

New York, N.Y. 10014

August 22, 1977

To Members of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction

Dear Comrades,

At a three-day meeting August 15-17, 1977, the Steering Committee of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction discussed the present situation in the Fourth International and in the organizations in sympathy with its program and revolutionary-socialist objectives. By a vote of seventeen for and two opposed it was decided to dissolve the faction forthwith. While this step was unilateral, the hope was expressed that the International Majority Tendency will take similar action in the near future.

Representatives of the IMT were invited to attend the sessions as observers. They were thereby able to follow for themselves the debate in the Steering Committee over the advisability or inadvisability of dissolving the faction. At the urging of the pan-Canadian leadership, and in agreement with the representatives of the United Secretariat and French LCR, two representatives of the OCRFI, one from Canada, the other from France, were also invited to attend as observers. Unfortunately, previous engagements prevented them from taking advantage of the opportunity.

A balance sheet of the contributions made to our world movement since 1969 by the LTF members was presented by Jack Barnes. This was adopted and is scheduled to appear in the next issue of the International Internal Discussion Bulletin.

On the specific question of dissolving the LTF, Barry Sheppard made a report, explaining the motivation. His report and his summary of the discussion were adopted. They, too, are scheduled to appear in the next issue of the International Internal Discussion Bulletin.

The reasoning of the majority of the Steering Committee was, in broad outline, as follows:

1. The faction was formed when it became clear that the majority leadership of the Fourth International was defaulting in its responsibility of recognizing the disastrous consequences, particularly in Latin America, of the turn toward the guerrilla war strategy made at the 1969 world congress, and of rectifying this course.

2. When the IMT in December 1976 presented its criticism of the turn as applied in Latin America, entitled "Self-Criticism on Latin America," this removed the main political basis for factional formations in the Fourth International. While vestiges of the old course remain in the form of resolutions passed at the 1974 congress, there is good reason to believe that these can be rescinded.

3. Other differences stemming from the turn in 1969 arose. Some of these remain to be resolved. However, this task of clarification has been hampered to an undue degree by the factional atmosphere engendered by the dispute over the course in Latin America and its consequences. Thus the overall interests of the Fourth International require the elimination of this atmosphere and its replacement by an atmosphere of comradely collaboration at all levels.

4. The feasibility of a vigorous effort along this line has already been demonstrated on a national level in various countries, an outstanding instance being the fusion this month of the factions in Canada that had split publicly. Fostering this trend is a certain convergence of positions on various important issues.

5. If the factional atmosphere can be eliminated, the Fourth International will gain fresh attractiveness, having demonstrated its capacity to maintain a vigorous internal life, including the formation of factions, without ending up in a major split.

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The Leninist Trotskyist Faction has now been dissolved. If any of you have further questions on any details relating to the dissolution, please write. However, this should be done immediately, as we plan to close our office within the next few weeks.

Comradely yours,


Gus Horowitz