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WHERE IS HEALY TAKING THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE?

A Dangerous Sectarian Tendency

-- by S. T. Peng

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## WHERE IS HEALY TAKING THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE?

### A Dangerous Sectarian Tendency

by S. T. Peng

In my article "Suggestions and Proposals on Unifying the World Trotskyist Movement," written in May, 1961, I pointed out that the leadership of the Socialist Labour League seek to obstruct and hinder, by whatever pretexts and measures, the unification of the world Trotskyist movement, ignoring completely the interests of the movement as a whole. I also pointed out that the "political discussion" which they had been vehemently urging on the ground that "unity must be based on fundamental agreement following a full international discussion" was merely a maneuver aimed at postponing unification indefinitely.

Their open admissions in the past year that they constitute a distinct tendency opposed to unification verifies the analysis I made more than a year and a half ago. In addition, in search of political arguments to justify their refusal to unite with sections adhering to the International Secretariat, arguments especially needed to oppose the stress placed by the Socialist Workers party on the need for unification, they have, on many important questions, above all on the issue of the Cuban Revolution, departed entirely from the basic principles of Marxism and fallen into an extremely sectarian petty-bourgeois position. This is displayed clearly for all to see in the SLL's article "Trotskyism Betrayed," written July 20, 1962, as a reply to the SWP's "Problems of the Fourth International — and the Next Steps."

As a consequence of its extremely sectarian position, the SLL leadership denounces the SWP as having accepted "the political method of Pabloite revisionism" and hence of having "betrayed Trotskyism." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p. 1.) They conclude that "it is in the construction of the revolutionary party in the U.S.A. itself that the necessity of defeating the S.W.P. leadership's revisionism is the most urgent." (Ibid., p.3. My emphasis.) The conclusion is obvious. Not only is the possibility of unifying the sections of the International Committee and the International Secretariat excluded, but in the IC itself there is likely to be a new split; i.e., the SLL is preparing to break relations with the SWP. Clearly the world Trotskyist movement is faced with still another new crisis!

In light of this threat, I am convinced that if the SLL's obstinate resistance to unification continues to develop, along with the extremely sectarian tendency displayed by the leadership, not only will a new split occur which would undoubtedly set back our whole movement for some years but the British movement itself will suffer disaster. For the sake of the world Trotskyist movement, for the sake of the British Trotskyist movement, we must thoroughly criticize and expose the dangerous tendency represented by the SLL leadership in hope of helping the SLL from suffering a new crisis and of assisting the world Trotskyist movement to unite as soon as possible on the basis of a common political program and going forward to the construction of a capable leadership of the Fourth International and a mass revolutionary socialist party in each country.

THE SLL'S SECTARIANISM ON THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

In its documents attacking the SWP, the SLL has singled out for repeated denunciation what it calls the SWP's substitution of "objectivism" for "Marxist method" (see C. Slaughter's "Report on the International Committee" of the IC held in July 1961) and its alleged acceptance of "the political method of Pabloite revisionism." But, in fact, it is precisely the SLL leaders themselves who have substituted their own impressionism and subjectivism for Marxist materialist dialectics. Their impressionism and subjectivism, and in final analysis their extremely sectarian tendency, are plain to see in their analysis and positions on a series of problems in the Cuban Revolution -- the nature of the Cuban state, the nature of the Castro regime, and the nature of the Cuban Revolution.

(1) On the Nature of the Cuban State.

Basing itself on the Castro regime's expropriation and nationalization of American imperialist and Cuban capitalist holdings, the SWP came to the conclusion that "a workers' state has been established in Cuba." ("Problems of the Fourth International -- and the Next Steps," p.2) The method used by the SWP is in full consonance with that used by Trotsky in determining the nature of the Soviet state. Trotsky held that the Soviet Union remained a workers' state (degenerated) because the nationalized property created by the October Revolution still remained intact despite the usurpation of proletarian power by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Even the SLL leaders have to admit the validity of this basic criterion. They say: "In defending the USSR as a workers' state, Trotsky himself considered that the social and economic conquests of October were still intact," and "Trotsky's basic definition still holds: the conquests of October are still intact." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.12.) Yet in the same article they declare: "The determination of the SWP and the Pabloites to consider Cuba a workers' state. . . is another example of the departure from the Marxist method." (Ibid., p.12.)

When Trotsky used nationalized property as the "criterion" to define the USSR as a workers' state, the SLL leaders think he was correct. But when the SWP uses the same criterion to characterize Cuba as a workers' state, why do the SLL leaders think it has departed from the Marxist method? In reply to this question, the SLL leaders attempt the following explanation: "At every stage of his eleven-years long work toward a 'definition' of the USSR, Trotsky insisted on a rounded, critical perspective and not simply on the 'normative' method of applying definition criteria. The SWP's method is the opposite, taking certain 'criteria' from the discussion of one particular manifestation of the revolutionary struggle in one part of the world as a unique stage in the development of the world revolution." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.13.)

This extended paragraph of "explanation" reveals not only astonishing confusion and sophistry on the part of the SLL leaders, it proves total ignorance of the fact that "at every stage of his eleven-years long work toward a 'definition' of the USSR," Trotsky never "insisted on a rounded, critical perspective." On the contrary, he insisted on applying "definition criteria" and not just "taking 'criteria' from the discussion of one particular manifestation of the revolutionary struggle in one part of the world as a unique stage in the development of the world revolution." In other words, when Trotsky was determining the nature of the Soviet state, he did not base

himself on any special condition or on "a rounded, critical perspective," but, as he said, on Marxist "sociology." The general formula of this sociology is:

"The relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material production forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual process of life." ("Preface to the Critique of Political Economy." My emphasis.)

The conclusion to be drawn from the above Marxist sociological formula is that the "economic structure of society, the real foundation. . . determines the general character of the legal and political superstructure." Standing precisely on this basic principle, Trotsky considered that the USSR remained a workers' state inasmuch as the relations of nationalized property created by the October Revolution remained intact (or, as the SLL puts it, "the social and economic conquests of October were still intact.") This "criterion," of determining the nature of the state through the relations of production which it defends, can be applied not only to the USSR but to any form of state in any of the stages of historical development. The property relations of feudal landlords determined the character of the feudal state. Capitalist property relations determine the character of a bourgeois state. Similarly, in determining the nature of the state in the East European countries and China, our movement used as its guide the transformation of property relations; i.e., the criterion of nationalized property. The use of property relations as the criterion in determining the nature of the state belongs to the ABC's of Marxism. Unfortunately, the leaders of the SLL have not yet come to understand the ABC's of Marxism.

Not comprehending the Marxist criterion in determining the character of the state, the SLL leaders substitute a new one. This can be seen from the following sentences:

"What does a 'workers' state' mean in concrete terms? It means the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' in one form or another."

"Does the dictatorship of the proletariat exist in Cuba? We reply categorically NO!" ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.13.)

Here the SLL leaders use the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as a criterion to determine the nature of a workers' state. This signifies that they have substituted a "political criterion" for the "economic criterion"; i.e., the "political superstructure" for the "economic structure of society." As a consequence they can categorically deny that Cuba is a workers' state. "Subjectively," they appear to have "won" the battle. But how can they then explain the nature of the state in the USSR, in the postwar East European countries and China? If they are really convinced and have the courage to insist on the correctness and universality of their new criterion (because a criterion with which one can determine the nature of a workers state should and must be universally applicable and not be tailored just to fit Cuba), then they should proceed to discard Trotsky's evaluation of the character of the Soviet state and categorically deny that all the postwar states in the East European countries and the People's Republic in China are workers' states, inasmuch as the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the Soviet Union -- in

the sense of political rule through democratically elected councils -- was long ago supplanted by the "dictatorship of the Stalinist bureaucracy"; and in the East European countries and China, there was never any "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the form of democratically elected councils, only the bureaucratic dictatorship of the Stalinist parties from the very beginning. In determining the nature of the state in the USSR, the East European countries and the People's Republic of China, the SLL leaders -- if they consistently followed their new criterion -- would depart entirely from the traditional viewpoint of Trotskyism and the Fourth International and end up in the deep mire of revisionism. You see, once you depart from Marxist method and principles, you can go very far!

