some areas.

I found the second issue of the magazine of yours to be very interesting. I feel it plays a very important function

as a theoretical organ aimed at the Marxist cadre itself on an international level. The comparable organs in English—*Labour Review* and the *International Socialist Review*—play a more propagandistic role which, of course, is extremely important.

I would be interested in your view on the French crisis—more particularly the role played by the various left and Marxist groups—information which it is difficult to get from this distance. I would like to know if there is any difference between the line of your group and Lambert on the developments; whether your group is in the Committee for Revolutionary Action; what exactly is this committee; and whether there have been any repercussions in the CP ranks over the role of its leadership in the events. Also, has the Nagy-Maleter murders had any effect? It sure has shook up things here again.

Things are moving along well here in both the youth and adult areas. The youth are heading for a national conference at which we will set up an organization with a pretty definite revolutionary-socialist program—at least in general outline. I suggest you look at the "Call" in the July YS for an idea of this. The United Socialist Ticket is of course the big thing in adult circles. We have succeeded in bringing back to life the old ALP [American Labor Party] with a few but rather basic changes. Corliss Lamont, McManus of the *Guardian*, Annette Rubinstein, etc., will run in the fall New York State elections. The difference is

that where the CP was in relation to this organization and political group the SWP now stands. In addition the nature of the grouping has veered leftward. For the first time in their lives these "progressive" characters are running openly as socialists against the capitalists. Some of them are even all shook up on the Russian question, with the *National Guardian* strongly protesting the murder of Nagy-Maleter. All this bodes well for the growth of the revolutionary tendency in this country.

I am glad that things are looking up in the moves towards reunification of the international Trotskyist movement. This is, of course, of extreme importance with all the possibilities opening up to all of us on an international scale. If organic unity is not forthcoming immediately, maybe it would be possible to work out a level of international collaboration between the different groups. It seems to me that the SWP leadership is very much interested in reunification as they sent Dobbs to Europe—a rather expensive move for a small party. So I am sure something can be worked out.

I have not heard from the Belgium youth though I look

forward to hearing from them. At least we should be able to work in a reasonably fraternal manner on the youth level which should be beneficial to all.

I hope that governmental harassment is not getting too great for you in Paris these days and that you can continue your operation there. I am looking forward to seeing the next issue of the *4th International*. I have put the various publications named on our exchange list and will drop them notes asking for the same courtesy when we can get to it.

Revolutionary Greetings,  
Tim Wohlforth  
Editor, *Young Socialist*

P.S. Your fifth world congress documents on Stalinism seem to have won over one comrade to a defensist line who had been a leading Shachtmanite since 1949. He spent most of that time fighting Shachtman. What time he had left he spent keeping the SWP off the Berkeley campus (he was rather effective, I might add). Presently he is fighting to get it back on! [The reference is to James Robertson.]

## **Topics Covered in “The Struggle to Reunify the Fourth International” (All Volumes)**

- Section I: The First Parity Commission and Peng Shu-tse’s “Pabloism Reviewed”
- Section II: International Committee Documents
- Section III: A Convergence of Views on the Khrushchev Revelations and the Hungarian Revolution
- Section IV: Growing Interest in Reunification
- Section V: The First Round of Reunification Discussions (1957)
- Section VI: Pablo Rejects the Proposed Basis of Reunification
- Section VII: Healy Voices Support for the Reunification Effort
- Section VIII: Healy Tries to Torpedo Reunification
- Section IX: Discussions at an Impasse
- Section X: Healy is Paralyzing the IC and Blocking Reunification: Letter from Peng Shu-tse to James P. Cannon (April 20, 1958)
- Section XI: Criticisms of the Ceylonese Trotskyists
- Section XII: “The Truth About the Algerian Revolution”: An Open Letter to the *Militant*,” by Sherry Mangan
- Section XIII: Tim Wohlforth’s Initial Views on Reunification
- Section XIV: The SWP Presses for a New Unity Effort
- Section XV: Pablo’s Anti-unity Offensive (1959)
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