

New York, N.Y. 10014  
April 15, 1974

TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE LENINIST-TROTSKYIST FACTION

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed are two very important items:

1. A letter from Ernest Mandel discussing which LTF resolutions will be included among the public documents of the world congress.

2. A letter from Joe Hansen to Ernest, expressing our reaction to the final edited version of the majority's Argentine resolution which we received on April 11.

As you can see from Joe's reply, we consider this development to be an extremely serious one. We will let you know as soon as we get their response.

Comradely,

Mary-Alice

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April 8, 1974.

Dear Joe,

I hope you have in the meantime received the Argentine resolution (Mary-Alice already confirmed reception of the Bolivian one).

We have received your corrected contributions on Argentina and Bolivia, as well as your corrected counter-report on armed struggle in Latin-America.

The minority contribution on Argentina and Bolivia remains unacceptable for publication in public magazines, in our opinion. It is essentially polemic, and raises a great number of issues to which the majority position is not known. It would entail, if published, at the very least a simultaneous publication of several discussion articles by the majority to make positions on both sides understandable to the reader; such a widening of the special world congress issue of the magazines transforms it into a book, which corresponds neither to the purpose of world congress documents publication nor to our present needs and possibilities.

As to the minority counter-report on armed struggle in Latin-America, we see no objection to publishing it in the special issue of the magazines devoted to the world congress documents:

- (a) provided we publish too comrade Roman's report;
- (b) we cut in the minority counter-report the first and the final two paragraphs, which deal with matters which have nothing to do with Latin-America and on which again the majority position is therefore not clear to readers. I would add that the way in which the final two paragraphs (as well as the first one!) is phrased, creates in addition, in our opinion, a grave security problem which we should eliminate.

It goes without saying that we shall carefully go through comrade Roman's report too, and eliminate any extraneous matter not dealing with Latin-America from that report equally.

Please let us know as early as possible whether you can agree with these short cuts in the minority report, so that we can give its translation (which is already underway) to the printer's.

We also received your revised version of the minority political counter-resolution, which is already at the printer's.

We are sorry that the names of Vincent R. Dunne and Connie Weissman were omitted from the list of comrades who died since the 9th world congress. We apologize for this error, the origin of which we can't understand, as these names were included in the minutes on which the drafting of the communiqué was based. We shall correct it in the magazines.

Since the beginning of March, we haven't received "Avanzada Socialista". Is this due to something which happened with the paper, or with the mail, or what?

Fraternally yours,

s/Ernest

New York, N.Y.  
April 15, 1974

Dear Ernest,

I received the copy of the resolution on Argentina on April 11. In the same mail I also received your letter of April 8. Mary-Alice is answering some of the points you ask about, and I am sending separately a few notations on a couple of words in the photocopy of the manuscript that were not legible or spots where the sequence was not clear. Please let us know about these as soon as possible as we have begun the translation into English.

Meanwhile I would like to take up two points in the resolution that in my opinion call for urgent attention.

1. The resolution on Argentina includes a public attack on the PST and what is called "morenoism." The reference to "morenoism" is incomprehensible to me and I am sure will be incomprehensible to most readers of the world Trotskyist press. That the authors of the resolution view it as something bad can be gathered from its being coupled with "posadasism" -- whatever that is. The linkage smacks of innuendo and is not far removed from the technique of the amalgam, neither of which belong to the school of Trotskyism, as you well know.

The arguments used in the attack on the PST are fallacious, being based on exaggerations, malicious half-truths, and outright misrepresentations. These arguments, characteristic of the most vulgar level of deadend factionalism, were answered in various documents during the discussion preparatory to the world congress and again at the congress itself in such a definitive way that one would think all responsible leaders of the international would join in blocking any new attempt to revive them.

I hope that on these grounds alone you will agree that it would be best to remove the attack on the PST from the resolution.

There are even more serious considerations that ought to be weighed. The PST was among thirteen groups in countries where splits had occurred that came under the provisions of the "Agreement on Measures to Help Maintain the Unity of the Fourth International." These included groups in Spain, Mexico, Australia, etc. The formula eliminated any value judgments on the groups. Under that agreement, a considerable organizational concession was made to the International Executive Committee Majority Tendency; namely, not to designate the PST as a section despite its size, its record of faithful adherence to the program of Trotskyism, and its activities in the class struggle in Argentina.

To now single out the PST for a special "explanation" constitutes a gross violation by the Majority Tendency of the "Agreement on Measures to Help Maintain the Unity of the Fourth International." In my opinion, the violation is so flagrant as to amount to a unilateral repudiation of that agreement.

This ought to be reason enough to drop the point from the resolution.

2.

It should be added that a public attack of this kind leveled against a sector of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction constitutes an attack against the faction as a whole. If the attack is not removed from the resolution, it will, as I see it, leave the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction with no alternative but to reply in public.

As you will most likely agree, these are strong reasons for the Majority Tendency to drop the public attack on the PST from the resolution.

2. The account given in the resolution on Argentina of the reasons that persuaded the delegates at the Ninth World Congress to recognize the PRT (Combatiente) as the official section in Argentina does not conform with the facts. You, of course, were not a member of the commission that met on this question and that reported its findings back to the delegates. However, as I remember it, you were present at the session where the report was made. If you don't recall the details, you can check it out with others.

In my personal opinion, this account in the resolution constitutes a falsification of the record. If it were published, I do not see how any responsible comrade who attended that congress and who recalled the report of the commission could help but feel morally obligated to state publicly what the facts were.

I hope that in view of this reaction, you will do your utmost to persuade the leadership of the Majority Tendency to reconsider these two points and eliminate them from the final draft of the resolution.

Nonetheless I can't help but express pessimism over the chances that the majority of the leaders of the Majority Tendency will reverse themselves on these two points. It is my impression that the two points were included in the resolution because of a provocative orientation that appears to have been adopted by the Majority Tendency immediately after the congress; namely, to increase tensions in the international to the point of destroying comradely working relations with the various minority tendencies.

This course is the opposite of the one adopted by the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction, which it announced at the congress and which was confirmed at a subsequent faction conference; that is, to do everything possible to relax tensions in the Fourth International in the postcongress period and to work in a comradely way so as to provide the Majority Tendency with the maximum opportunity to test its line in practice.

The public attack on the PST and thereby the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction, which has been included in the draft of the resolution on Argentina, obviously dovetails with the decision to give the minority only token representation on the United Secretariat and to exclude it from the Bureau unless it meets arbitrary specifications laid down by the Majority Tendency as to its representatives. The immediate effect of thus converting the Bureau into the organ of a faction was to heighten tensions, as you are aware.

3.

Finally, it appears to me that the arguments you use in your April 8 letter against publishing the documents of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction on Argentina and Bolivia, even in an edited version, would seem to be inspired by the same general motivation.

You contend, for instance, that the two contributions raise "a great number of issues to which the majority position is not known." But this flies in the face of the fact that the positions of the Majority Tendency are detailed in its resolutions. The positions, moreover, are stated with definite targets in mind (the attacks being masked by eliminating direct references to the opposing positions). In addition, the versions of the two documents that we proposed be made public along with the documents of the Majority Tendency were edited in such a way as to include only references to public documents written by members of the IECMT (with possibly an exception or two that could hardly be objectionable). The main thread of the argumentation in the two edited documents of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction concerns precisely the question of "armed struggle" that is dealt with in some detail in the Majority Tendency resolutions, especially the one on Argentina.

In the light of these considerations don't you agree that it would be in the best interests of the Fourth International as a whole to make these edited documents available in the same issue in which the key documents of the Majority Tendency are made available? Wouldn't this present a much more balanced and rounded picture of the deliberations and decisions of the congress? Wouldn't this constitute proof of the capacity of the Fourth International to conduct a vigorous internal debate, thereby increasing its attractiveness to radicalizing layers of the workers and the youth?

As to your proposal to publish the report by Comrade Roman, this is acceptable provided that his arguments and examples are not altered. To publish a highly altered version could make the counterreport seem to have little connection with what was actually said. After all, it was in reply to a report that was made.

I do not understand your reasons for wanting to eliminate the first and the last two paragraphs in the edited counterreport. You say that they deal with matters not connected with Latin America and on which the majority position would therefore not be clear to readers. But they deal with a theme and with arguments that were presented at the congress.

You say in addition that a security problem is involved. I am, of course, not opposed to security editing; however, I fail to see what the problem is concretely. Perhaps you could take this up with Comrade Johnson at the next United Secretariat meeting or before if possible.

Fraternally yours,

Joe

cc: Johnson