Here I must point out that when the class character of the Soviet state was being discussed in the 1930's, persons like Bruno R., Burnham and Shachtman, without exception, substituted the "political" criterion for the "economic" criterion in evaluating developments in the USSR. Basing themselves on the fact that the proletarian power had been usurped by the Stalinist bureaucracy, that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" had been converted into the "omnipotent dictatorship" and even that Stalin and Hitler signed a "German-Soviet pact," all of them "categorically" denied that the USSR was a workers' state. Today the position taken by the SLL leadership on the nature of the Cuban state is but the continuation and repetition of the revisionist viewpoint of Bruno R., Burnham and Shachtman and "those essentially petty-bourgeois trends in our movement" (to use the words of the SLL).

The SLL leaders appear to feel that using the political criterion -- "the dictatorship of the proletariat" -- to deny that Cuba is a workers state is not quite sufficient. Consequently they suggest the supplementary use of another criterion. They say:

"A basic criterion for a workers' state in the economic sphere in an underdeveloped country is the nationalization of the land and thorough political measures by the ruling power to prevent the growth of Kulaks. Neither in Egypt nor in Cuba has this been done. On the contrary, in Cuba Castro has recently promised (under the impact of the food crisis) to give the land back to the peasants. So long as land remains alienable, so long will petty-commodity production continue and so long will Cuba remain a capitalist nation." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.14. Emphasis in the original.)

The above "basic criterion for a workers' state in the economic sphere" is not better, only more ridiculous, than the political criterion, "dictatorship of the proletariat." In addition to a display of ignorance of historical experience it contains some remarkable errors in theory:

(A) When Lenin, in criticism of Kautsky, said, "Kautsky's assertion that to transfer the large estates to the state and rent them out in small plots to peasants with little land would be achieving 'something socialistic' is a downright mockery of Marxism," he referred to Marx's opinion that "land nationalization is in fact a consistent slogan of the bourgeoisie." ("Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky," Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. II, Part 2, 1952 Moscow Edition, p.128-29. Emphasis in original.) Consequently even such "nationalization of the land" as has been carried out is still not "something socialistic," but only the realization of one of the tasks of a consistent bourgeois democratic revolution. Unfortunately the SLL leaders have used "a consistent slogan of the bourgeoisie" -- "the nationalization of the

land" -- as "a basic criterion for a workers' state in the economic sphere in an underdeveloped country." This reveals how ignorant they are of Marxist theory!

(B) It is true that Lenin once said: "The nationalization of the land has given the proletarian state the maximum opportunity of passing to socialism in agriculture." (Ibid., p.131.) However, if the proletarian state does not take into its hands all means of production such as factories, mines, transportation, the banks, etc., nationalization of the land only clears the way for the development of capitalism. The SLL leaders assert that nationalization of the land is a basic criterion of a workers' state, yet they have not demanded the expropriation of all the means of production. Their stand is thus not qualitatively different from "Kautsky's assertion that to transfer the large estates to the state. . . would be achieving 'something socialistic.'"

(C) The SLL leaders, of course, add "and thorough political measures by the ruling power to prevent the growth of kulaks." It is utopian to hope "to prevent the growth of kulaks" through "political measures by the ruling power" without the ruling power having first taken into its hands all the means of production. Even after this, the ruling power is still not able "to prevent the growth of kulaks"; because, besides nationalizing all the means of production, establishing planned economy, control over the domestic market and the monopoly of foreign trade, the "ruling power" must carry out total collectivization of agriculture to destroy the kulaks at their source of social origin. But the total collectivization of agriculture can hardly be completed in a short period "in an underdeveloped country." To attempt thorough "political measures. . . to prevent the growth of kulaks" smacks more of Stalinist adventurism than Marxist-Leninist policy.

(D) As for "petty-commodity production," even after the land has been nationalized and ceases to be alienable, it will still continue. The reason, according to Lenin, is that along with nationalization of the land "in an underdeveloped country," "equal land tenure" should also be established. That is, the proletarian state should redistribute the land to the peasants and let them engage in agriculture on an individual basis. Under individual management, petty-commodity production will inevitably continue in agriculture. This is one of the ABC's of Marxist economics. Cessation of petty-commodity production is possible only after carrying out the total collectivization of agriculture. But, as I indicated above, the total collectivization of agriculture can hardly be completed in a short period. Hence it was that after the October Revolution, especially after the New Economic Policy was put into force, "petty-commodity production" still continued. From the viewpoint of the SLL leaders, the USSR, under Lenin's leadership, would also have been "a capitalist nation"!

## (2) On the Nature of the Castro Regime.

We have pointed out that after the bourgeois elements were excluded from power in 1959, the Cuban revolutionary government or the Castro regime became a "workers' and farmers' government." The SLL leaders, however, having abandoned basic Marxist methods and principles so as to deny that Cuba is a workers' state, declare: "The [Castro] regime is a variety of capitalist state power. The Castro regime did not create a qualitatively new and different type of state power from the Batista regime." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.14.) In their opinion, the Castro regime is not qualitatively different

from the Batista regime since both are "capitalist state powers." This is being blind to facts and ridiculous in theory.

Concerning the facts in regard to foreign policy: The Batista regime upheld American imperialist privileges in Cuba in their totality, willingly converting Cuba into a semicolony and making every effort to protect American interests so as to permit them to freely and arbitrarily exploit the Cuban workers and peasants. The Castro regime has not only deprived American imperialism of all privileges in Cuba, and won national independence; it has expropriated and nationalized all American interests in Cuba, waging a fierce struggle against American imperialist aggression. In view of the glaring contrast in such absolutely indisputable facts, is the Castro regime really no different from the Batista regime "qualitatively"?

Concerning the facts in regard to domestic policy: The Batista regime strove to protect the interests of the Cuban landlords and capitalists, the better to permit them to bleed the workers and peasants. It also established one of the most reactionary political systems in the world, depriving the people of all democratic rights and using the civil police, military police and troops to brutally suppress all protest. The Castro regime completely destroyed Batista's political machine and its civil police, military police and army. It not only excluded the landlord and bourgeois elements from the new government, it expropriated the land from the latifundists so as to either redistribute it among the peasants or to set up collective farms, and it has nationalized all the capitalist enterprises. It has also built up a workers' and farmers' militia to suppress the counterrevolutionary activities of landlords and capitalists, to resist American imperialist aggression and to safeguard the basic interests of the worker and peasant masses. Are these two regimes really the same "qualitatively"?

On the theoretical plane, Lenin and Trotsky asserted over and over again that the bourgeoisie in colonial and semicolonial countries could never wage a resolute struggle against imperialism and for the realization of national independence. Nor could they stand on the side of the poor peasants to overthrow the rule of landlords so as to expropriate the land for redistribution among the peasants, thus solving the land problem. Because of these weaknesses of the bourgeoisie, these central tasks -- national independence and land reform -- can only be carried out by the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants. Therefore, "the struggle for national independence and land reform is inseparable from the socialist struggle against world imperialism." This has been clearly stated in "The Transitional Program." If the SLL leaders contend that both the Castro regime and the Batista regime are "capitalist state powers" and represent the interests of the bourgeoisie, then they must also admit that the bourgeoisie in colonial and semicolonial countries can wage a fierce and resolute struggle against imperialists and local landlords, thus achieving the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution -- national independence and land reform!

Moreover, the Castro regime has not only annulled imperialist privileges and expropriated landlords' holdings; it has nationalized imperialist and native capitalist holdings, instituted a planned economy and monopolized foreign trade. If the SLL leaders assert that the Castro regime is not "qualitatively" different from "the Batista regime," since both regimes, as they see it, represent the interests of the bourgeoisie, they must then say

that the bourgeois class can also carry out socialistic measures such as nationalization of its own holdings, planning the economy and establishing a state monopoly of foreign trade, etc. Then what revolutionary role is left for the working class and its party to play? The SLL leaders, on every occasion, stress "in theory" the revolutionary task of the working class and its party, but in reality they nullify what the working class and its party must accomplish!

The SLL leaders tell us that the Castro regime is not "qualitatively" different from the Batista regime, being but "a variety of capitalist state power." From the above analysis we can see to what alarming lengths their subjectivism, which has led them to completely deny the facts, and their impressionism in theory, have gone.

But the following statement is even more surprising: "Hence we have Kemal Ataturk, Chiang Kai-shek, Nasser, Cardenas, Peron, Ben Bella -- and Castro. . ." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.15.) Here the SLL leaders put Castro and Chiang Kai-shek on the same level, treating both as enemies. What they do not understand is the totally reactionary role played by Chiang Kai-shek, the butcher of the Chinese worker and peasant masses in the Second Chinese Revolution (1925-27) from beginning to end. As for Castro, while he has many shortcomings and has committed many errors, he has acted as a revolutionary leader from the beginning right up to this moment. To place the counter revolutionary Chiang Kai-shek and the revolutionary Castro on the same level, and to despise both, is to go beyond sectarianism and slip into the camp of reaction. If this disgraceful position of the SLL leaders were to become widely known, they would be spurned by all revolutionaries, especially those in Latin America.

### (3) On the Uninterrupted Development of the Cuban Revolution.

In order to deny that the Cuban Revolution has developed from the stage of democratic revolution to socialist revolution; i.e., in order to deny the uninterrupted development of the Cuban Revolution, the SLL leaders, again displaying their subjectivism and impressionism, wrote the following:

"Despite or rather because of all its economic and social changes that have taken place in the last two-three years, Cuba has witnessed, not a social revolution which has transferred state power irrevocably from the hands of one class to another, but a political revolution which has transferred power from the hands of one class to another section of that same class. In the course of such a transfer, substantial concessions have been made to the working masses, but these concessions do not transcend the limits of capitalist rule and exploitation. In this context it is childish nonsense for the SWP leaders to declare that Cuba affords 'fresh confirmation of the correctness of the theory of the Permanent Revolution.'" ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.15. Emphasis in original.)

The above conglomeration of works reeks with ignorance of the facts and theoretical absurdities. First of all, let us ask: What is a social revolution? If the leaders of the SLL had not abandoned or forgotten the ABC's of Marxism, they would know that a social revolution means a change of property relations in society or the transfer of property from the hands of one class to another. Within this frame, Marxists consider the French Revolution in the eighteenth century to be a social revolution, since it converted the property of the feudal landlords and the church into capitalist



property. Similarly, Marxists call the Russian October Revolution of 1917 a social revolution, because it transformed property relations from bourgeois private ownership into workers' state ownership. "All the economic and social changes that have taken place in the last two-three years" clearly indicate that a social revolution has occurred in Cuba; i.e., property relations have been converted from capitalist private ownership into workers' state ownership (expropriation and nationalization of all factories, mines, transportation, banks, etc.). If such changes in property relations are not to be considered a social revolution, ~~then what is the concrete content of a~~ "social revolution" as envisaged by the leaders of the SLL?

If the leaders of the SLL are not to limit themselves to always denying facts and always offering empty talk; and feel that they should assume a responsible attitude toward the revolution, then it is their duty to work out a program to guide the coming social revolution in Cuba -- if they think that the actual Cuban Revolution has not yet reached the stage of social revolution. Why have they not proposed such a program? The reason is very simple. The Cuban Revolution has already reached the stage of social revolution and has taken the decisive steps -- the expropriation of the capitalist class and the nationalization of capitalist holdings. Therefore the leaders of the SLL cannot even think up a program of "social revolution" for Cuba.

In fact, the SLL leaders have also abandoned the ABC's of Marxism on the question of social revolution just as they abandoned them on the question of the workers' state, since the criterion which they use to characterize the nature of a revolution is not the transformation of property relations but state power. They do not realize that a revolution which has transferred "state power" from the hands of one class to another is not yet a complete social revolution if property relations are not transformed along with the transfer of power. But if in a revolution property in the means of production is transformed from bourgeois private ownership to workers' state ownership, while the state power is not directly in the hands of the working class, Marxists still consider such a revolution a "social revolution." It was precisely on the criterion of such a transformation of property relations that our movement characterized the revolutions in Yugoslavia, the East European countries, China, North Korea and North Vietnam as "social" or revolutions. Consequently our program in these countries calls not for "social" but for "political" revolution.

The assertion of the leaders of the SLL that the Cuban Revolution is "a political revolution which has transferred power from the hands of one class to another section of the same class" is nothing but another way of saying that "the Castro regime is a variety of capitalist state power." The assertion consequently reveals the same blindness to facts and the same departures from Marxist theory.

The statement that "in the course of such a transfer, substantial concessions have been made to the working masses, but these concessions do not transcend the limits of capitalist rule and exploitation" no doubt refers to the "economic and social changes that have taken place in the last two-three years"; i.e., the expropriation and nationalization of capitalist holdings (factories, mines, transportation, banks, etc.). If such "substantial concessions" to the working masses as the expropriation and nationalization of capitalist holdings are still not to be considered as having transcended "the limits of capitalist rule and exploitation," then I do not

know what the leaders of the SLL mean by "capitalist rule and exploitation." Are not capitalist holdings -- capitalist means of production -- to be considered the material base of their rule and exploitation? Can the capitalists still rule and exploit the working masses after having been deprived of this material base? Let the leaders of the SLL answer these questions!

The main motivation behind the attempt of the SLL leaders to deny the uninterrupted development of the Cuban Revolution from the democratic to the socialist stage is their wish to denounce the SWP for having declared that "Cuba affords fresh confirmation of the correctness of the theory of the permanent revolution." But from the facts and theoretical consideration advanced above it is indisputable that the Revolution, despite its shortcomings, has developed uninterruptedly from the first stage to the second. This development has objectively proved "the correctness of the theory of the Permanent Revolution." However, the SLL leaders deny the fact. This shows that if they are not purveyors of "childish nonsense," they do not grasp the theory of the permanent revolution and stand outside the ranks of those who adhere to it.

Trotsky presented one of the key points of the theory of the permanent revolution as follows: "First it embraces the problem of the transition of the democratic revolution into the socialist. This is really the historical origin of the theory." (Introduction to Permanent Revolution, p. xxxii, Pioneer Publishers, 1931.) All the facts of the development of the Cuban Revolution have shown unequivocally the transition from the first phase of democratic revolution to the socialist revolution. The turning point occurred August to October, 1960, when all the main industries in Cuba were nationalized. As a result of these measures, the economic structure of Cuban society was radically transformed. However, the SLL leaders deny that a radical change in the Cuban economic structure is a fact. To support their argument they quote Trotsky:

"No matter what the first episodic stages of the revolution may be in the individual countries, the realization of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is conceivable only under the political leadership of the proletarian vanguard, organized in the Communist Party. This in turn means that the victory of the democratic revolution is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat which bases itself upon the alliance with the peasantry and solves first of all the tasks of the democratic revolution." (As quoted in "Trotskyism Betrayed," p.15.)

Citing this quotation, the leaders of the SLL conclude, without any attempt at serious consideration of the facts and their relation to theory: "Thus Cuba constitutes, in fact, a negative confirmation of the permanent revolution. Where the working class is unable to lead the peasant masses and smash capitalist state power, the bourgeoisie steps in and solves the problems of the 'democratic revolution' in its own fashion and to its own satisfaction." (Ibid., p.15.)

In this smug conclusion, they ignore entirely what happened in Yugoslavia and China where not only was "capitalist state power" smashed but "the tasks of the democratic revolution" (national independence and agrarian reform) were solved. But these achievements, obviously, were not won "through

the dictatorship of the proletariat based on an alliance with the peasantry"; even today these two countries have not yet established a genuine "dictatorship of the proletariat." This much is recognized by the SLL. Confronted by such a fact, how then can the leaders of the SLL hope to explain their contradictory position? Did the bourgeoisie in Yugoslavia and China "step in and solve the problem of the democratic revolution"? If they are as affirmative in their answer to this as in the case of Cuba, they would then have to admit that the Yugoslav and Chinese Communist parties, which solved "the problem of the democratic revolution," represent the bourgeoisie and that Yugoslavia and China have not reached the stage of workers' states but have remained in the orbit of capitalism. This would mean dumping their evaluation of the nature of the revolution and the state in Yugoslavia and China!

In his polemic with Burnham and Shachtman on the nature of the Soviet state, Trotsky declared: "In the question of the social character of the USSR, their mistakes flow . . . from replacing the historic fact with the programmatic norm. Concrete fact departs from the norm." ("In Defense of Marxism," p. 3. My emphasis.) The leaders of the SLL do not understand that what they quoted from Trotsky is "a programmatic norm." But the living event does not always follow the programmatic norm. Sometimes it more or less deviates. Sometimes it contradicts the norm, especially under certain special circumstances. In Yugoslavia and China, great deviations from Trotsky's programmatic norm clearly occurred. Although the Cuban Revolution differs from the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions in many respects, all three revolutions have one thing in common, none followed the programmatic norm. On a series of questions relating to the Cuban Revolution, the mistakes committed by the leadership of the SLL flow precisely "from replacing the historic fact with the programmatic norm" and from not knowing that "concrete fact departs from the norm" under certain circumstances.

True, the Cuban Revolution was not carried out "under the political leadership of the proletarian vanguard, organized in the Communist Party." As a result, the "dictatorship of the proletariat" could not be built in time during the process of the revolution. However, the Revolution did "smash capitalist state power," and did carry out socialist measures. These are "historic facts." To deny these "historic facts" on the grounds that they do not agree with "the programmatic norm" is not only pointless, it will inevitably result in serious mistakes and lead practical policies to catastrophe. One of the basic differences between a Marxist and a petty-bourgeois sectarian is that the Marxist always faces historic, or concrete facts, correctly analyzes the facts and understands the facts. If a Marxist discovers that a contradiction exists between the "historic fact" and the "programmatic norm," his duty is to study the contradiction in hope of finding its cause so that he can increase his own knowledge as well as explain the contradiction to others. The leadership of the SLL is totally unable to do this. They do grasp certain "norms" or "dogmas"; the "historic facts" they deny.

The peculiarity of the Cuban Revolution was that no "political leadership of the proletarian vanguard, organized in the Communist Party" existed. The Revolution began and was impelled forward under the leadership of a petty-bourgeois radical democratic formation -- the July 26 Movement. The original program of this grouping was based on democratic, even humanitarian, concepts. They were far from the program of Marxism or the "programmatic

norm" of the permanent revolution. Yet the leaders of this revolutionary grouping were young and charged with revolutionary zeal, courage and audacity. They were not hampered by the unbroken tradition of Social Democratic reformism since they were not part of that movement. Nor were they corrupted by the ossified prejudices of the Stalinist "theory of revolution by stages." After they succeeded in overthrowing the Batista regime (helped in large part by its high degree of rottenness), they responded to the urgent revolutionary pressure of the workers and peasant masses, the severe threat of American imperialism and the mighty impact of the tremendous expansion of the Soviet Union and the upsurge of socialist countries such as China, etc., by gradually (empirically) giving up their original liberal illusions and accepting Marxism-Leninism. They not only excluded the bourgeois elements from the new regime, established a workers' and farmers' government, won national independence and solved the land problem, they also enacted socialist measures. By so doing, they pushed the Cuban Revolution into the path of socialism. Although not in accordance with the "programmatic norm" of the theory of the permanent revolution, all this in reality follows the objective logic of the uninterrupted development of the Revolution. This is a "historic fact."

Naturally, in explaining the contradiction between the "historic fact" of the Cuban Revolution and the "programmatic norm" of the theory of the permanent revolution, we are not attempting to deny the validity of the "programmatic norm." On the contrary, we refer to the "programmatic norm" in seeking to solve this contradiction; that is, to overcome the shortcomings of the Revolution. For instance, we have seen that the ideological development of the leadership of the July 26 Movement from the standpoint of bourgeois liberalism to the standpoint of Marxism was decisive in pushing the Revolution forward. But, on the other hand, the leadership of the July 26 Movement lacks the tradition of Bolshevism and does not understand the content of democratic centralism nor its decisive importance in the development of socialism. In consequence we advocate building a revolutionary Marxist party to solve the problem of leadership. Likewise we have seen that the workers' and farmers' government in Cuba was not created in a democratic way by the workers and peasants. Consequently we urge establishment of workers', farmers' and soldiers' councils to reorganize the government and establish a democratic socialist regime — the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Finally, we hold that the Cuban Revolution can be thoroughly completed only by extension of the revolution to other countries, above all those in Latin America. To help achieve this aim we have urged unification among all Trotskyists in Latin America so as to increase the effectiveness of their work in assisting the Cuban Revolution and in extending it. (See the series of documents published by the SWP on the Cuban Revolution and my document, "A Draft Resolution on the Cuban Revolution and the Tasks of the Trotskyists.")

But ~~what~~ policies do the leaders of the SLL suggest in order to push forward the Cuban Revolution — after denying the socialist nature of the Cuban Revolution because of their peculiar subjective approach, after denying that Cuba is a workers' state, and after asserting that the "Castro regime is a variety of capitalist state power"? In other words, what social program do the leaders of the SLL advocate to bring about a "social revolution" in Cuba? None. They can suggest nothing. Because of their condemnation

of the Castro regime, their stigmatizing of the revolutionary conquests in Cuba, and, in reality, their sabotage of the Revolution, the leadership of the SLL cannot play a positive role.

Perhaps the leaders of the SLL will protest and argue: "Haven't we urged building a Marxist party in Cuba to advance the revolution there?" Yes, they make a declaration to that effect in their document:

"The Socialist Labour League fights for the construction of a Marxist party based on the working class and armed with the finest and latest weapons from the arsenal of Marxism. The first task of such a party would be to establish the political and theoretical independence of the working class from the capitalist class, its state and its ideological servitors. This implies complete organizational and political independence from that bureaucratic fusion of Stalinism and Castroism which is the Unified Revolutionary Party. . . ." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.15.)

The above declaration, calling "for the construction of a Marxist party based on the working class and armed with the finest and latest weapons from the arsenal of Marxism" may win hearty applause from some "infantile leftists." Nevertheless, it is necessary to call to the attention of the leaders of the SLL that their position on a series of basic questions in the Cuban Revolution is a combination of miserable anti-Marxist revisionism and extreme sectarianism. In Cuba if such a combination of revisionism and sectarianism were propagated in expectation of constructing a Marxist party, nothing would be achieved but disaster. In reality, the SLL call "for the construction of a Marxist party" in Cuba constitutes nothing but empty talk. On the one hand, they refuse to join and work in the "Unified Revolutionary Party" since they denounce it as "a bureaucratic fusion of Stalinism and Castroism." On the other hand, they refuse to cooperate with the existing Cuban Trotskyist party (PORT) because they consider this party to be "Pabloite" and thus they have irreconcilable political differences in principle with it. To implement "the construction of a Marxist party," they are left with no choice but to send their own people from London to Cuba. Are they not dealing in empty talk?

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I have attempted above through a sentence-by-sentence, and even word-by-word analysis of statements on the nature of the Cuban state, the Castro regime and the Cuban Revolution in the SLL's recent document "Trotskyism Betrayed," as considered in the light of indisputable facts and the AEC's of Marxism, to prove how blind the leaders of the SLL are to reality and how ignorant they are of our theory or how they distort it. From this exposition, which I have tried to make as clear as possible, we can see that the so-called "correct method" which the SLL leaders boast of possessing consists actually of subjectivism or impressionism which denies facts; that the high "theory" they boast of is merely in line with the revisionism of Bruno R., Burnham and Shachtman; that their self-chosen "correct way for the construction of a Marxist revolutionary party" is in the school of that incurable sectarianism which was criticized by Trotsky in the "Transitional Program." To continue propagating this kind of combined revisionism and sectarianism in the name of Trotskyism will undoubtedly give Trotskyism a bad name. If they were able to influence the Trotskyists in Latin America through the International Committee of the Fourth

International (as it operates at present), it would inevitably lead to catastrophe. Fortunately the Trotskyists in Latin America have begun to protest this disastrous line as we see from the following:

"We believe that the characterization of the IC, considering Cuba as not a workers' state, is erroneous and does not take into account the characterization of Russia, China, Yugoslavia, etc., and the tradition of Trotskyism in analyzing the changes of economic structure on liquidating the capitalist regime, in addition to the appreciations of the political superstructure that led the revolutionary process. That the errors of the IC on Cuba are due fundamentally to either lack of knowledge or to being ill informed on the reaction that has occurred among the Latin-American masses since the impact of the Cuban Revolution. If the Trotskyist sections of Latin America should make a mistake on Cuba and deny the character of the workers' state in Cuba, of the socialist conquests made by the proletariat since the effective liquidation of capitalism, of the struggle against the sectarianism and bureaucratism of the CP, of the insurrectional line which the Workers and Farmers Government of Cuba poses for all the Latin-American peoples; if we should deny all this, we repeat, the Latin-American Trotskyists would be committing the swiftest political hara-kiri."

The above criticism and protest is quoted from a document "Proposals for the IC Meeting at the End of October 1962" signed by Carlos Hugenbert and José Valdés, two leaders of the FOR of Chile. Unfortunately, this most realistic and significant document was not discussed at the IC meeting at the end of October 1962. Nevertheless the "Proposals" of Comrade Hugenbert and Valdés constitute in fact the severest protest, representing the consensus of Trotskyist opinion in all the Latin-American countries on the political line on the Cuban Revolution passed by the IC (embodied in the SLL's "The World Prospect of Socialism"). It is at the same time a severe warning to the leaders of the SLL.

II.

TWO EXTREME ATTITUDES OF THE SLL  
TOWARDS THE ALGERIAN STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION

From Right Adaptation to Left Sectarianism

Besides the Cuban question, there is another current political question on which the SLL fiercely attacks the SWP -- the Algerian question. Take the following from its document "Trotskyism Betrayed" as an example:

"The SNP's attitude towards the Algerian struggle, and particularly the condemnation of the SLL's characterization of the FLN leadership and its agreement with French imperialism will serve as the best example. On this question, it has to be said that the SWP now finds itself at the end of a long historical line, beginning with the Mensheviks and continuing through the Chinese revolution. . . From our side, over a number of years an attempt has been made to analyze the nature of the Algerian war and revolution and to specify the character of its leadership." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.7.)

The SLL leaders openly denounce the SWP above for having followed the "line" of the "Mensheviks" in its "attitude toward the Algerian struggle." They even boast of having made an attempt to "analyze the nature of the Algerian war and revolution" and "to specify the character of its leadership." However, they have entirely forgotten that their own previous "attitude towards the Algerian struggle" was precisely a sample of the worst "line" of the "Mensheviks." To remind them of their previous line and to contrast that line with their "attitude" of today, let me quote from the "Resolution of Solidarity with the Algerian Struggle for National Liberation" passed at the IC meeting of November 1955.

"It hails the Algerian National Movement (MNA) which, operating under the most stringent conditions of illegality, wages an intransigent fight against imperialism under the leadership of the working masses. In the person of Messali Hadj the oppressed and exploited of the world possess a living symbol of this struggle.

"This slogan -- the only one in keeping with the principles of democracy and socialism -- calls for a constituent assembly in Algeria enjoying sovereignty in the nation."

This resolution, if I am informed correctly, was drafted by Healy himself with the help of a French comrade. For the sake of demonstrating "solidarity" with the MNA at the time, Healy even interviewed Messali Hadj and submitted an article for publication in the Bevanite Tribune which, in essence, flattered the Algerian leader. Subsequently in Labour Review, Michael Banda wrote a long article about the causes and perspectives of the Algerian war in the light of social, economic and class relations. Banda's conclusion was that the only party in Algeria which was struggling in the interests of the working class was the MNA. From all the evidence I can gather, it was the leaders of the SLL who were responsible for the position taken in the IC resolution. On January 15, 1956, I wrote a document "Declaration on the 'Resolution of Solidarity with the Algerian Struggle for National Liberation,'" the chief purpose of which was to criticize the two main points made in the quotation cited above. I asked Healy at the

time to publish my article in order to reopen discussion on the Algerian question. My article was not published. To me this signified that the SLL leadership insisted on the position of the IC resolution and was not willing to brook either discussion or correction on the question. As a matter of fact both the SLL and the La Verité group led by Lambert supported Messali Hadj and his MNA almost to the very day he capitulated to French imperialism.

Let me indicate the political implications contained in the quotation from the IC resolution.

(A) To assert that the MNA, during the Algerian war, was "under the leadership of the working masses" or, in other words, serving the interests of the working masses, and to praise Messali Hadj as a "living symbol of this struggle" seemed ridiculous at the time, even before the MNA and its leader capitulated to French imperialism. Both its program and its policies, adopted at the beginning of the Algerian war, showed it to be a petty-bourgeois grouping. Both words and deeds proved that Messali Hadj was no more than a petty-bourgeois politician. To characterize a petty-bourgeois group as being "under the leadership of the working masses" and to praise a petty-bourgeois politician as "the living symbol of this struggle" leads one to ask the leaders of the SLL: What "method" did you apply? What facts did you "analyze" to reach such a conclusion? Is this what you refer to today when you boast about your "attempt to analyze the nature of the Algerian war and revolution and to specify the character of the leadership"?

(B) The sentence, "This slogan -- the only one in keeping with the principles of democracy and socialism -- calls for a constituent assembly in Algeria enjoying sovereignty in the nation," sounds no less ridiculous. They thought that Messali's call for a constituent assembly was the only slogan "in keeping with the principles of democracy and socialism." In criticism of this misconception, I made the following observations in my "Declaration":

"From the Marxist point of view, 'constituent assembly' belongs to the realm of bourgeois democracy, and even the most democratic constituent assembly has nothing to do with the principles of socialism. . . . The resolution mixes up the principles of democracy and those of socialism, and crowns the constituent assembly with all of them -- this can only be qualified as a theory of petty-bourgeois ideology and has nothing in common with Marxism."

Today the leaders of the SLL proclaim how much they emphasize Marxist "theory"; they are particularly fond of denouncing other comrades as "Mensheviks." Yet how can they explain away their mistaking the slogan for a bourgeois "constituent assembly" as "in keeping with the principles of socialism"?

(C) I should also like to ask them: On the basis of what theory and facts did you ~~forecast~~ forecast that a petty-bourgeois grouping like the MNA would "wage an intransigent fight against imperialism"? Was this prediction or estimate obtained through applying the "Marxist method" in making your attempt to "specify the character" of the MNA?

Characterizing a petty-bourgeois grouping as being "under the leadership of the working masses"; forecasting that it would wage "an intransigent



fight against imperialism"; praising a petty-bourgeois politician, Messali Hadj, as a "living symbol of this struggle"; and mistaking the slogan for a bourgeois "constituent assembly" as in keeping with socialist principles -- this was the basic line; i.e., the line of "the Mensheviks" which the leaders of the SLL adopted during the first phase (1955-58) of the Algerian struggle. The bankruptcy of this line was clearly and openly exposed in 1958 when Messali Hadj and Belloum's guerrillas capitulated to French imperialism.

Unfortunately the leaders of the SLL learned nothing from this disgraceful experience. On the contrary, they still resort to sophistry to justify their line and to blame others. For example, in their reply to my criticism of their mistake on the Algerian question (see my article "Suggestions and Proposals on Unifying the World Trotskyist Movement"), they not only denounced me for "simply repeating old Pabloite slanders and stories," they even openly declared: "We conditionally supported both wings in Algeria so far as they fought the French. But we reserved our right to criticize them from a Marxist point of view if we considered this necessary." ("A Reply to Comrade Peng," p.9.) This would have been splendid had this been their position! But where did they make this position known? In what document did they write that they "supported both wings in Algeria"? In their "Resolution of Solidarity with the Algerian Struggle for National Liberation"? For Absolutely not! This resolution only "hails the Algerian National Movement" and flatters Messali Hadj as "the living symbol of this struggle." It does not at all mention "support" for the FLN. Just because of this mistake, I proposed the following rectification in my "Declaration":

"That the struggle against French imperialism in Algeria was not led solely by the Messalist party but proceeded from many regional groups spontaneously organized and rallied together, such as those in the name of the National Liberation Front (FLN)." Hence I proposed the following amendment: "We should accord solidarity to all mass organizations. . . in Algeria engaged effectively in a struggle against French imperialism. . . This is to say that we are not permitted to support one faction, such as Messali's, as against another faction that led the masses in taking arms against French imperialism."

Today the leaders of the SLL take the proposal I made seven years ago (to "support both wings of this movement), claiming it as their own in order to conceal the bankruptcy of their policy of one-sidedly supporting "Messali's faction" and opposing the FLN. Even more ironical is the fact that after I had criticized the leaders of the SLL for their mistakes in the Algerian question on the basis of documents and indisputable facts, they not only failed to admit the mistakes; on the contrary, they denounced me for having "simply repeated Pabloite slanders and stories," although they offer no evidence of their charge. In face of such an attitude what can be done but to shrug one's shoulders?

Aside from this, the leaders of the SLL cite Jean Bellespie's description of the "Melonza Massacre" from her book Algerian Rebellion and Revolution as a way of apologizing for Belloum's capitulation and of explaining the betrayal of Messali and his MNA as being due to the terrorism practiced by the FLN. To lodge the responsibility for the MNA's capitulation and betrayal on the FLN -- its political opponent -- and to try to dump their

own responsibility for having fully supported these capitulators and traitors is nothing by cynicism!

Four years after the capitulation of Messali Hadj and the MNA to French imperialism, the leaders of the SLL called the Evian agreement of March 1962 between the FLN and the French a "sell-out." Let us agree for the moment that it was a "sell-out." But why do they still keep silent about Messali's capitulation?

As a matter of fact, the Evian agreement was not a "sell-out" on the part of the FLN; it represented concessions and compromises by both sides. On the one hand, despite seven and a half years of a war of suppression against the Algerian people, French imperialism had proved unable to crush the resistance led by the FLN, although it had mobilized the entire military and financial resources of France. Therefore it had to grant political independence in hope of maintaining its economic concessions and military bases. On the other hand, seven and a half years of struggle had almost exhausted the FLN and the direct and indirect damage to Algeria had become unbearable. In addition the opportunist policies of the French Communist and Socialist parties excluded large-scale support from the French working masses. Furthermore, since the provisional government of the FLN was stationed in Tunisia and as part of its troops and military supply depots were in Tunisia and Morocco, the FLN came under heavy pressure from the Tunisian and Moroccan governments to compromise with the French when the de Gaulle government expressed its intention of negotiating a cease-fire with the Algerian Provisional Government. The Tunisian and Moroccan governments welcomed de Gaulle's move as it opened the possibility of ridding themselves of such heavy burdens. In such difficult circumstances, the leadership of the FLN had to agree to grant temporary economic concessions to the French and let them retain certain military interests in exchange for political independence. Before signing the Evian agreement, the leadership of the FLN consulted with almost all its political and military cadres. As a result the rank and file in the majority did not oppose signing the Evian agreement. Despite the fact that the leaders of the FLN displayed many shortcomings and made many mistakes during the war of liberation, we should never call such an agreement a "sell-out" if we evaluate it from the Marxist point of view and not as sectarians or left Communists. We can only call it a "compromise," a compromise compelled by force of circumstances. Even the most revolutionary Marxist party has to accept a compromise such as this in certain instances. For example, the Bolshevik party under Lenin had to sign the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk with German imperialism. If we compare the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Evian agreement, there were greater concessions made in the former than in the latter. Would the leaders of the SLL call the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk a "sell-out"? Lenin once told those "left Communists" who would not compromise under any circumstances: "To reject compromises 'on principle,' to reject the admissibility of compromises in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to take seriously." (Selected Works of Lenin, Vol. II, Part 2, 1952 Moscow edition, p.584.)

On the question of compromise, what a Marxist should do is neither reject it nor call one compelled by force of circumstance a "sell-out" but point out the contradiction involved in the compromise and the correct policy needed to resolve it. In the concrete case of the Algerian war and revolution, the contradiction contained in the compromise lies between

political independence, a precious gain won by the Algerian people after seven and a half years of bloody struggle against French imperialism, and economic and military concessions to French imperialism which the Algerian people have to tolerate for the moment. Of course, the concessions are big threats to Algerian political independence. Until the French economic concessions and military interests are ended in Algeria, there is no safeguard for Algerian political independence. To resolve this contradiction, all revolutionaries in Algeria should unite behind the hard-won political independence as the starting point for a Marxist program to mobilize all the working masses and poor peasants for further struggle. The program should include, in my opinion, the withdrawal of all French military forces, the cancellation of all French economic concessions in Algeria, a thorough agrarian reform, the nationalization of all the basic means of production, democratic rights for workers and peasants and the establishment of workers, farmers, and soldiers councils and a workers and farmers government. All revolutionaries in Algeria should engage in the struggle to realize this program so as to bring Algeria into the path of socialism. This should be the line we ought to take in Algeria. This should also be the norm for criticizing all measures taken by the Ben Bella government and also the platform on which to rally all revolutionaries in Algeria to form a Marxist party to carry on the struggle.

Unfortunately the leaders of the SLL designate such a compromise as a "sell-out"; the hard-won political independence which is of such great significance appears in their eyes as something meaningless. This attitude marks a sharp departure from the viewpoint of Marxist realism. They have fallen into the mire of extreme leftist, even childish, sectarianism. Because of this sectarian attitude, the leaders of the SLL can suggest no revolutionary program for the working people of Algeria to help them further their struggle they can only make nonsensical attacks on the leaders of the FLN. The mistake is of the same character as their failure to suggest any positive program in relation to the Cuban Revolution.

The SWP does not consider the Evian agreement a "sell-out." On the contrary, they have pointed out the importance of the hard-won political independence conceded by the France when the agreement was signed. This conclusion reflects Marxist realism. In attacking the SWP on this account, the SLL once again reveals its sectarian attitude.

The SLL makes much of the SWP declaration that "the first step in Algeria is the consolidation of independence, the second must be the socialist transformation of Algerian society." The meaning of this sentence has nothing to do with what the SLL chooses to call the "Stalinist 'two stage' theory of the revolution in backward countries." The SWP's statement was made in the light of the actual situation after the Evian agreement was signed. The SWP is suggesting to the Algerian people that having now obtained political independence, the immediate, the next following step should of course be the protection and consolidation of this independence; on this basis they can take further steps toward the socialist transformation of their society. The leaders of the SLL talk a lot about permanent revolution in relation to Algeria but in essence what they have done once again is to substitute "programmatic norms" for the "concrete facts."

If we contrast their previous "attitude" towards the MNA with their present "attitude" toward the FLN we clearly see two extremes. That is to

say, when their attitude of extreme right adaptation towards a petty-bourgeois group proved bankrupt, they immediately shifted to an attitude of extreme left sectarianism. Such a jump from the extreme right to the extreme left reflects exactly the process of their political evolution in recent years. The same process occurred in their attitude towards the Labour party. Before Bevan turned to the right, they placed almost all their hopes in him. For a long time their praise of, adaptation to, and illusions in his role went far beyond even their attitude towards Messali. But in spite of their praise and adaptation, Bevan, following the logic of his own political course, went over to Hugh Gaitskell. After this, they made an about turn of 180 degrees, from right adaptation to extreme left sectarianism --- and this remains the position which the SLL takes today towards the British working-class movement. Space here does not permit me to go into the details of their evolution in Britain from the extreme right to the extreme left; but it is clear to many Trotskyists, I believe, that the present sectarian policy of the SLL is very dangerous to the movement. If it is not corrected in time, it will inevitably lead to disaster.

III.

THE EVOLUTION OF PABLOISM

The Kind of Fight Put Up by the SLL Leaders

In order to fight more firmly against reunification of our movement, the leaders of the SLL, in the early part of 1957, invented the argument "that the gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider." This argument has now been slightly revised by these leaders to read: "Pabloism has not changed, or if it has, it has only become more crass in its theory and more bureaucratic in its organization." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.17.) Because the SWP is strongly in favor of reunification, it has been condemned by the leaders of the SLL: "The SWP has set a false course and is drawn irresistibly into the morass of Pabloite thinking." (Ibid.) Furthermore, they declare, "we propose to continue to combat Pabloism, as we have done consistently in the past."

From this, one may arrive at the following three conclusions:

(1) Pabloism is evolving more and more away from "ourselves," therefore rendering reunification impossible.

(2) The SWP has already surrendered to Pabloism, or at least "is drawn irresistibly into the morass of Pabloite thinking." In order to continue to combat Pabloism, the SLL leaders must therefore oppose the policy of the SWP.

(3) Since Pabloism has not changed and the SLL leaders have fought against it consistently in the past, they are therefore qualified to "propose to continue to combat Pabloism."

Do these conclusions fit the facts? The facts, the indisputable facts, are just the opposite. In order to expose the hypocrisy of the SLL leaders and the falseness of their positions and to let our comrades know the truth, it is necessary to review in detail the evolution of Pabloism and the struggle against it, particularly the role played by the SLL leaders in this.

First of all, let me remind the SLL leaders that Pabloism, like similar currents, is not unchangeable. It has its own logical process of rise and decline. A wrong concept (such as opportunism or sectarianism) will inevitably collapse under strong criticism and the test of events that contradict it. In this respect, Pabloism is no exception.

To bring out clearly the evolution of Pabloism and the role played by the SLL leaders in the struggle against it, and how consistent they were, I should like to discuss thoroughly the whole course of events by dividing them into three periods:

The First Period -- 1949 To November, 1953

This period may be said to be that of the gradual development of Pabloism. In essence, Pabloism represented a pro-Stalinist tendency in contrast to Shachtmanism which was Stalinophobic. The objective reason for its development was the tremendous expansion of Stalinism after the second world

war; i.e., the USSR became the second world power, the East European countries became workers states (the victorious revolutions in Yugoslavia and China were especially important) and the Communist parties in West European countries such as France and Italy experienced great growth. In an article in October 1949 ("On the Nature of Yugoslavia") Pablo's conclusion about "centuries of deformed workers' states" reflected this objective situation. At the beginning of 1951, he reaffirmed the same opinion in "Whither Are We Going?" (Quatrième Internationale, February-April 1951.) When this article was criticized by Bleibtreu ("Whither Pablo?"), Pablo published "On the Duration and Nature of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism" (The International Information Bulletin, June, 1951.) These two articles developed further the theory of "centuries of deformed workers' states" which served as the theoretical basis of Pabloism. From this theory, Pablo proposed the tactic of deep entry. He first attempted to carry out this tactic in France, ordering the PCI to enter the French CP. This tactic was opposed by the PCI majority of which Bleibtreu was the leader.

In fact, Pablo's deep-entry tactic included what he later developed as the theory that the USSR bureaucracy could reform itself; Communist parties could, under the pressure of the masses, take a revolutionary orientation and the transitional program could be abandoned, etc. This concept was illustrated in the plenary session of the Central Committee of the PCI in January 1952. During the discussion, Pablo stated that "The Stalinist movement today, under the cold war and the perspective of a clash with imperialism leading to a decisive battle, and placed objectively in new conditions, is obliged to act, and this action has already begun. Nobody can argue about what the Stalinists are doing at present. Between 1934 and 1947 they had the illusion of a period of coexistence. We will discuss with our comrades who have this understanding, and we will leave aside the transitional program which was written in an entirely different period." (La Verité, January 1952.) This obvious revisionist concept immediately aroused strong opposition from the majority of the PCI. In this session, Pablo, in the name of the IS, suspended sixteen members of the Central Committee of the PCI. Subsequently the struggle between Pablo and the majority of the PCI broke into the open, and this caused the latter to be expelled from our movement.

The further development of Pablo's revisionism, after Stalin's death, was expressed in his "Post-Stalin New Course." In this article he discussed various "concessions" made by Malenkov and concluded that "once the concessions are broadened, the march toward a real liquidation of the Stalinist regime threatens to become irresistible." (Fourth International, March-April 1953.) This was obviously saying that the Stalinist regime would be liquidated through its own "concessions."

The more systematic and clearly defined expressions of Pablo's revisionist thinking were contained in his draft resolution, "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism." In this, Pablo described how the objective situation after World War II resulted in the decline of Stalinism. He arrived at the following two main conclusions: (1) "Caught between the imperialist threat and the colonial revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy found itself obliged to ally itself with the world revolution against the former." (2) "In the countries where the CP's constitute the majority of the working class, they can under the pressure of the masses be led to project a revolutionary orientation." The first conclusion definitely assumed that the Soviet bureaucracy would abandon its former reactionary policy and would change toward a world revolutionary policy; while the second conclusion affirmed that the Communist

parties could, under the pressure of the masses, be led to take a revolutionary orientation.

The position adopted by the IS toward the East Berlin revolt in June 1953 and the general strike in France in August of the same year was the first time Pablo's revisionism was put into practice.

As for the organizational sphere, the bureaucratic method which Pablo used in carrying out his revisionism was clearly shown by the following facts: In the name of the IS he deliberately suspended sixteen members of the Central Committee of the PCI, then used maneuvers to expel them; prevented the majority of the PCI from presenting criticisms to the Third World Congress and Peng from presenting criticism of the draft resolution on the Third Chinese Revolution; he maneuvered Manuel, delegate of the New Zealand section and myself from participating in IS meetings. Pablo also worked behind the scenes with the Cochranites against the SWP leadership, etc.

What was the attitude of the SLL leadership at the time toward the development of Pablo's revisionist thought and his bureaucratic method in the field of organization? Did it combat Pabloism? Unfortunately, the facts prove just the contrary. Whether on questions of policy or organization, the SLL delegate Burns always supported Pablo. Among the facts, one of the most indisputable is the following. When I criticized Pablo for his deliberate action in February 1952 in suspending sixteen members of the PCI at the plenary session of the IS in violation of traditional Bolshevik organizational procedures, Germain, U. of Germany and L. of Italy were in agreement with my criticism; but Burns stood up and firmly supported Pablo's bureaucratic measure. Following this session, Burns also supported Pablo's political line (deep entry) and violently attacked the majority of the PCI in the combined meeting of members of the IEC and members of the PCI Central Committee.

The foregoing is sufficient to show the contradiction in Comrade Burns' attitude toward Pablo's revisionism and bureaucratism at that time and the present propaganda of the SLL leaders that they "have done everything to combat Pabloism consistently in the past."

On the Chinese question (this was the direct conflict between Pablo and myself at the time), Comrade Burns was also in complete agreement with Pablo's position. When discussing Germain's draft resolution on "The Third Chinese Revolution" in the plenary session of the IEC in May 1952, Burns, besides giving his support to the resolution, declared that "it is not a victory for the tactics of Mao or his ideological conceptions, but on the contrary a victory for the perspectives and strategic conceptions which we have advocated since the beginning of our movement." (International Information Bulletin, December 1952, p.33.) (My emphasis.) It would prove quite interesting to compare Comrade Burns' contribution to the discussion on the Chinese question at that time and the opinion of the SLL leaders on Cuba at present!

One more point here is worth noting. At the meeting of the Far Eastern Commission at the Third World Congress, when I was giving the report on the Chinese question, Ali, the IS delegate, stopped me half way. I protested to the IS; and Comrade Burns, representing Pablo, came to explain to me. In his explanation, he not only condemned Ali's irresponsibility but he also said that "Pablo is my intimate friend. He is a genius politically and organizationally, and he is capable of accepting others' views, and hopes that you

will participate in the IS and collaborate with him." (The words are from notes I took at the time.) Considering Burns' high appraisal of Pablo and the intimate friendship between them the support offered by the SLL leaders to Pablo's revisionism and bureaucratism in the past is not accidental.

It is true that Comrade Burns expressed some differences over Pablo's political resolution, "The New Stage of Development of the USSR and the Tasks of the Fourth International," at the plenary session of the IEC in May 1953. He even warned that we should have learned a lesson from the failure to fully grasp the significance of events in Yugoslavia, which resulted from a too optimistic appreciation. But his warning at this time was obviously due to the influence of the SWP's struggle against Pabloism (because the struggle within the SWP against Pablo's supporters, the Cochranites, was at that time entering its sharpest stage). And as part of this, Pablo worked with Lawrence against Burns in the British section. The differences between Burns and Pablo at that IEC meeting were perhaps the starting point of the split between them, which later became the basis for Burns' lining up with the SWP against Pablo.

#### The Second Period -- End of 1953 To The End of 1956

This period marked not only the struggle against Pabloism under the leadership of the SWP, but also the decline of Pabloism and the split among Pablo's forces under severe criticism. His "theory" of "centuries of deformed workers' states" was basically derived from the possibility of using the reform method to change Stalinist bureaucratic domination in the USSR and the East European countries. Pablo assumed that the Soviet bureaucracy could be self-reformed or self-corrected, and that in other countries Communist parties could, under the pressure of the masses, be led to adopt a revolutionary orientation. Hence he essentially denied the possibility of the political revolution within the Soviet bloc and the establishment there of Trotskyist revolutionary parties.

The logical development of this revisionist concept would lead to the liquidation of the Trotskyist movement and a surrender to Stalinism.

