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TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND NC MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Our attention has been called to a number of arrests in Spain of militants who have been attracted toward the Fourth International. In some instances it involves persons who consider themselves to be members of the Fourth International. In other instances it appears to involve persons who have only heard about the Fourth International, but from what they have heard consider that to be the organization they were looking for even if they have not been able to get in touch with its representatives.

An instance is the following account that appeared in the April 13 issue of a Spanish newspaper called LaVanguardia:

"Bilbao 12 -- Four minors, all of them high-school students, have been arrested in Bilbao. They are charged with belonging to a clandestine group of 'Trotskyist' persuasion and of having committed various subversive acts.

"On March 25, a group of youths threw stones at the windows of a branch of the Bilbao Bank, and another group broke the windows of the Municipal Savings Bank, both located in the Recaldeberri area. On March 1 a group of the same type had appeared in front of the Provincial Union Headquarters and, after breaking the windows in the doors, threw an incendiary device inside, which burned out without doing much damage.

"On both occasions the actions were carried out by youths of both sexes, some of whom were even carrying their school books, from which it was concluded that they were studying for examinations. On the first occasion, they fled quickly; but on the second, two of them were caught. They were both sixteen years old, high-school students who used as their battle names 'Uxai' and 'Quique.' The two admitted having been directly involved in the actions both at the Provincial Union Headquarters and the two banks in Recaldeberri.

"Two other youths were then arrested, 'Chavi' and 'Manolo,' both eighteen years old, also high-school students. The four, having confessed and been convicted were turned over to the judicial authorities.

"It was learned this morning from informed sources, that the four youths had declared that for the past three or four months they had joined other high-school students of both sexes in various official and private schools in forming groups of a clandestine organization controlled and led by older students, said to be of Trotskyist persuasion whose objective is to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat in Spain. The political group that controls and leads these students from the university is called 'Communism'; but, the better to carry on their agitation and subversive activities, they divide up their tiny groups and orient them toward work in the labor field and among high-school and university students. Each group puts out leaflets bearing such names as 'Proletarian,' 'Red University,' and 'Barricade.'

"About a month ago, according to the same sources, the police arrested two women university students, members of the group called 'Red University,' who were carrying propaganda that led to them being turned over to the judicial authorities. Two other university students were arrested a week ago on charges of belonging to the 'Communism' group. One of them was turned over to the judicial authorities while the other was released for lack of evidence.

"Full declarations were made by the prisoners, enabling the police to identify a great number of students implicated in these actions. Some of them have gone into hiding, abandoning their homes and classes in order to avoid arrest."

Another dispatch dated April 19 from Barcelona, which appeared in a different Spanish paper that we have been unable to identify carried the following item:

"Between 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. last Saturday, various illegal actions were carried out in Sebadell, Tarrasa, and Rubi. This consisted of distributing illegally printed leaflets and pasting up bulletins of similar content.

"The leaflets, according to Europa Press, were signed by the so-called 'Liga Comunista Revolucionaria' of Trotskyist persuasion."

A third item appeared in the Paris daily Figaro of April

"Demonstration in Barcelona of three hundred youths identifying themselves as belonging to the 'Revolutionary Communist League' (Trotskyist), Friday evening, in Barcelona. The demonstrators distributed numerous leaflets, and shouted slogans."

These items were sent to Intercontinental Press with the request that for the time being no publicity be given them save for mentioning the demonstration in Barcelona. IP's correspondents added that some genuine Trotskyists were among those seeking to avoid arrest and that their situation is rather difficult for the moment because of lack of funds. They wondered if word about their plight could be passed on to persons in the United States who might be especially interested in Spain -- whether because of past associations as in the Spanish civil war or because of interest in current developments that have been undermining the Franco regime -- in the hope that they might make a financial contribution.

We are complying with this request and calling it to your attention so that you can mention it to anyone especially interested. Since we do not want to cut into other fund-raising activities, we suggest that perhaps the simplest thing to do -- since a large sum is not involved -- is to simply pass the hat for any voluntary contributions some of the comrades may wish to make and send this in to us.

Comradely,

Jack Barnes

Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary