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**YOUNG SOCIALIST**  
FOR AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST  
FIGHT TO END THE INDOCHINA WAR  
BUILD THE STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S  
STUDENT-FACULTY CONTROL OF  
NATIONALIZE THE POWERS

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International Report



International Report, presented by Al Cappe and adopted by the September 1972 YS/LJS Plenum.

Since the founding of the First International in 1864, internationalism has been the touchstone of the Marxist movement. The primacy of a perspective of world revolution, has been the question behind major splits and unifications of the world socialist movement since its inception. The Second International collapsed in 1914 as its component parties, with few exceptions, lined up behind the imperialist war machines of their respective countries. The Third Communist International was founded in 1919 to organize a world party based on the internationalist and revolutionary principles of the Russian Bolsheviks.

As a privileged bureaucratic caste, headed by Stalin, triumphed in the first workers state -- the Soviet Union -- the perspective of internationalism was abandoned. The needs of the world revolution were subordinated to the narrow, national needs of the bureaucracy; and the Third International became nothing but a tool to this end. The struggle against this degeneration was waged by the International Left Opposition, under the leadership of Leon Trotsky, who counterposed a strategy for world revolution to Stalin's theory of "Socialism in One Country".

The Third International abandoned its role of leading the world revolution and finally, under the pressure of Stalin's wartime allies, was dissolved in 1943. It was ten years earlier, after the massive Communist Party in Germany had capitulated to fascism without a fight, that the Left Opposition called for a new international -- one that could continue the traditions of the First, Second and Third. The Fourth International was founded in 1938 growing out of a struggle to maintain an internationalist perspective.

The first years of the new international were extremely difficult. In 1940 Trotsky was assassinated by Stalinist agents. Both the imperialists and the Stalinists sought out and persecuted the young comrades. In the Soviet Union oppositionists were exterminated. Many were murdered in Nazi concentration camps. Even in Canada the movement was forced to work underground during the war.

But the Fourth International survived these years, as well as the McCarthyite witch-hunt of the early '50's. And as the world revolution surged forward again and the current radicalization began to flourish, sections of the International were rebuilt: new revolutionists came into the ranks of the sections which had remained intact, and new sections appeared.

The reason why revolutionists have devoted so much of their attention and energies to the building of an international movement is to be found in the nature of the capitalist system and the powerful enemy we face.

Capitalism is a world system, and despite important conflicts between them the capitalists of all countries maintain a close collaboration to defeat their common enemy -- the world revolution. They are organized on a world scale with an international strategy. To bring about the victory of world socialist revolution, an international organization with a counter strategy is necessary.

Particularly in this age of imperialism, events in one country deeply affect another. The victorious revolution in Cuba opened the way for the youth radicalization of the 60's. In fact, it is impossible for revolut-

ionists to understand the events of their own country unless they have an international view, studying the struggle for markets, the inter-imperialist rivalries that affect national economies etc. For example, our understanding of the central role of Vietnam in the world revolution made us best able to respond to the radicalization in Canada.

Secondly, a world movement is necessary to overcome the divisions of the oppressed into national boundaries and nation states. The ruling class uses national chauvinism and exploits language, cultural and social differences to cut across any international solidarity.

Internationalism and the construction of an international movement are necessary if the experiences in various parts of the world are to be absorbed, and the lessons of struggles are to be passed on to revolutionists around the world. Moreover a world strategy is needed from which national sections can work out the application to their country.

For the revolutionists of the Young Socialists/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes internationalism has never been an abstract solidarity or identification with the struggles in other parts of the world. It is fundamental to our general political perspectives and it is a real and concrete component of both our program and activities. For example, the document on the worldwide youth radicalization presented to the Fourth International is the basis of the intervention of the YS/LJS.

The YS/LJS was born in the defence of the Cuban revolution and the Black struggle through our understanding of their impact on the youth of Canada and Quebec. We, like Trotskyists around the world are the most consistent and active defenders of the Vietnamese revolution and we are the leadership of the organized antiwar movement in this country. We carried the international defence for Hugo Blanco, and for other political prisoners in Latin America, most recently those in Argentina. We can point proudly to the work done by our Ottawa comrades for Humberto Pagan. Just last year we carried campus tours on the Irish revolution and the struggle in Bengla Desh.

We have declared our solidarity with the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere, Canadian section of the Fourth International, committing ourselves to building and defending it, and we have united with it in a common movement whose task is the building of the revolutionary party in Canada. As a revolutionary socialist youth organization we see our task as the winning of the best of our generation to the program of Trotskyism, to train them as cadres for the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere and the Fourth International. As a sympathizing youth organization this is our concrete contribution to the building of the Fourth International, World Party of Socialist Revolution.

### Vietnam

At the center of the world revolution is the struggle in Vietnam. The Canadian Trotskyists, like their comrades around the world, have been the most consistent defenders of the heroic fighters of the Vietnamese who stand in the front lines of battle against imperialism.

Never before have our efforts in aid of Vietnam been so necessary. The corrupt bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking have raced each other to shake hands with Nixon and it is without doubt that their secret deals have struck

a blow at the Vietnamese revolution. There will be a cutback on the even meager aid which the Vietnamese now receive from them and we can expect increasing pressures on the Vietnamese to sacrifice their interests in a settlement. Far from creating any peaceful co-existence with imperialism, the diplomatic maneuvering and the lack of response to the mining of the harbours, has only served to embolden imperialism and as well to demobilize the antiwar movement, creating the conditions for the US's present monstrous air offensive across all Vietnam.

We have to continue our efforts to build the antiwar movement in Canada and to defend the Vietnamese. We have to expose the complicity of the Canadian government in US aggression.

As revolutionary internationalists, we have a responsibility not only to build a concrete defence of the Vietnamese, but in doing so to educate Canadian and Quebecois students as to why they must defend the struggles of the oppressed around the world and raise them beyond local and national concerns to point out the world system of capitalism and imperialism.

The work we have done to build the Canadian antiwar movement and to expose the real character of the Canadian state is one of our great achievements.

Defending the Vietnamese revolution remains our prime task this fall. Other reports to this plenum will elaborate further on our concrete plans for this work.

### The Fourth International

The Fourth International has experienced a very inspiring growth. The French section, the Ligue Communiste numbers about 2500 members, the International Marxist Group of Britain about 300, the Argentine Revolutionary Workers Party (La Verdad) a sympathizing group which recently fused with the Argentine Socialist Party, close to 1000, and the Canadian section, the LSA/LSO, about 300 members. The Socialist Workers Party, the US Trotskyist organization which is prohibited by reactionary legislation from affiliation to the Fourth International, has undergone an inspiring growth and development of its program to meet new challenges in the radicalization. There are nuclei of new Trotskyist groups in Israel, Iran, Brazil, Martinique, Uruguay, Senegal. There is a nucleus of several hundred in Franco's fascist Spain. Since the last World Congress of the Fourth International twelve new groups have come forward to apply for membership in the International. In general there is a growing eclipse of the other currents in the workers movement -- pro-Moscow Stalinism among youth and vanguard layers, Maoism which has been exposed in the recent events around Ceylon, Bengla Desh and Vietnam; Nasserism; and there is a decline of Guevarism whose strategy has born no fruits in a decade of its application.

But an international movement cannot be built overnight by the simple task of winning more members and sections. It is a long and arduous political task made difficult by the diversity of situations and numerous forms of struggle confronting revolutionists around the globe.

There are many practical problems. Comrades should think of the distances that are involved in organizing congresses and meetings, the

problems posed by immigration authorities. Even some of our Canadian comrades were unable to cross the border and go to Oberlin. As the International grows so does the variety of languages its members speak and with that the massive job of translations. Many comrades are suffering under repression, either they are in jail and unable to participate directly in our political life or police harassment is such that their contact with Trotskyist publications is very irregular.

At the last World Congress, the Latin American comrades had not seen the documents in their own language, been able to discuss them or make contributions, while the biggest debate centered around Latin America. It is most important to note that the majority of the members of the Fourth International were recruited since the world congress and a great many of them have never seen its documents or know little of the debates. Most of them are young people like ourselves who are relatively new to politics and just beginning their political education.

So the building of the world party is not an easy task and the Fourth International is just at the beginning stages of achieving the necessary political clarity and agreement, of constructing the necessary leadership and strong national sections.

There has been much discussion and not a little confusion on the character of the Fourth International and what its statutes represent. Many comrades tend to lift abstractly the norms of a national section to the International not taking into account the differences involved and above all the present stage of development of the Fourth International.

The Fourth International is a democratic centralist organization -- that is striving to achieve the fullest democratic discussion and the utmost in political clarity as the basis for unity in action. Democratic centralism is a fluid concept, subordinate above all to political debate and clarification, and it changes with the concrete situation. Comrades have seen this in our own organization which is involved in an intense debate over marked differences and where we have placed the emphasis on the development of the debate and discussion.

For the Fourth International at this time the emphasis must be on developing fully the political debate and discussion. A democratic centralist world party with a united leadership and strong integrated sections cannot be simply declared or decreed by fiat. It can only be built through the process of political clarity and debate, through discussion which has gone through the ranks of the entire International and not just its leadership. One cannot establish a line correctly when comrades do not even see or discuss the documents before the congress or are unable to participate in the discussion as was the case for many at the last World Congress. Not only are the positions of this coming World Congress yet to be documented translated and distributed to the world movement -- they are still in the process of being formulated. There are only a handful of contributions from the Latin American comrades on the Latin American debate. That debate has essentially focussed around the positions of the European and North American leaders. The discussion only opened at the 1969 Congress on the youth radicalization. The task before the International is to develop fully the lines of the debate and to clarify the differences.

There are many groups in the Fourth International for whom the debates are something very new. There are widely divergent opinions on even the most basic questions like the transitional program, the character of Maoism, the strategy of party building. There is the Argentine section of the Fourth International; the PRT-Combatiente for which Trotskyism is only one of the legitimate continuations of Leninism; Maoism being hailed as another and Castroism as the correct synthesis of the two for Latin America. This is referred to on Page 8 of their document "The Only Road to Workers' Power and Socialism." There is the British section, the International Marxist Group, which elucidated at its last congress a series of positions which to us represented a revision of the method of the transitional program. The IMG majority wrote in its "Perspectives Document" for that congress that the method and perspectives of the SWP were reformist. I need not develop how far-reaching these differences are nor the pressing necessity that the Fourth International discuss and clarify them.

But these examples serve to point out the dangers of putting forward a very rigid plan for centralism in the International. To demand of the various groups of the Fourth International that they champion at this time a particular line or strategy would not serve to build the Fourth International but rather to blow it apart. Unity in action is not based on monolithic agreement but it is based on agreements on fundamentals and on the full understanding by the entire International of the debates involved.

The development of a world party must also be based on the development of a strong international leadership, with an ongoing collaboration. We tend to think of the International leadership as just those well-known comrades. This is false. The leadership of the Fourth International is all the leaderships of all the sections, those comrades who have been tried and tested in the life of their sections and have the confidence of the section. Those of us in this room who see ourselves developing as leaders of the LSA/LSO are future leaders of the Fourth International. The leadership of the Fourth International is far from the homogeneous consolidated body necessary.

This underscores the final point. A strong International can only be based on the development of strong and dynamic national sections with tested leaderships. The basic building block of the international is the national section, where the cadres of the International are tested and trained. The construction of the world party will be a function of the development of the parties around the world and their political integration into a world movement.

As we can see it, the main task before the Fourth International and in particular its leadership bodies is: to provide political leadership, to strive for clarity in the debate, and to maintain the broad principles of Trotskyism. It must seek to involve all the ranks of the International in the discussion.

The Revolutionary Communist Tendency, in our movement, poses in its document "Theses on the Character and Statutes on the Fourth International" that the International is "not yet ready to change national leaderships or impose lines of intervention." It has been the experience of the revolutionary movement that this should never be done. The replacing of

national leaderships and tactical proscriptions from afar are disastrous reducing national parties to mere lifeless puppets. This was the experience of the Third International under Stalin. Comrades could imagine what would happen if the Central Office overruled the elections of locals and told comrades how they should intervene tactically in every struggle that came along. There would be no development in the movement. Such measures, very rare and hazardous in national sections, are all the more excluded in an international movement where the common experience in struggle and the centralization of leadership cadre is so strictly limited.

### Sallustro Kidnapping

The incident around the kidnapping of Sallustro points out clearly some of the main concepts about the character of the Fourth International. We fully developed this in the CEC statement on the Labor Challenge boycott by the United Minority Tendency (appended). We are not called upon, as a rule, to take a stand on the actions of the LSA, but as we were challenged to do so, we took a position.

It is important to remember two main things. First, that the incident involved a grave political error of a principled character. It was not just any action. And, secondly, the incident was widely publicized - in fact, publicized worldwide as a Trotskyist action. It is in light of these two things, and only these things, that the LSA published a statement differentiating itself from the actions of the comrades of the PRT (Combatiente).

The United Minority Tendency, now the Revolutionary Communist Tendency, made three points then and in its recent document.

1. That the statement in Labor Challenge was an attack on the Argentine comrades.
2. That the statement was a breach of democratic centralism, going against the line of the Ninth World Congress publicly.
3. That the actions of the Canadian section put into question its loyalty to the Fourth International.

The first point is simply false. The statement expressed solidarity to the Argentine revolutionists and places the full blame for the violence on the Lanusse regime. It makes a fraternal criticism of the tactics employed by these comrades.

On the second point. Does democratic centralism mean that no section can publicly disagree with any action or statement of any other section -- actions over which there is no means of democratic control? What nonsense! Moreover we have already explained in our statement that it is formal and rigid of the comrades to pose that somehow the LSA/LSO could have hidden the debate. It was already outside the movement, since the position of the LSA has been very clear on kidnapping because of a somewhat similar incident in Quebec involving the FLQ.

The LSA did not publicly oppose a world-congress decision, but a decision of a section which in point of fact was unsupported by a world

congress decision. If the United Secretariat unfortunately refused to take a stand on the Sallustro kidnapping, the position of Trotskyism is clear and speaks volumes. The tactic of individual terror is condemned by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, indeed the entire experience and traditions of the Marxist movement.

On the third point. In our opinion the statement of the LSA Political Committee was proof of its loyalty to the Fourth International. Loyalty is not blind loyalty. It is taking the responsibility to see that the International has a correct orientation. It means that one does not adapt to mistakes which may occur but rather one has the obligation to make honest and fraternal criticism. This is no less than what the comrades in the situation would expect.

The tactic of individual terror has led to the needless death of many of our comrades in Latin America. In our opinion it was the majority leadership of the United Secretariat which did not act in the interests of the Fourth International by not criticizing the PRT-ERP's policy. In fact it gave silent assent by criticizing some of those who did raise a dissenting view (statement appended). Moreover, by endorsing individual terror it was the members of the United Secretariat and not the LSA Political Committee which went beyond the decisions of the World Congress.

Moreover the comrades of the tendency were not showing their loyalty to the Fourth International in boycotting Labor Challenge. Building the Fourth International is building the LSA/LSO. That is what the YS/LJS has committed itself to do.

What a shambles the Fourth International would be if individuals and tendencies in sections or sympathising organizations around the world refused to build their organizations because they were in sympathy with what some other section did or said. That is not Bolshevism. We do not say: "I want a piece of this section of the International and a piece of that section. I won't sell this issue, I'll sell another." We accept the Fourth International and the LSA/LSO as it is and commit ourselves to building them and working out questions as we go.

Similarly we reject any concepts held by currents in the left like the Old Mole, that they are Fourth Internationalists and Trotskyists, because they like one or two of its leading spokespersons. Building the Fourth International in Canada is building the LSA/LSO and the YS/LJS.

#### What We Want to Adopt

At the last World Congress there were three main disputed questions:- the character of the leadership of the Chinese workers state; strategy for the Latin American revolution; and the nature of the youth radicalization.

As a youth organization and not being a section of the International, we are not called upon to take positions on all these questions. Rather we base our positions on those of the LSA/LSO Canadian section of the Fourth International with which we are in political solidarity. We do however follow the debate very closely, and I am sure all the comrades



here have read the documents.

But on two of these questions we are called upon to act.

The document on the world-wide youth radicalization which was set aside at the last World Congress for continued discussion has been endorsed by our movement and has formed the whole basis for our intervention. This question is crucial to our organization.

The debate over Latin America raises fundamental questions for Trotskyists. The positions have been documented and have been tested in life in the struggle in Latin America. Moreover it has become a question in our own movement as raised by the Revolutionary Communist Tendency.

So with this report the CEC is putting forward two positions for adoption by the plenum. First, we should re-affirm our support for the positions outlined in the document, the "World-wide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International". Secondly, we want to take a position on Latin America, specifically in opposition to the line of a continental strategy of rural guerrilla warfare.

### The Youth Radicalization

As an independent youth organization, in sympathy with the Fourth International, the YS/LJS is involved in implementing one of the key orientations outlined at the last World Congress. There a motion was passed stating that the prime task before the Trotskyist movement was the winning to its ranks of the best of the new youth vanguard. The United Secretariat, which corresponds to our Central Executive Council in the structure of the world movement, had unanimously agreed on the document "The World-wide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International" and presented it to the delegates at the World Congress. Because of some criticisms raised by some of the French comrades and others the document was not voted on and the discussion was continued after the Congress. We supported and have endorsed that resolution.

The main points of that resolution are as follows.

There is a new generation of revolutionary fighters engaged in anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle. This youth radicalization has common features world-wide. It is rooted on the one hand in the world-wide crisis of imperialism and, on the other in the decline of Stalinism. As such the youth radicalization is not a passing phenomenon but a permanent feature of the revolutionary struggle today. Its prime arena is among students who have more time and freedom for political thought and activity. The massive university explosion which brought thousands into the universities has increased the potential impact of the student movement and deepened the ties of students to the problems facing the rest of their generation and to the struggles of the working class.

Experience has shown that the student movement can act as a detonator, or a transmission belt for radical ideas and action in the rest of society. A strategy is necessary to link student struggles to those

of other sectors of the society. The resolution outlined the Red University strategy which both transcends and includes student struggles and demands. The Red University could never be fully achieved under capitalism but the struggle for it serves to maximize the impact of the student movement on the overall class struggle. While understanding the social weight of students relative to the working class and other oppressed sectors of the society, revolutionary socialists must give our work in the student movement great weight as it is at present the best arena for recruitment. Finally the resolution outlined the necessity to build independent youth organizations.

This resolution has been confirmed in the last three years both by our own experience here in Canada and Quebec and by events around the world.

The action by a million students in the USA following the Cambodia-Kent events in May 1970 provoked a deep political crisis for the American ruling class. Students were the backbone of the Mukti Bahini in the struggle for the independence of Bengla Desh and the universities are presently the centers of opposition to the bourgeois regime of Mujibur Rahman. In Sri Lanka, the youth of the Janatha Vimukthi Poramuna won enough support in the countryside that the government declared a state of emergency and sent in the army to put down the uprising. In the Young Socialist there have been reports on struggles in Malagasy, South Africa and Argentina where students played the central role. Student struggles have occurred in Tunisia, Philippines, the Caribbean and other areas.

Students in Egypt occupied the universities. They raised demands calling on Sadat to arm the people to fight Zionism and to support the Palestinian liberation fighters. They appealed to the unions for support, and, when the unions were about to join the students in action, the army moved in to put down the upsurge.

In France, the student struggles this March approached the level of those in '68 in campaigns against the government's education "reform" program. There were strikes for guaranteed jobs upon graduation.

England saw its broadest upsurge of students ever. Our comrades intervened actively in the struggles in defence of the student unions which swept one third of the universities. The student upsurge linked up with the miners strike as students organized mass support demonstrations, adding the workers' demands to their own. Students provided accomodation to the miners' flying squads and raised speakers' fees for miner representatives.

In fascist Spain, beginning in the medical colleges thousands of students boycotted classes.

In the workers' states, students have played an important role. In October 1970, there was a ten-day student strike in Belgrade. The universities in Czechoslovakia remain the centers of resistance.

The conditions fermenting the student revolt are not passing away but are deepening with each new crisis for the imperialists and for the

Stalinist bureaucrats. The rise of workers' struggles in the advanced capitalist countries has not killed the student movement or caused it to be by-passed. Rather, the struggles of the student movement have deepened. The emergence of the working class in action, while dominating the political scene, serves to inspire other layers of the population. This is the lesson of the British experience cited above.

Our experiences in Canada have been similar, and what we have learned is being discussed more fully in the Political report and in our political resolution. The actions by tens of thousands of students against Amchitka captured the attention of the entire country and drew sections of the labor movement into mass action. The struggles in Quebec against the extension of the school year began to make links with the May upsurge of the Quebecois workers. New student formations on a national and regional level are being formed. The universities were centers of protest against the War Measures Act.

The schools and universities remain a key area of intervention for revolutionary socialists and the most profitable one for recruitment at the present time. There are no sections of the Fourth International whose overwhelming majority of recruitment has not been from students.

We re-affirm our support to the document on the world-wide youth radicalization. We hope that our documents, discussion and experience can be useful in the coming debate prior to the World Congress of the Fourth International and to the day-to-day work of our comrades around the world.

#### Latin American Debate

At the last World Congress a resolution was adopted on Latin America. It asserted that: "the fundamental perspective, the only realistic perspective for Latin America is that of an armed struggle that may last for long years. This is why the technical preparation can not be seen merely as one of the aspects of revolutionary work, but as the fundamental aspect on a continental scale and one of the fundamental aspects in the countries where the minimum conditions have not yet been met." It stated that the principle axis of the work of the Trotskyist movement must be the technical preparation for and the engagement in rural guerrilla warfare. It stated that there have been great mass mobilizations of the Latin American masses but one "should not conclude from this that the classical variant of the progressive rise and broadening of the mass movement will occur." The repression in Latin America, it stated, was too great "and the adversary is in no wise ready to allow a mass revolutionary movement to organize more or less legally or normally." It further stated that "guerrilla warfare can stimulate a revolutionary dynamic" and what was needed was the "active sympathy, protection and solidarity of the masses".

The debate which this resolution opened has been the central debate in the world movement since the last World Congress. We see this debate as crucial because for us this guerrilla warfare line represents a serious drift away from the Trotskyist and Leninist strategy of party building, from the method of the transitional program and an adaptation to the Castroist and Guevarist currents in Latin America.

This debate is not only taking place in our movement but in the revolutionary vanguard around the world and most particularly in Latin America. It has been going on since the tremendous success of the Cuban revolution. The victory of Fidel Castro and the July 26 movement opened a whole new stage in the world revolution, and inspired a new generation of Latin American revolutionists. With the success of this heroic group ninety miles off the coast of the United States, a new debate opened among revolutionists on Guevarism, on the Cuban road to the revolution. For the July 26 movement, rural guerrilla warfare was its principle, and "Down With Batista" and secondarily land reform its only demands. Many saw this strategy as the path to the revolution.

The Trotskyist movement, which was the first to rush to the defence of the Cuban revolution, was also the first and only to put forward a correct analysis of the Cuban revolution and how and why it took place. We were not thrown back by the events, we did not see them as a refutation of our strategy of party building and mass mobilization, because we were able to analyse the particular and unique circumstances of that revolution.

The July 26 movement started out as a democratic movement with the single demand of Down with Batista, with, later and secondarily, land reform, which had overwhelming support of the country including of course the peasantry. The national bourgeoisie was split, (Che said "latifundistas were neutral") and some poured money into the movement. Che also wrote that "imperialism was suspicious at most" and the New York Times hailed the defeat of Batista and the victory of Castro. The army was demoralized due to the unpopularity of the regime. Castro was able to gain government control, and arm the masses while the ruling class was off guard, before beginning to move toward socialism.

This occurrence cannot be repeated today as the tragic example of Che in Bolivia, of Santo Domingo, and the many rural guerrilla warfare experiments testify. Imperialism sees any democratic movement as a threat and has especially developed its technology and military to defeat it.

These were not the conclusions that the Cubans drew. Their conclusions, due to their lack of political experience, were essentially military ones -- that the military victory was the key, and that the countryside was the focus. Che's theory was that the revolution was ripe all over Latin America and that repression radicalizes the masses. The guerrilla group creates the conditions for that radicalization by provoking a social crisis and thus popular support would be immediately forthcoming. This conception has led to countless tragic defeats in Latin America. Che's fundamental error was in failing to see that while the socio-economic conditions were ripe, the political ones were not. He reduced the complex political process of the class struggle -- leading the day-to-day struggles of the masses, raising their consciousness, winning their confidence, breaking the hold of the reformists over the mass workers organizations, defeating other tendencies etc., etc. -- to a simple tactic of armed struggle. But above all the Cubans did not understand the necessity of building a vanguard party, rooted in the masses and capable of leading them.

There have been no fruits of the Guevarist strategy. Many of the heroic proponents of the rural guerrilla warfare strategy are rethinking their positions -- for example, the Chilean MIR (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria). Hugo Blanco has pointed out that there is a broad debate taking place in the whole Latin American vanguard, a whole generation looking for answers and trying to draw a balance sheet.

We, the Trotskyists, with our understanding of the Leninist theory of party-building, the Transitional Program, the importance of the urban proletariat, the Cuban events, are the only ones able to provide those answers. Our intervention in this debate is crucial.

But when we examine closely the continental strategy of rural guerrilla warfare as was posed at the last World Congress and is now put forward by some in the International including the Revolutionary Communist Tendency within our movement, we see that what it comes down to in life is not substantially different from the guerrillista strategy. It holds that because the repression is so fierce the task of mobilizing the masses and building the party must be set aside and rural guerrilla warfare launched. What the party does is simply recruit the minimum number of militants and provide liason and direction for the guerrilla groups. The tactic of guerrilla warfare becomes a strategy and the party is only presented as an adjunct of that. The "fundamental aspect" of revolutionary work is not mobilizing the masses and constructing the party, the heightening and deepening of the class struggle out of which at a certain stage the armed struggle will flow. No, the fundamental aspect of revolutionary work becomes the engagement in guerrilla warfare by vanguard elements in the hope that out of this the masses will be mobilized and the party built. The continental strategy of rural guerrilla warfare is a shortcut, placing tactics and technique above political program.

We characterize this epoch as an epoch of war and revolution, whose chief characteristic is that while the objective conditions exist for revolution there is not an organized vanguard which can lead the revolution. The whole strategy of the Leninist movement hinges around the building of parties along the lines of the Bolshevik model. The Leninist party is based on a political program, a program of class struggle. It recruits and trains vanguard elements. It fights with and mobilizes all layers of the society at all levels from the petition to the gun. It never substitutes for the masses. It has an international perspective.

The transitional program outlines a method by which, through patient and consistent organizational, agitational and propagandistic work we can mobilize the masses, raise their consciousness and recruit the best elements. We hold that there is no substitute, no shortcut for the building of the party. The party must be rooted in all the struggles of the oppressed, building their struggles where they are at. It can't be a small group far out in left field having simply the "solidarity" or "protection" of the masses. The emancipation of the proletariat will be by the proletariat itself.

What does the Trotskyist movement have to say about armed struggle? We know that armed struggle is necessary for the proletariat to be victorious, that the ruling class will not hand over the state peacefully. But the form of the armed struggle, its use, the assessment of the stage when it should be launched are tactical questions to be determined by the vanguard, based on the level of mobilization of the masses and their consciousness. To make rural guerrilla warfare a continental strategy for all times and places goes against the experiences of Leninism and Trotskyism. For us the overall strategy is party building.

Here is what Trotsky had to say in the Transitional Program:

"Only armed workers' detachments, who feel the support of tens of millions of workers behind them, can successfully prevail against the fascist bands. The struggle against fascism does not start in the liberal editorial office but in the factory -- and ends in the street... Strike pickets are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army. This is our point of departure. In connection with every strike and street demonstration it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating workers' groups for self-defense. It is necessary to write this slogan into the program of the revolutionary wing of the trade unions. It is imperative wherever possible, beginning with youth groups, to organize groups for self-defense, to drill and acquaint them with the use of arms.

"Only with the help of such systematic, persistent, indefatigable, courageous, agitational and organizational work, always on the basis of the experience of the masses themselves, is it possible to root out from their consciousness the traditions of submissiveness and passivity; to train detachments of heroic fighters capable of setting an example to all toilers; to inflict a series of tactical defeats upon the armed thugs of counter-revolution; to raise the self-confidence of the exploited and the oppressed; to compromise fascism in the eyes of the petty bourgeoisie and pave the road for the conquest of power by the proletariat.

"Engels defined the state as bodies of "armed men". The arming of the proletariat is an imperative concomitant element to its struggle for liberation. When the proletariat wills it, it will find the road and means to arming. In this field also the leadership falls naturally to the sections of the Fourth International". (emphasis added)

In other words armed struggle, its use and forms are tactical questions to be decided by the party. It flows out of the mobilization of the masses themselves and their present consciousness and consists of the arming of the masses themselves. "The workers militias are the point of departure".

Here is what Hugo Blanco wrote concerning his experience with guerrilla warfare in Peru:

"The members of my guerrilla force (except an artificial element) were taken from the best in the union vanguard; it is sufficient to mention the organizational and economic secretaries of the Federacion Provincial de Campesinos and general secretaries of four unions.

People who had been looked down on for occupying themselves with demanding "crumbs" while the "genuine revolutionaries" argued over how to take power. This happened and will happen again; here and elsewhere. Today we are fighting for higher wages and against unemployment, with our old Transitional Program in hand. The audacious guerrillistas call us cowards, they tell us that we don't want to make the revolution or that we are thinking of doing it in the year 2,000. We know that we will again take up arms in the city and in the countryside; we did it before they did, with the forces that emerged from our people, not artificially "a suero". With this in mind we are working patiently today in organizing the peasantry and in advancing the workers' wage demands. We have confidence in Comrade Trotsky because Chaupimayo showed us that he was right." (Letter to Joseph Hansen January 1970...page 55 (emphasis added)

What does the Trotskyist movement have to say about guerrilla warfare. It has been stated many times that Lenin advocated guerrilla warfare in 1906. But, as Joseph Hansen points out, the balance sheet of this experience was not drawn until 1940 by Trotsky when he wrote about it in his biography of Stalin. With the beginning of the reaction following the events of 1905, Lenin advocated guerrilla activities including "expropriations" (robbing banks) and as well a boycott of the Duma. Trotsky points out that these actions were based on an incorrect assessment of the situation and as a result were extremely destructive. The guerrilla actions were not episodes in between lulls in the civil war but isolated actions separated from the mass movement that was in decline.

"Finally, 'guerrilla warfare is an inescapable form of struggle... whenever more or less extensive intervals occur between major engagements in a civil war.' (From a resolution by Lenin). From the point of view of the general principles of the class struggle, all of that was quite irrefutable. Disagreements came with the evaluation of concrete historical circumstances. When two major battles of the civil war are separated from each other by two or three months, that interval will inevitably be filled in with guerrilla blows against the enemy. But when the 'intermission' is stretched out over years, guerrilla war ceases to be a preparation for a new battle and becomes instead a mere convulsion after defeat. It is of course not easy to determine the moment of the break...

"It was self evident that guerrilla activities had become sheer anarchism when it was necessary to utilize even the arena of Tsarist 'parliamentarism' in order to prepare the ground for the mobilization of the masses. At the crest of the civil war guerrilla activities augmented and stimulated the mass movement; in the period of reaction they attempted to replace it, but, as a matter of fact, merely embarrassed the Party and speeded its disintegration. Oliminsky, one of the more noticeable of Lenin's companions-in-arms shed critical light on that period from the perspective of Soviet times. "Not a few of the fine youth," he wrote, "perished on the gibbet; others degenerated; still others were disappointed in the revolution. At the same time people at large began to confound revolutionists with ordinary bandits. Later, when the revival of the revolutionary labor movement began; that revival was slowest in those cities where "exes" (expropriation) had been most numerous." (Taken from In Defence of the Leninist Strategy of Party Building -- J. Hansen)

The point about the boycott of the Duma is very interesting. Many guerrilla groups who had previously boycotted elections in Latin America are now seeing the necessity to participate in them. For example, the PRT-El Combatiente in Argentina.

### Some Myths and Misconceptions about Latin America

I want to discuss next some myths that exist about Latin America and the subsequent misconceptions that flow from them.

The first one concerns the myth about repression -- that the repression is so fierce that it is impossible for the mass movement to develop and for revolutionists to progress in building the party. We do not underestimate the terror unleashed by the state against its enemies nor are we unmindful of the number of fighters who have been tortured, imprisoned or killed. But it is important also to not underestimate the possibilities for revolutionary work.

I would like to take up two statements. The first is from the 1969 World Congress resolution: "The adversary is in no wise ready to allow a mass revolutionary movement to organize more or less legally". The second one is contained in the contribution by Germain and Knoeller. It re-appeared in a slightly different form in our Belgian weekly edited by Ernest Mandel:

"In the countries where the workers' movement has won its fundamental democratic rights, where it can blossom out freely, the application of the methods of guerrilla warfare is false and ineffective...

"The situation is quite different in the countries where the democratic rights of the workers movement have been suppressed or severely limited, where an open fascist or military dictatorship rules, where assassination, torture, concentration camps become the daily form of government of the capitalists".

The ruling class is in "no wise ready" ever to allow the mass movement to blossom freely, as War Measures and Kent State point out. The ruling class uses every method it can to break the mass movement, to attack it, from the Minneapolis general strike, to the SFU 114, to the Russian revolution.

The logic of the La Gauche article is to set up a formal schema -- to divide the world into two parts -- those where the mass movement is supposed to be able to blossom freely and those where it can't. Can't we break it down into three areas, or four? There is a more dangerous logic to it -- that is, that this analysis cannot be just applied to Latin America. Shouldn't revolutionists engage in guerrilla war in the Soviet Union, Greece, and Spain? Was Trotsky wrong in not launching guerrilla warfare in the Soviet Union in the thirties?

Thirdly it is a dangerous and defeatist position. It says that nothing can be done. All the mass mobilizations led by Hugo Blanco or in Cordoba have been demoralizing defeats. In reality while we do not minimize the tragic loss of life the mass mobilizations in Santo Domingo cost imperialism much more politically than the crushing of a handful of guerrillas in the mountains.



We know that repression is a function of the relationship of class forces and that it varies and oscillates between repression and concession. The effect of repression is determined by the degree of mobilization of the masses and can be neutralized by the power of the mass movement. The ruling class cannot crush powerful mass movements without provoking a deep crisis and confrontation of classes. The crushing of mass movements by repression or coups poses even more sharply the necessity of revolutionary leadership and mobilizations of all sections of the oppressed against the enemy. There is no alternative, especially the isolated actions of guerrilla bands.

Times of repression are most particularly the times when revolutionaries must stick close to the masses and never give up their orientation to mobilize them to defeat the state and take power. If this cannot be done there can be no revolution. Czarism was more repressive than the regimes in most Latin American countries today and the Bolsheviks worked in exile, underground and through whatever legal channels they could to build the party and organize the masses.

There have been many changes in the governments in Latin America and while the drift has been toward dictatorial regimes there have been a number of reformist ones as well.

What is the real situation in Latin America? Comrades who have been following the press of the world movement know that there have been many mass mobilizations in Argentina. In the trade unions in Argentina there exist factory committees in which all tendencies on the left participate. The PRT-Combatiente says that there are openings for legal mass work that must be utilized. This holds true for Uruguay as well. There are more democratic rights in Chile than in some countries in Europe. The peasant unions formed by Hugo Blanco still exist in Peru and there was an anti-war demonstration of 30,000 in Lima. There have been land seizures by the peasants in Colombia and in Venezuela every organ of the left is legal. Under fascist-like conditions in Brazil tens of thousands of workers operate in underground unions.

Another myth about Latin America is that it is in a perpetual state of civil war. The Revolutionary Communist Tendency places its analysis in the context of "a long civil war unfolding on a continental scale" (Thesis 1A, Latin America). This is completely false. A civil war is a civil war, that is the masses are armed and engaged in combat. The most obvious example is Vietnam.

Finally, the greatest misconception concerns guerrilla groups in Latin America. The myth is that all over Latin America all the time there are mass guerrilla organizations fighting in the mountains and operating in the cities. The real picture is different and somewhat tragic.

Many of the guerrilla groups have been smashed, many are in exile. No guerrillista current in Latin America has any left wing in any union anywhere. Neither the PRT-Combatiente nor the ERP are mass organizations. The comrades of the PRT-Combatiente say that they have only sympathy among the workers but no organic links.

## Argentina and Bolivia

In order to develop the points I have raised above I want to go over the experiences of our comrades in two countries -- Argentina and Bolivia -- where opposing lines have been tested in the real life of the class struggle.

In Argentina there are two Trotskyist groups. One is the PRT-La Verdad which is a sympathizing organization and which opposes the line adopted at the last World Congress. The other is the official section the PRT-El Combatiente which holds to the perspective of a strategy of rural guerrilla warfare.

First the La Verdad group. These comrades are active in the factory committees, in the student movement, and the developing women's liberation movement. They were leaders of large strikes in Citroen, Petrol, bank-workers, Fiat and Chrysler. They are the leaders of the factory committees in auto, metal, teaching, banking, meat and telephones. They were in the leadership of the struggle in Cordoba. They have a thousand members and are the third largest Trotskyist organization of the world. They published an illegal weekly paper with a circulation of several thousand. All this was achieved while they were underground and while the PRT-Combatiente claimed that no mass work could be done.

They have now achieved legality through a unity with the Socialist Party -- they wrote the program, they are six to one of the membership, and six out of eight on the editorial board of Avanzada Socialista which has a circulation of 10,000. They took advantage of the bourgeois electoral laws which provide many facilities, signing up 30,000 members, thus getting a dollar per member from the government and free election material. They are running a socialist alternative pole against the bourgeois coalition, the GAN.

These comrades face repression. They couldn't legally sell the paper although they did it. But they are protected by their connection and work in the mass movement and they do not leave themselves open.

On the other hand, we have the example of the PRT-El Combatiente, the official section of the Fourth International which adheres to the strategy of guerrilla warfare. The exact size of this organization is unknown but it does not approach in size the Verdad group. Many of these courageous comrades are in jail. Some have been killed. The PRT-Combatiente was involved in the kidnapping of the capitalist boss Sylvester and in the killing of Oberdan Sallustro. By its own statements, as I mentioned earlier, it can claim only sympathy among the working class but has no real links to the mass organization having no cells in the factory committees. As evidenced by some recent statements published in The Militant, it has now come to see the opportunities for open mass work particularly as presented by the upcoming elections.

This brings me to the next point. Why it is impossible to have autonomous armed detachments which are part of the mass movement. The major point involved here is what was discussed in the transitional program -- the arming of the masses and the defence of the masses must flow from the mass of workers themselves and from their organizations. A small vanguard cannot declare itself the guardian of the workers.

Secondly, it is simply impossible to be a guerrilla and to implant yourself in the mass movement at the same time. You are defenceless and so is any one who associates with you. Trotsky wrote how those engaged in such actions must of necessity be so "hermetically sealed" that all contact with the masses is impossible.

### Bolivia

It is in Bolivia that the disastrous effects of the line of a continental strategy of guerrilla warfare have been most clearly pointed out. This incorrect line which places the tactic of guerrilla warfare above the transitional program and party-building, blinded comrades to the possibilities that existed for the revolutionary mobilization of the masses and the construction of a vanguard party necessary for the seizure of power.

All comrades should read and study the important contribution on Bolivia by the Argentine comrade Anabel Lorenzo.

A great defeat was suffered in Bolivia. The army moved in against the workers, killing many and the air force bombers strafed the universities. But the defeat stands out because of the tremendous possibilities which existed in Bolivia. Comrades will remember Livio Maitan's contribution "An Insufficient Document" to the last world congress which stated that the Fourth International would make a great "breakthrough" in Bolivia, that "the Fourth International would be built around Bolivia". But the majority of the congress looked for a shortcut to the revolution, adopted the guerrilla warfare line and in the ensuing events the revolution and the section were smashed.

Everything that was not supposed to happen in Latin America because of the repression, etc. -- happened. And it happened along the "classical" lines of the Bolshevik revolution. There was a split in the army, and like Kerensky, Torres rose to power on the crest of a mass mobilization of the workers. Workers' assemblies were established and an embryonic situation of dual power existed. This situation existed for two years with left groups able to participate openly in the assemblies.

The main difference between Bolivia of 1970 and the situation preceding the Russian revolution was that there existed no vanguard party capable of leading the workers to power.

The Bolivian Trotskyists were implementing the line of the world congress and were blinded by the guerrilla warfare strategy. They failed to use the opportunities that existed for legal work for moving into the leadership of the mass struggles, putting forward a program and a strategy that could develop the struggle for the arming of the masses.

A right wing coup took place followed by a terrific repression.

Those who hold to the line of a continental strategy of guerrilla warfare must face these facts.

This line represents an adaptation to the Guevarist strategy. It is a vain and disastrous search for a shortcut to the essential task of the

construction of a revolutionary vanguard party. The RCT writes in its document "The LSA attacks on the Argentine section."

"It is not the task --contrary to what the PC statement says -- to build the revolutionary party; rather the central axis of our strategic orientation in Latin America is the armed struggle, and it is around this central axis that our mass work and the construction of the party proceeds." (page 4)

It is an abandonment of the Transitional Program.

Joe Hansen writes on this theme in his "Assessment of the Draft Resolution on Latin America". I would like to read an extensive but very important and revealing quote.

"Once it has been decided that 'the principle axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare the term having primarily a geographical-military meaning' the question of transitional steps is narrowed to the extreme, becoming reduced even in the area of armed struggle. Even worse the central concept of the Transitional Program drafted by Trotsky on the utilization of transitional slogans and transitional measures (including the field of armed struggle) to mobilize the masses and construct a combat party, is hard to fit in with this 'principal axis' if it can be fitted in at all.

"The reasons for this are not difficult to discern. Trotsky's Transitional Program conceives the socialist revolution carried forward by mass mobilizations in the process of which a competent revolutionary leadership organized in a combat party is forged. The concept of rural guerrilla war as the principal axis for a long period, projects a small heroic elite carrying the battle in the absence of the masses and in areas remote from the cities. Thus if the concept of rural guerrilla warfare for a prolonged period is adopted as the principle axis of revolutionary work, then the problem of mobilizing the urban masses becomes somewhat irrelevant, and along with it most of the Transitional Program." (page 25, LA Compilation)

The guerrilla warfare strategy reduces to a single tactic the complicated and necessary tasks of mobilizing the masses, raising their level of consciousness, defeating the reformists in the workers movement, preparing the masses for the armed struggle and, above all, the patient propagandistic and agitational organizational and political work necessary for the construction of a Leninist party.

This line has meant many missed opportunities and many defeats. It has meant the miseducation of substantial forces within and without the Fourth International.

But the degree of disorientation caused by this line was never more clearly shown than in the events surrounding the Sallustro kidnapping. If one is going to support the military actions of a small elite then the logic is to support individual terror.

In the traditions of the Marxist movement which has had a long-standing position of opposition to individual acts of terror, we opposed the

kidnapping of Sallustro by the PRT-Combatiente.

Contrary to what was said at the time by the RCI, the kidnapping was not an action closely linked to or flowing out of the mass movement, it was merely coincidental to the mass mobilization occurring at the time. It gave the ruling class a good opportunity to attack the mass movement. It was the isolated action of a small group taken against an individual capitalist in the name of the masses. The possible sympathy of sectors of the masses for an action and the mobilization of the workers themselves are two entirely different things.

There was no civil war going on, in the context of which such an action could be a spur to the masses. It was a spectacle for the masses.

There is much to be learned from the events following the first kidnapping by the PRT-ERP, the one involving Fiat boss Sylvester. The revolutionaries won their demands for wage increases and better conditions in the factory and Sylvester was released. A month later elections were held in the factory committee and the left wing lost and the right was elected. And of course conditions soon worsened. The kidnapping had taught the workers nothing. It had not helped to break their reformist illusions nor taught them how to struggle, or even that they should struggle. To go off and organize elite actions is to abandon the mass organizations of workers to the reformists.

I have already mentioned the problem posed to the world movement by the Sallustro kidnapping. The action represented a departure from the principles and traditions of the Fourth International. Moreover the action was widely publicised and identified as a Trotskyist action. The world movement was called upon to respond -- to state its agreement or disagreement with the tactic employed by the Argentine comrades. It is in this light the Political Committee issued its statement and that we endorsed it when called upon to do so. When we did so we anticipated that the United Secretariat would also make a public statement as they had done a few months earlier in criticizing the Bolivian comrades signature of the FRA statement endorsing a popular front.

We find it very unfortunate that they did not. The majority leadership of the Fourth International abdicated their responsibility as a leadership to defend the principles of the Fourth International and educate the comrades involved. By criticising those sections which in a fraternal way dissociated themselves and by giving silent approval to the action, the majority leadership foisted a new line on the International.

Sometime later two articles appeared in the press of the world movement -- both have been reprinted and are available in your plenum kits (appended). One is a center spread unsigned article in La Gauche, the Belgian weekly edited by Ernest Mandel. The other is an article by Daniel Bensaïd, a leading member of the Ligue Communiste in the French section paper Rouge. They both point out the danger of accepting terrorist actions because the authors are forced to develop incorrect theories in order to justify them. They try to integrate individual terrorism into Leninism.

The dangers posed in these articles point out clearly the correctness of the LSA/LSO's action in taking a principled stand against the Sallustro kidnapping.

Summary

Because we are committed to building the Fourth International and its reality in Canada today, the LSA/LSO, these debates are extremely important to us. As well, the questions being raised are crucial to our own work and the discussions are a great education for us. Similar questions are also being raised in our own organization. So, we want to follow the debate very closely.

The CEC has asked the Political Committee of the LSA/LSO to release to us the Political Resolution of the International Marxist Group, the statement of the United Secretariat concerning the statements of the LSA/LSO and the Socialist Workers Party on the Sallustro kidnapping, and the Fact-Finding Commission into the British Section. These documents are already in the hands of some of our comrades and as such we would like them to be released to our entire organization.

In adopting this report comrades are voting on four main points:

1. To re-affirm our unconditional support for and our commitment to build the LSA/LSO, Canadian section of the Fourth International.
2. To underwrite the CEC's endorsement of the statement of the LSA/LSO Political Committee on the Sallustro kidnapping.
3. To re-affirm our support to the document "The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International".
4. To take a position against the line of a continental strategy of rural guerrilla warfare, in Latin America.

We want all the comrades to read the international bulletins and to discuss this report in the locals. In educating ourselves and orienting our own intervention in the process we are making a valuable contribution to the building of the World Party of Socialist Revolution, the Fourth International.

TO ALL LOCALS AND MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

CEC STATEMENT-concerning the Labor Challenge boycott and the LSA/  
LSO statement on the Argentine kidnapping

The recent kidnapping of Oberdan Sallustro, general manager of the Argentine branch of Fiat Concorde, by the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and his subsequent death aroused wide interest around the world. This dramatic action which received extensive attention in all the bourgeois media was termed a Trotskyist action in the majority of the reports. The ERP's employment in the given situation of the tactic of kidnapping is a matter of great concern to the world revolutionary movement, and in particular, in light of a somewhat similar incident involving the FLQ last fall, to Canadian revolutionaries.

In response to this situation and the questions raised about this incident by both sympathizers and opponents of the movement, the Political Committee of the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière published a statement in Labor Challenge solidarizing the LSA/LSO with the struggle of the Argentine revolutionists in the FRT-ERP, but expressing its disagreement with the methods they are employing in this struggle, in particular their use of kidnapping.

Toronto Local

At the April 9 meeting of the Toronto local of the YS/LJS, the comrades of the Unified Minority Tendency read a statement declaring that the Political Committee statement on Argentina in the Labor Challenge was a public "vicious and slanderous attack" on the Argentine comrades. The tendency comrades stated that the Political Committee in the statement equated the ERP and the FLQ. They further declared that they "refused to sell the April 10 issue of Labor Challenge and called on other comrades of the local to do the same". The tendency comrades also presented motions which "demanded that the Toronto YS local dissociate itself from the PC statement" and that Dennis Lomas, member of the local and LSA/LSO Central Committee member, be called upon to "defend the PC statement at the next local meeting."

Due to the seriousness of the questions involved in the tendency statement, the local referred the discussion of the declarations and the motions to the next meeting and instructed the executive to organize a discussion.

At the next local meeting, Comrade Lomas made a report on the P.C.'s reasons for publishing the statement and on the positions put forward in it. The organizer presented an executive report which dealt with League-Youth relations and concluded with three motions from the executive. After extensive discussion, the motions were adopted overwhelmingly. They were: 1. We reject any concept of boycotting Labor Challenge and uphold our unconditional support of the LSA and its paper. 2. We denounce the comrades for their action of boycotting Labor Challenge. 3. We endorse the PC statement. This was neither a censure nor a disciplinary action, but a firm statement of the local's opinion on the boycott.

### Halifax Local

The Halifax local at its meeting of Sunday April 16 was presented with a lengthy statement from the Halifax comrades of the Unified Minority Tendency. This statement discussed the statutes of the Fourth International and the positions adopted by the Fourth International at its Ninth World Congress in particular concerning armed struggle in Latin America. It characterized the statement of the Political Committee on the Argentine kidnapping in the April 10 Labor Challenge as "an appalling violation of proletarian morality", as a breach of democratic centralism in the Fourth International, as an "open public attack on the PRT" and as "pure and simple opportunism". The statement concluded with a series of motions, the main ones being:

1. (The Halifax local) directs all members of the Local, without exception, to boycott the April 10 issue of Labor Challenge absolutely. No member of the local will sell, distribute or give away any copies of it whatsoever as a matter of elementary proletarian internationalism;
2. demands that the leadership of the YS/LJS publicly dissociate itself from this attack by issuing a public statement condemning the LSA/LSO attack and solidarizing itself with the comrades of the PRT and ERP.

These motions passed the local by a vote of 8-4.

On learning of the events of the Halifax local meeting, the Central Executive Council met. The CEC unanimously adopted a statement which declared the motion of boycott to be null and void and not binding on any of the comrades in the local. The statement explained that the motion "constituted a breach of democratic centralism" in that "by this motion the comrades in Halifax are attempting to define for themselves a special relationship to the LSA/LSO and to Labor Challenge which contravenes the relationship as laid down in the constitution, the convention resolutions and indeed in the day-to-day life of the YS/LJS... (that is) our support to the LSA/LSO is unconditional". The statement urged the comrades to reaffirm their unconditional support and circulate Labor Challenge, the organ of Canadian Trotskyism. The statement also declared that the CEC rather than dissociating itself from the PC statement, endorsed the PC statement.

The CEC also voted to underwrite the action taken by the Toronto YS local.

### Fredericton Local

The CEC was informed by a copy of a letter dated April 20 and sent to the editor of Labor Challenge that the Fredericton local had decided to boycott the April 10 issue of Labor Challenge because of the PC's statements on the actions of the ERP. The Fredericton comrades stated that the publishing of the PC statement was a breach of democratic centralism in the Fourth International and that the statement contained an "incorrect appraisal" of both the present situation in Latin America and of the actions of the ERP.

At its meeting of April 27, the CEC declared the motion of the Fredericton local to boycott Labor Challenge to be null and void and not binding on



any members of the local.

### League - Youth relations

The actions taken by the tendency comrades in Toronto, Halifax and Fredericton were very serious actions. They put into question, indeed challenged, the cornerstone of the YS/LJS -- its relationship to the LSA/LSO, Canadian section of the Fourth International.

For the students and you of the YS/LJS the construction of the vanguard party necessary to lead the working class in socialist revolution is not an abstract question. It is the concrete necessity to build, defend and collaborate with the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, the nucleus of that vanguard party and the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

The YS/LJS is essentially a student movement, and the LSA/LSO is our link to the vanguard elements of the Canadian and Quebecois working class.

We see ourselves as an "organizationally independent part of a common movement" with the LSA/LSO, a movement which is united in the task of constructing the Trotskyist leadership necessary to lead the working class and its allies to victory. This is the kernel of our politics and is part of the day-to-day life of our movement.

This relationship is formalized in Article 3 of our constitution and the statement on League-Youth relations passed by our 1965 convention and printed on pages 15-16 of "Organizing the YS/LJS". We declare "our adherence to the objectives and program of the LSA/LSO" and to "the policies that the League represents and advocates in the ranks of the adult Canadian working class."

The essence of this relationship -- wherein we declare very clearly our full political solidarity with the LSA/LSO and view ourselves as part of a common movement -- is that our support to the LSA/LSO, Canadian section of the Fourth International, is unconditional. That is not to say uncritical; but in no way do we have a tentative or ambivalent attitude to the LSA/LSO, threatening at any moment to withdraw our support from the movement which is assembling the cadres for the Canadian revolution, from the nucleus of the vanguard party, from the Canadian section of the Fourth International, because we may disagree with a particular policy

The tendency comrades by their decision to boycott Labor Challenge and their advocacy that our entire movement boycott it place conditions on our support to the Canadian section. "We will not support you unless you do so and so" is what they are saying.

Our resolution on League-Youth relations states that any differences should be worked out between the leaderships of the YS and the LSA. The tendency comrades, by taking their hasty action without even asking for an explanation from the PC for its statement, can only be declaring their disregard

for the LSA and their complete unwillingness to seriously work out their differences with the Canadian section.

Moreover, the boycott of the League paper represented a public attack on the League. Comrades would have to explain why they have ceased to circulate Labor Challenge.

The boycott also represents an attack on the Fourth International. The commitment and loyalty of the YS/LJS to the Fourth International is through and only through its commitment and loyalty to the Canadian section, the LSA/LSO. The YS/LJS is not a sympathising section of the Fourth International, but a sympathising youth organization, and as such, its identity with the Fourth International is through its identity with the Canadian section, which is the LSA/LSO.

While the Labor Challenge is the paper of the Canadian section, we view this paper as our own. We carried this paper onto the campuses and into the high schools, on the joint sub drive. Not only do we find this paper useful, we identify ourselves with it.

This flows from our political solidarity with the LSA/LSO which is part of the day-to-day life of our movement. The motion to boycott Labor Challenge passed by the Halifax and Fredericton locals and urged by the Toronto tendency comrades is a violation of our relationship with the LSA/LSO as established by our conventions and by our traditions and daily functioning. As the elected leadership of the YS/LJS, it was the responsibility of the CEC to see that this relationship was not violated by individuals or locals, but upheld. Therefore, the CEC declared the Halifax and Fredericton motions null and void and underwrote the actions of the Toronto local.

#### The PC Statement

The YS/LJS is organizationally independent of the LSA/LSO. We hold our own conventions, elect our own leadership and decide our own policies.

We have declared ourselves to be in political solidarity with the LSA/LSO and part of a common movement with it, united in the task of building a revolutionary vanguard party.

As such, we do not take our own independent position on every question which may arise on the political scene but rather base our policy on the decisions and positions adopted by the section -- e.g. Ireland, Bangladesh. By the same token, we are not called upon to underwrite every action of the LSA/LSO.

However, since the Halifax, Fredericton and Toronto comrades demanded that the CEC take a position, the CEC discussed the Argentine kidnapping and the PC statement and declared its endorsement of it.

Not an Attack

The CEC does not consider the PC statement to be an attack on the Argentine comrades. The statement solidarizes itself with them and their aims and clearly states that the violence "originates from the repressive measures carried out against the masses by a dictatorial regime". Within this framework of solidarity, it does however express disagreement on their employment in the given situation of the tactic of kidnapping.

Comrades should note that the LSA branches and the YS locals in the Metro Toronto area are presently involved in the Canadian Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners which is most active in publicizing the repression in Argentina. The LSA/LSO regards the revolution as extremely important and carries the defence not just in words but in deeds. This broad campaign which we are attempting to build will be no small aid to their struggle.

The statement does not equate the FLQ with the ERP, but rather attempts to show that the Canadian section's views on kidnapping are based on real life experience.

The Statement was Necessary

The circumstances surrounding the incident made it necessary in our opinion for the PC to express the disagreement of Canadian Trotskyists with the tactics employed by the Argentine comrades.

The kidnapping received wide coverage in the international media, front-page articles in Canadian newspapers and frequent reports on radio and TV. The employment of kidnapping is a matter of great concern to the world revolutionary movement and in particular to Canadian revolutionists who faced a somewhat similar incident involving the FLQ 1st fall. The Argentine incident demanded that revolutionaries take a stand.

But the fact that the vast majority of the publicity called the kidnapping a Trotskyist action and a wide interest was provoked amongst both sympathisers and opponents of our movement to the point where several people contacted us to learn our position, it was necessary for the Trotskyist movement, especially the Canadian section, to express its opinions on the incident. In our opinion, it was the responsibility of the Political Committee to defend the line of the LSA/LSO which was very clearly established during the October crisis as being in opposition to individual acts of terrorism. The LSA/LSO had a responsibility to all those who look to the Canadian Trotskyist movement for direction to state its opinions on the Argentine events. In our opinion, the LSA/LSO had no choice but to make public its position to maintain the credibility of its line that was based on the experiences historically of the Leninist movement and the recent experience of Canadian revolutionaries.

Terrorism

The brutal capitalist regime of General Lanusse, which is responsible for the imprisonment, torture and death of hundreds of political prisoners, must be overthrown. Only the actions of the great masses of people can

achieve this. But experience has shown that acts of individual terrorism such as kidnapping and assassination substitute the actions of a few, however heroic, sincere or highly organized, for the actions of the masses themselves.

Moreover, the vast majority must be led, organized and educated by a mass revolutionary socialist party. Any tactics employed by revolutionaries must aid this strategy of winning support for and building the revolutionary vanguard party.

Regardless of intentions, individual terrorist acts and a policy of individual terrorism harm this strategy.

Such acts against individual officials or capitalists creates illusions amongst working people. They make it appear that the state consists of a few men rather than numerous repressive institutions controlled by a ruling class; or that the class struggle consists of demanding reforms from these individuals rather than seizing state power; or that the way forward for the working class is through dramatic actions by a few on its behalf rather than by collective mass action.

The tasks of revolutionists is to isolate the ruling class politically. Through mass defensive actions by the working class, one shows that the ruling class is the source of violence and oppression. Individual terrorist acts tend to place the blame in the eyes of the masses on the revolutionary left.

Individual terrorist acts give the ruling class the excuse to mobilize the full weight of its repressive apparatus. The War Measures Act was proof of this, wherein the Trudeau government, playing on the backwardness of the English Canadian working class, willingly sacrificed Laporte and brought the troops and political round-ups to decapitate and intimidate the mass movement. Similarly, in Argentina, the government responded with martial law, sending army troops with dogs on house-to-house searches. Many of our comrades of the PRT-ERP have been picked up.

At a time when the student and labor movement of Quebec were beginning to head boldly onto the political arena, moving toward another October upsurge, when they would demonstrate and exercise their own power in struggle for their own just demands, the FLQ decided to reduce the Quebecois masses to the role of spectators, in fact innocent bystanders, by an act of frustration.

The task of Argentine revolutionists, was to devote their full energies to the organization and leadership of the general strikes that were developing in San Juan and Cordoba.

The task of revolutionists is to be involved in the day-to-day struggle, projecting demands which deepen and broaden the struggle, developing the confidence of the masses and above all, building the revolutionary socialist party necessary to overturn capitalism.

It is in this light that the CEC endorsed the PC statement.

Democratic Centralism and the Fourth International

The comrades of the tendency stated that the position put forward by the PC in the Argentine statement went against the positions adopted by the Ninth World Congress of the Fourth International, and that in making the statement public, the PC violated the norms of the Fourth International which governs itself on the principles of democratic centralism.

The Fourth International has no stand endorsing kidnapping, either as a strategy or as a tactic. Moreover, kidnapping is a tactic of some significance, since the world bourgeoisie has a worked-out strategy on how to deal with it. Trudeau's line of refusing to negotiate, initiating War Measures and sacrificing Laporte was publicly underwritten by Nixon and followed by the Spanish and now the Argentine bourgeoisie.

The tendency comrades reveal a very formalistic and rigid concept of democratic centralism when they state that the LSA/LSO, in publicly differentiating itself from the actions of another section, was violating the norms of the international movement.

While the PC would be the first to state that their actions were not normal, it must also be added that the circumstances were not normal. Democratic centralism is a fluid organizational tool, and not a fixed, abstract principle, and what is desirable and necessary must be decided by the circumstances.

For example, the debate that broke out in the SWP in the late 30's with Burnham-Schachtman was carried publicly in the press of the world movement. This was done in consultation with Trotsky. The circumstances were such that issues of the debate could not be considered internal. There was wide debate on this question in the revolutionary movement around the world, and Trotsky and other leading comrades of the International felt that it was artificial to conceive that the debate could properly be confined to the cadre of the Fourth International.

We decide what is the best way to carry our discussions. The Trotskyist movement is neither a conspiracy nor a showcase -- that is, we neither tell all nor hide all, but decide according to the circumstances. We make a division between the internal and the external in order that we can discuss free from outside pressures, and the division shifts according to our needs or requirements.

In this case, the question of kidnapping, in fact the debate on kidnapping was already in the public domain. The action was known around the world and particularly in Canada as a Trotskyist action. The publicity identified kidnapping as a policy of the Trotskyist movement, whereas anyone acquainted with the Canadian section and its press, both sympathisers and opponents alike, would know that the LSA/LSO stood against kidnapping as a method of struggle. The Canadian section was called upon to clarify the situation and it is artificial and formal to think that somehow the PC could have hidden the debate.

### Summary

As a sympathizing youth organization, the identity of the YS/LJS to the Fourth International is through and only through its identity with the Canadian section, the LSA/LSO. Loyalty to the Fourth International is not an abstract sentiment or adherence to some far-off organization. It is the day-to-day reality of building and defending the Canadian section of the Fourth International, the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière.

It is this relationship with the LSA/LSO which ties the YS/LJS to the world working class movement. But most important, it is this relationship of unconditional support to the Canadian section, to the nucleus of the vanguard party, which makes us part of the process of assembling the cadres and constructing the party which are necessary to the Canadian socialist revolution. It is this relationship which makes us unique among the youth movements of Canada and Quebec, which places us in the center of the historic process.

This relationship is central to the politics of the YS/LJS. The hasty actions taken by the comrades in Halifax, Fredericton, and Toronto put our support to the LSA/LSO in question and it was in consideration of this that the CEC took its action. It is the hope of the CEC that this experience has only served to deepen the understanding of the entire movement of our relationship with the nucleus of the vanguard party in Canada, the LSA/LSO.

APPENDIX: MOTIONS PRESENTED AT THE APRIL 15-16 MEETING OF THE  
#2 UNITED SECRETARIAT

Motion by Pierre

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International disapproves of the publication in the Militant and Labor Challenge of resolutions adopted by the leaderships of the Socialist Workers Party and the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere concerning the kidnapping of Sallustro by the Argentine ERP, the armed organization led by the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT) Argentine section of the Fourth International.

Such public declarations could well encourage sections to follow this example of public attacks against other sections, which would be highly damaging to the whole International.

In addition, these resolutions do not express any solidarity towards these comrades, at the moment when a fierce campaign is underway against them.

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International resolves not to publish these two resolutions in the International's organs, or in organs expressing its positions.

This resolution is not for public circulation.

Vote: For: 6 Against: 5  
Consultative for: 1 Consultative Against: 1

CARRIED

Motion by Juan

That the United Secretariat issue a public statement on the kidnapping of Sallustro making the following points:

- 1) Indicate the economic, social and political crisis racking Argentina, citing some examples, such as the massive strikes, demonstrations and uprisings in various cities, the latest one being Mendoza
- 2) Indicate the origin and purpose of the military dictatorship, that it constitutes an illegal regime, ruling in violation of the constitution.
- 3) Outline the brutal methods used by the military dictatorship such as suppression of student and workers demonstrations, suppression of strikes, arbitrary imprisonment of union leaders and union militants, the use of kidnapping, torture, and murder of political opponents. Name some of the political prisoners held by the hundreds in the jails of Argentina.
- 4) Give some facts on the frustration, anger, and instinctive elemental reaction, particularly among youth, who want immediate direct action against the dictatorship.
- 5) Describe briefly the historical political crisis facing the Argentine working class, above all the absence of a mass revolutionary Marxist party of the kind the Fourth International is seeking to build in all

countries, that could guide the struggle effectively toward an early revolutionary victory.

6) Stress the influence of guerrilla struggles in Latin America and elsewhere in which the action of a small group has been substituted for action by the masses, leading to adventurism, and away from the construction of a mass revolutionary Marxist party regardless of the intentions of the guerrilla fighters.

7) Specify in a few sentences that we consider the PRT-ERP to have fallen into errors of this kind, the most spectacular being the kidnapping and execution of Sallustro. Include a brief explanation of how acts like the kidnapping and execution of Sallustro injure the work of building the mass revolutionary party required to overturn Argentine capitalism, and how the world press has taken advantage of the Sallustro affair to attempt to discredit Trotskyism by identifying it with terrorism.

8) Reaffirm that the Fourth International expresses its solidarity with the courageous militants of the PRT-ERP regardless of their mistaken course and pledges to step up its campaign in their defense and in defense of all the political prisoners held in the jails of Argentina.

Vote: For: 5 Against: 6  
Consultative for: 1 Consultative Against: 1

DEFEATED



APPENDIX #3

Class Struggle and Armed Struggle in Argentina

(Editorial article translated from the April 21 issue of La Gauche, which is edited by Ernest Mandel.)

For years, Argentina has been undergoing a social, economic, and political crisis of exceptional gravity. The bourgeoisie of this country succeeded in starting a process of accelerated industrialization, profiting from the second world war and the immediately following period. In order to gain concessions from imperialism, it permitted the rise of a powerful mass trade union movement under the Peronist regime.

Thanks to the resources accumulated during the favourable years, it was possible to grant considerable reforms to the working class. A strong Peronist trade union bureaucracy participated in managing the institutions of social security, profiting from the strength acquired by the mass movement and aiding the bourgeoisie in keeping it within the framework of the capitalist system.

Behind the Crisis

The material foundation of this whole system melted away during the fifties and sixties. That is why we witnessed successively the downfall of the Peronist regime, a permanent crisis of the post-Peronist political regimes, the installation of a military dictatorship that is still in power, and the current attempt to bring Peronism back under the wings of the regime.

With the re-establishment of the world market, dominated by imperialism, the further development of Argentine industry was blocked. The concessions won by the working class following the second world war proved to be incompatible with even a relative competitiveness of Argentine products on the international market.

The big imperialist monopolies increased their penetration of the Argentine market, becoming more and more associated with so-called "national" Argentine big capital. There was only one road open to the Argentine bourgeoisie to save themselves from certain economic ruin: brutal lowering of the workers' standard of living. Permanent inflation, unemployment, elimination of the state subsidies to public and social services--these were the main means utilized to achieve this end. Solely within the last seven months, the buying power of the wages of the Argentine workers was reduced about 40%, as estimated by the trade unions.

The Argentine working class, of legendary militancy in Latin America, did not stand by passively in face of these fierce attacks against its elementary interests. It sought to answer blow for blow, particularly by means of powerful general strikes in which successively 3,000,000, then 4,000,000, and then 5,000,000 workers participated.

Although the capitalists engage in maneuvers in face of this impressive force in order to gain time, they cannot concede anything substantial. The effectiveness of these broad struggles is limited moreover, so long as they are content to exercise pressure on the successive governments without posing the questions of power, and in

fact tolerate power being held in the hands of various factions of the bourgeois class.

But, while the Peronist bourgeoisie was able to utilize the advantages gained by the workers under the Peronist regime to maintain rigid control over the mass movement, the situation began to change during recent years. The experience of the Cuban revolution, the more and more heated anger of the toiling masses over the successive blows against their standard of living; the appearance of a new vanguard of workers and youth who no longer accept in any way the subordination of the mass movement to the interests of this or that faction of the bourgeoisie--all this has brought about bit by bit the erosion of the Peronist control of the working class.

Successive layers of the workers have liberated themselves from this control, whether consciously or simply by the way they act. More and more they are going beyond the purely reformist slogans of the trade union bureaucracy.

Thus a series of veritable insurrections of the workers have occurred on a local scale since 1969: two times in Cordoba, once in Rosario and in Tucuman. In the last few days, from April 4 to April 7, an insurrection of the same kind occurred at Mendoza in response to a decision of the government to double (sic) at one stroke the electric power rates.

#### A Country on the Verge of Civil War

The bourgeoisie, up against the wall, is perfectly conscious of the fact that the country stands at the verge of civil war. Its reply is being developed along two planes, or rather by a combination of two maneuvers.

On the one hand, by preparing a "Grand National Accord" with the Peronists and all the other bourgeois parties, the capitalists hope to reintegrate the Peronist trade union bureaucracy into the government structures, divide the more moderate layers of the working class from the more radicalized layers, and reorient all the combative energy of the masses once again into reformist and electoralist roads. But the big obstacle to actual success in this maneuver is the incapacity economically of the bourgeoisie to grant genuine, substantial concessions to the masses.

On the other hand, the system is equipped with a military dictatorship. The attempts of the working class to provide itself with a class-struggle leadership are systematically repressed by violence. At the Fiat plant in Cordoba, the organization of the workers into two trade unions, SITRAM-SITRAC, under a left-wing leadership that led several victorious strikes, brought about occupation of the plant by the gendarmerie, the firing of 500 workers, the dissolution of the unions, the arrest of the trade union delegates who had been democratically elected by the workers.

They joined in prison hundreds upon hundreds of political prisoners, who are being held indefinitely without any kind of trial, or who are deported to concentration camps in Patagonia. The total

number of these political prisoners is held by some to reach 3,000. The Revolutionary Workers Party, Argentine section of the Fourth International, which is not a mass organization, itself alone has 150 members in prison.

The military dictatorship is not content with arresting militant workers and revolutionists. It tortures and assassinates. General Sanchez, commander of the 2nd military regime--whom the guerrillas just executed--used torture in Rosario against all the political prisoners belonging to the revolutionary organizations. He boasted publicly (see the April 12, 1972, issue of Le Monde) of advocating the assassination of revolutionists: "If it was up to me," he said, "I would throw them out of a plane without a parachute."

It seems that more than he and his cohorts are involved, since the April 11, 1972, issue of the New York Times had to admit that many political prisoners disappear without a trace, that is, they are assassinated by the dictatorship.

This is the background that must be taken into account in judging the actions of our comrades of the Revolutionary Army of the People (ERP), led by the PRT. How is it possible not to denounce the hypocrisy of all the good souls, beginning with the Pope, who are shedding crocodile tears over the fate of the manager of Fiat, Sallustro--whom the Lanusse government cold-bloodedly sent to his death--or the sinister butcher, Sanchez, but who have not found a word to denounce, criticize, or even regret the abominable assassinations of workers and of revolutionists, against which the actions of the Argentine guerrillas are only replies.

Our comrade, Luis Pujals, one of the leaders of the PRT, was kidnapped in full view in the streets by the secret police, savagely tortured to death and murdered. What voice among all these "moral authorities", who are so voluble today, was lifted then to denounce these "methods contrary to all the laws of civilization"? To condemn these methods when they strike the butchers but to remain quiet when they strike their victims; to speak in emotional tones regretting the death of a boss and of torturers but accepting as the most normal thing in the world the death of workers and of revolutionary militants underscores the "moral" hypocrisy that is the rule in bourgeois society.

#### Is Guerrilla War Contrary to the Traditions of the Workers Movement?

As was to be expected, Berlinguer, the general secretary of the Italian CP, decided to join in the orchestra disapproving the actions of the ERP: "We reject the methods of individual terrorism, contrary to the principles and traditions of the workers movement," he hastened to proclaim, out of fear that the events in Argentina might cause him to lose a few votes in the current electoral campaign in Italy.

Our comrades of the ERP do not uphold individual terrorism at all and do not practice it either. They uphold the principles of urban guerrilla war, which is hardly foreign to the traditions of the workers movement. That is, unless one excludes from this workers movement Lenin, who advocated guerrilla war after December 1905 in Russia, Fidel Castro and "Che" Guevara, who utilized it to facilitate the

first victory of a socialist revolution in Latin America, and many others besides whom no sophisticated distinguo (hair-splitting distinction) can banish from labor and revolutionary history.

The position of the revolutionary Marxists towards the problem of guerrilla war is well-known and conforms to their principles.

In the countries where the workers movement has won its fundamental democratic rights, where it can blossom out freely, the application of the methods of guerrilla war is false and ineffective. The working class, which represents the interests of the immense majority of the nation, has no need of violence at all to attain its objectives. Violence is used against it at certain moments in its development by its adversaries when they see no way out. In this case, it must create bodies of self-defense, an outcome of its own forms of mass organization. In the same way, threats of the rebirth of fascism must touch off vigorous replies, but which can and must be implanted normally in the mass movement of the workers.

It is the growth and organic force of the workers movement that permits, under these conditions, saving the utilization of the forms of action of guerrilla warfare, which are incomprehensible to the masses as long as that free growth remains assured.

The situation is quite different in the countries where the democratic rights of the workers movement have been suppressed or severely limited, where an open fascist or military dictatorship rules, where assassination, torture, concentration camps become the daily form of government of the capitalists. In this case the masses find themselves either intimidated for a period, lacking an immediate reply to an adversary ready to go to any lengths, or they see their movement condemned to take the form of a succession of spasmodic explosions, interspersed with phases of ebb and despair.

When the adversary systematically fires on any mass demonstration that displays the slightest radicalism; when he savagely represses any strike and any union that goes beyond reformist objectives, the concrete choice facing militant workers is reduced in reality to three possibilities: either deliberately restrain the movement in order to avoid a bloody confrontation with the repressive forces, or consider as inevitable a confrontation between unarmed masses and repressive forces armed to the teeth, or, without delay, to get on with preparing and organizing the arming of the masses.

The two first possibilities are politically inadmissible and in any case unrealistic. The Argentine experience clearly demonstrates that no matter what the "wisdom" may be of the slogans advanced by incurable neo-reformists, when the anger of the masses reaches a certain level, successive explosions are inevitable. It is the elementary duty of revolutionists to act in such a way that they occur in the best possible conditions for the workers.

The third possibility is subdivided again into two variants. There are those who espouse the principle that it is requisite for the masses to answer with their own arms against the arms of the slaughterers. But they prefer to await the moment when the masses themselves find the means to take the initiative in this respect. It is not until after this moment that the vanguard is justified in taking the

initiative.

This position appears to us to be tinged with spontaneist illusions. It transforms the vanguard into a tail-endist rearguard. In practice it condemns the arming of the masses to be delayed up to the moment the dictatorship sinks by itself. Because one cannot see very well how, under the conditions of dictatorship and the illegality of all political initiatives of the slightest radical import, the masses would find the means to openly constitute a military apparatus of a legal nature, so to speak.

There remains the last variant, which is that proposed and applied by our Argentine comrades. The revolutionists construct autonomous and clandestine armed detachments, which are implanted in the mass movement as it matures and attains higher and higher levels, in order to stimulate in it the formation of broader and broader armed detachments, which they can fuse.

At the time of the Mendoza insurrection -- where our comrades were not yet implanted -- the presence of such armed detachments would have served as an organizing pole for the most advanced elements among the workers, each fighting cell, already trained and armed, becoming the organizer of a larger group of workers. Instead, the workers had to confront bare-handed a band of assassins of the people, who fired without mercy on the crowds of workers and on their homes, massacring several dozen persons. But how to improvise on the spot the arming, organization, and tactics of self-defense groups?

Moreover it was this role of armed protection, cover, and regroupment of the insurgent masses that was played by the comrades of the ERP at the time of the last uprising in Cordoba. But to be able to play this role it is necessary first of all to be organized for this end, to be trained and experienced, to have gained the sympathy of the masses and to have broken -- in the mind of the masses -- belief in the invincibility and invulnerability of the repressive apparatus. These are all functions that the guerrilla fighters must fulfill.

#### A Duty of Revolutionary Solidarity

Revolutionary Marxists, contrary to the populists or the partisans of Regis Debray, do not at all consider guerrilla war to be a universal panacea. It is only one form of struggle among others, even in countries where a dictatorship is in power. It must fulfill a precise function there which is attached to others: the construction of a revolutionary party; the elevation of the mass movement to a level of generalized revolutionary action.

Marxists reject any blind faith in this or that tribune, including armed tribunes, to free the workers. The emancipation of the workers can only be achieved by the workers themselves. On the road to that emancipation, in confronting bloody dictator-

ships, guerrilla war can be a remarkable weapon, under precise conditions and in a precise context, as the teachings of history confirm.

The Fourth International is not a hyper-centralized organization. Its international bodies determine only the general political line of the movement. Tactical decisions are strictly the province of the national sections. It is in this sense that the Fourth International does not have to take the responsibility for every tactical decision of this or that particular national section, nor judge it either. To be able to express such a judgment in a responsible manner, it would be necessary in addition to have available a number of detailed facts, which we lack for the moment.

Our duty in face of the hysteria unleashed in the press against our comrades of the PRT and the ERP is summed up, under these conditions, in two points. First of all in the affirmation of our complete solidarity with these courageous comrades, targets of a campaign of denigrations, the hypocrisy of which is disgusting. This solidarity, moreover, must not remain purely verbal. A committee for the defense of the political prisoners in Argentina has been set up in Paris under the sponsorship of Comrade Carpani, the representative of the Argentine trade union confederation, the CGT. This committee is in urgent need of aid and of extension to other countries of Europe. This must be assured to it.

Next, in the affirmation of our agreement with the general orientation of the PRT of developing the armed struggle, while expressing the hope that our comrades will find the means to link this struggle in the most intimate way to the development of the mass struggle, with the broadening of an organized base among the masses, and with a clear political orientation toward the socialist and proletarian revolution, against any concept of a revolution by stages.

The lesson to be drawn from the events in Argentina in this regard is, moreover, of universal importance. The temptation to resort to a fascist regime or to a military dictatorship constantly recurs to the bourgeoisie as soon as the class struggle becomes exacerbated anywhere in the world.

The possessing classes must be made to know that after the experience of the barbarous Nazi atrocities, the young vanguard throughout the world will never again tolerate the most abject form of civil war: that in which one camp is armed to the teeth, and murders, tortures, and oppresses without mercy, while the other camp is physically, psychologically, and politically disarmed, and resigns itself passively to the role of victim. The example of Argentina demonstrates that this vanguard is already sufficiently strong and resolute so that such an ignominy will not be repeated again.

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APPENDIX # 4: The following article by Daniel Bensaid, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist League of France, is translated from the June 10, 1972 issue of Rouge

### TERRORISM AND REVOLUTION

#### After the Attempt at Lod and the Arrest of Andreas Baader

Le Monde of May 26 entitled its editorial, "Bombs in Europe." Since then, the attempt on the airport at Lod, the arrest of Andreas Baader in Germany, one of the principal leaders of the Red Army Fraction, has occupied a select place in current events. The bourgeois press and the press of the reformist workers' movement yelp in unison and denounce the spectre of terrorism. The method is easy. Through the classic procedure of the amalgam, it permits them to get around the fundamental problem of revolutionary violence, which is posed with new acuteness at the moment when imperialist genocide is unleashed over Vietnam, when torture is systematized by the government in Brazil, and where even the French bourgeoisie begins to arm its killers of the SAC and CDR.

#### The Banditry of Yesterday and Today

Minority, even solitary, action cannot be judged outside its social context. In a small book, recently published by Maspero, Hobsbawm set forth the essential characteristics of social agrarian banditry. Honored bandits of peasant origin expresses profound popular resistance to the developments of feudalism, then to the penetration of capitalism in the countryside. Representatives of a small peasantry, incapable of smashing the system which strangles them, these bandits are condemned to a certain solitariness. Their action is a desperate protest. The masses can recognize that in it, as is attested to by the success that their popular literature accords to Robin Hood as well as the haidoucs of Roumania, sketched by Panait Istrati. But they cannot directly participate in it.

On the other hand, it is not unusual to see bandits take a place in the revolutionary struggle when the proletariat comes to the head of a national or social struggle of emancipation. During the long march, Mao Tse-tung attracted and reeducated a certain number of them. In Russia, the collaboration between the Bolsheviks and the illegal groups of the Caucasus in the big expropriations from 1905 to 1914 is well-known. This is also true for the participation of the celebrated bandits of Aurès in the Algerian revolution and the role played by Pancho Villa in the Mexican revolution.

The working class has not expressed its resistance to capitalism in the form of an urban banditry, analogous to agrarian banditry. If a certain sort of anarchism, that of the band at Bonnot, appears to be lodged in this tradition, it is also on the whole lodged in a political current which rather expresses a confrontation with the existing social order: the project of its destruction, even if this project borders on utopia. Rather than a workers' banditry, ascending capitalism developed gangsterism in the cities, which, far from challenging capitalist

society, is installed in its midst, the better to nourish it. Agrarian banditry constitutes resistance to oppression; gangsterism is only a form of parasitism on capital, without popular sympathy.

What is emerging today, beyond the limited case of the Baader band, is a new form of social confrontation which already in part constitutes an international phenomenon. A series of social sections, made up of technicians, intellectuals and students, find themselves on the warpath on the line of division between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The workers' movements, dominated by Stalinist or social-democratic reformism, cannot permit them to express their radical break with the decaying society, with its hypocritical values and its legalized violence. This makes up a part of the despair which has developed into urban terrorism. The groups which embark on this type of action constitute microsocieties, living apart from official society, justifying their action by a revolutionary project which they do not have the forces to bring to realization for lack of real connections with the masses. The only link is that of exemplary action and not organized resistance to capitalist exploitation.

If it's genuine, the document of the Tupamaros (MLN) published by the Uruguayan police confirms this hypothesis. "The MLN remains a subversive but non-revolutionary organization," declared this document of self-criticism. In other words, what is involved is a movement of violent confrontation, assured of broad sympathy in the masses, but up to now incapable of organizing them for a decisive assault upon the bourgeois state power.

So far as we're concerned it's clear that instead of plunging into terrorism, the role of revolutionaries is first of all to show the responsibilities of capitalist society for its legal and organized violence, as well as the responsibility of a workers' movement which capitulates before its historical tasks.

#### Minority Violence and Mass Violence

But the problem does not stop there. If the denunciation of terrorism takes so prominent a place in the bourgeois press, that's because the minority violence of some groups demonstrates the vulnerability of a system that wants to be faultless. The workers give a daily example: by showing that a strike-stoppage in a workshop can paralyze a highly automatized factory. The Vietnamese give a like example on a very different scale by holding at bay the most formidable apparatus of destruction equipped by guidance mechanisms, giant bombers, electronic apparatuses. Skyjackings of airplanes also contribute to demonstrate that the more the capitalist system is centralized, organized and automatized, the more it is at the mercy of a grain of sand.



For revolutionaries, the problem that the action that the Baader band poses is not one for moralizing judgment, but rather that of the bonds which can be established between mass violence and minority violence. A first and particularly enlightening example is given us by factory struggles. It is clear that the occupation of a factory which mobilizes a mass of workers to control the means of production and eventually passes over to active administration has a far greater significance than the kidnapping of a supervisor or a boss. The occupation attacks the boss' power at its roots, the ownership of the means of production. Kidnapping only attacks the physical person of an easily-replaceable oppressor. But if the kidnapping expresses a genuine anger, if it is not presented as an end in itself, a pure revolt, but rather as a means of breaking up a passivity and resignation of the masses by beginning to overthrow its hierarchical idols, then kidnapping can be a correct initiative that the workers ought to defend and even, in certain cases, to promote.

One of the latest actions attributed by the police to the Baader band is an explosion of a bomb in the barracks of the American forces in Europe where three American soldiers were found dead. The question is not one of principle but of tactics. So far as we're concerned, we have not hesitated to resort to violent minority actions when the actions were tied up with mass activity. In December 1970, the Communist League supported, at the moment of the Burgos verdict, the attack of a group of militants against the Bank of Spain, but that was parallel with the mass campaign led on behalf of the Basques threatened with death. We have also led actions against General Ky when he visited Paris, against the U.S. consulate, an action which led to the indictment of Alain Krivine, and supported the action led by militants against the firms profiting from the U.S. war. But this was parallel with a systematic mass work within the framework of the FSI in particular on behalf of the Indochinese revolution. We have taken responsibility for the direct attack against the meeting of the New Order, March 9, 1971, at the Sports Palace, physically imposed our presence upon the hirelings of the CFT at Rennes, and uncovered the anti-crisis plans of the Minister of the Interior. But that was parallel with a campaign of systematic propaganda against the armed gangs of capital, particularly in the trade unions where we are active, particularly through the army committees created in 1970 for the defense of the drafted imprisoned soldiers.

As for ourselves, revolutionaries ought not to await the insurgence of the masses to oppose their own violence to the daily violence of capital. In strikes, we propose to workers who have learned from the assassinations of Overney, and Labroche, threatened by the CRS, to organize workers self-defense. To prove its possibility, we gave an example to the extent of our capabilities. In the same way, our Spanish comrades of the Revolutionary Communist League have popularized the idea of workers self-defense but from the beginning tied it up to assure themselves the

protection of mass demonstrations as they did the first of May at Madrid with chains and Molotov cocktails.

We do not think that the way chosen by Baader and his comrades is one that leads to revolution. But we understand that they can think so, hard-pressed by the unleashing of imperialist violence and made desperate by the inertia of the reformist workers movement. That is why we defend them, first of all, against their bourgeois judges, as well as against the calumnies of the frightened bureaucrats.

---Daniel BENSARD