Pablo's bureaucratism was expressed by his attempt to build an international leadership in the Stalinist pattern, giving him control over the whole international movement. To achieve this aim, he deliberately suppressed critical opinion and expelled opponents (including both organizations and individuals). He also established his own factions in sections where he attempted to seize leadership. In an attempt to do this in the SWP through the Cochranites, Pablo carried his struggle into that organization and this led to the breaking point in the autumn of 1953.

This situation showed clearly that the Trotskyist movement throughout the world was seriously threatened. In the face of such a trend, the SWP was obliged to stand up and fight. Thus it was that in November 1953 the SWP published its "Open Letter to the Trotskyists Throughout the World" and "Against Pabloist Revisionism."

The contents of the above two documents are well known to all of us. It is unnecessary to repeat them here; but I wish to point out that these documents made a systematic and thorough criticism of Pablo's revisionist thought (particularly "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism") and its



application in compromising with Stalinism (e.g., the East German insurrection and the general strike in France) and the use of bureaucratic methods in the organizational sphere. This touched off a great struggle against Pabloism in all countries. Though this movement led to an unfortunate split (the split might have been avoided as I pointed out in my article "Suggestions and Proposals on Unifying the World Trotskyist Movement"); nevertheless, it dealt Pabloism a fatal blow and at the moment of crisis saved Trotskyism politically.

As Pabloism staggered under this fatal blow from the SWP, the sections which still adhered to the IS were strongly influenced and broken up. The first was the LSSP of Ceylon which in April 1954 issued the "Resolution and Amendments on 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism'". This document was in fact the strongest echo of the SWP's criticism of Pablo's revisionist thought. After discussing three main points of Pablo's revisionism, it concluded that "The three points discussed above have a logical interconnection. When they are taken together, there emerges the single governing concept that, in this period of the flow of the world revolution, in which a durable compromise with imperialism is ruled out for the Soviet bureaucracy, and with it, for the Stalinist leadership of the mass Communist parties, this bureaucracy gets pushed on to the revolutionary road under the pressure of the masses. This concept not only leads to a fundamental revision of the position of Trotskyism in regard to Stalinism but also denies to the Trotskyist movement all justification for its continued independent existence." (Internal Bulletin of the LSSP, April 1954, p.7.) Although the conclusion of the LSSP was derived from the SWP's "Against Pabloist Revisionism," it was issued by the LSSP, a section of the IS, and it approved the criticism by the SWP of Pablo's revisionism; thus it strongly influenced other sections within the IS.

On the other hand, Pablo's intimate collaborators and active supporters, under the fierce attack of the SWP, followed the course of Pablo's revisionist logic and developed it to its final conclusion. These were the Cochranites in the U.S., who in April 1954 issued "Our Orientation," declaring publicly that "now it is a fact that our whole tradition [Trotskyist tradition] . . . is of no interest to the existing labor movement. Because the tradition has been created largely outside of the labor movement, it is foreign to them. They do not see or believe that any of it is pertinent to the solution of their problem . . . and have to draw the necessary lessons." What lessons? Namely, "the very formations of the International Revolution must lead us to the conclusion that the revolutionary parties of tomorrow will not be Trotskyist in the sense of accepting the tradition of our movement." Consequently the Cochranites advocated that the whole tradition of Trotskyism must be abandoned -- "the name and works of Trotsky and the name and existence of the Fourth International" must not even be mentioned. Instead, progress is to be made "by integrating ourselves within the existing movement." (The above paragraphs are quoted from the Draft Resolution adopted by the National Board, April 27, 1954.)

If we compare the conclusion made by the LSSP on Pablo's revisionism and that developed by the Cochranites we can see that the latter coincided with the prediction of the former; and at the same time we can see that two irreconcilable tendencies existed in the IS. These two extreme tendencies were bound to enter into a bitter struggle; and in the plenary conference of the IS in June 1954, the fight broke out. Clarke, the spokesman for the

Cochranites, proposed at this meeting to liquidate the Trotskyist organizations all over the world; all Trotskyists should participate in the mass parties; i.e., the Communist and Social Democratic parties, etc., etc. In other words, the Fourth International should be liquidated except for its "theoretical organ." Clarke's thoroughgoing revisionist proposal was firmly opposed (except for Lawrence, Mestre and a delegate from Canada) by all the other delegates, led by the Ceylonese delegation. Even Pablo himself was obliged to oppose his former co-thinkers and active supporters, Clarke, Lawrence and Mestre. After the sharpest debate the absolute majority of the conference adopted the proposal of the LSSP, amending the draft resolution, "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism," which had been the basis of Pablo's revisionist thought.

This was the first time that the struggle against Pabloism begun by the SWP succeeded not only in consolidating the part of the Trotskyist movement around the International Committee but also in strongly influencing sections belonging to the IS and accelerating their disintegration. The result was that many Trotskyists who had been influenced or confused by Pablo's revisionism now returned to the basic principles of Trotskyism as underlined by the SWP in its criticism of the draft resolution, "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism."

On the other hand, Clarke, Lawrence and Mestre carried their support of Pabloism to its final conclusion -- complete liquidationism. Some openly left the Trotskyist movement and surrendered to Stalinism. This marked the decisive political victory in our struggle against Pabloism, and at the same time showed how Pabloism, under attack from the SWP from the outside and the LSSP from the inside, was brought unavoidably to its downfall. In this way the political foundation was laid for the reunification of the Trotskyist movement.

The outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution in October-November 1956 and its barbaric suppression by the Soviet bureaucracy -- this great historical event with its indisputable, iron evidence -- exposed the falseness of the argument contained in Pablo's revisionism that the Soviet bureaucracy could reform itself. The manifesto of the IS on the Hungarian Revolution, however, despite some discrepancies in content, clearly affirmed that an uprising of the working masses is necessary to overthrow the Soviet bureaucracy. Thus the traditional Trotskyist position was restored. If we compare this manifesto with the handling of the East German insurrection, it is quite clear that the IS had shifted away from political application of Pablo's revisionism. Someone might insist that Pablo's revisionism still remained in the IS and some of its sections after the lesson of the Hungarian Revolution; nevertheless, it is clear that very little revisionist thought remained after that event.

What role was played by the SLL leaders during this period of struggle against Pabloism? So far as politics and theory are concerned, they did nothing. The SLL leaders never wrote any criticisms of Pablo's revisionism or published any documents to expose his bureaucratic methods. At least nothing on the level of the international Trotskyist movement. They limited their struggle against Pabloism to England where they fought the Lawrence faction, and they did this mostly on the organizational level in a battle for control of their journal Socialist Outlook. Consequently I would say that the role played by the SLL leaders in this period of struggle against

Pabloism was organizational rather than political or theoretical. Today the SLL leaders pride themselves on their concern for "theory" and "method." Unfortunately they did not display a trace of this during the real and heated struggle against Pabloism.

A document of the SLL states that "no matter how the SWP now estimates the events of 1954, they found it necessary along with the other sections of the IS to circulate Peng's document against Pabloite revisionism in 1955. The criticism of Pabloism contained in this document is just as severe as that of the Open Letter of 1953." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," pp.18-19.) The SLL leaders sought to use my document of 1955 against Pabloism in order to claim that the way the "SWP now estimates the events of 1954" is wrong. In fact, the main purpose I had in mind in writing "Pabloism Reviewed" in 1955 was not to continue the "Open Letter" against Pabloism but to help reunify the Trotskyist movement. That is why I started at the beginning of the document: "Before we start with reunification of our movement at the present time, it is necessary to have a complete and thorough review and clarification on this question, in order to reunify our International on a solid ideological basis of orthodox Trotskyism." My proposal for reunification at that time was almost the same as the SWP's present "estimate" if one considers that the foundation for reunification was laid at the June 1954 conference when Clarke, Lawrence and Mestre pulled out in a minority split against the majority led by the LSSP delegation.

My document thus emphasized the theoretical point of view in criticizing Pabloism, especially the "centuries of deformed workers' states," and in explaining "the origin of Pabloism and its consequences" and "the last development through Cochran, Clarke and Mestre." This was an attempt at a "complete and thorough review and clarification on this question" of Pabloism "in order to reunify our International on a solid ideological basis of orthodox Trotskyism." The SLL leaders do not understand to this day the "events" which took place in the IS in 1954 or that my document "Pabloism Reviewed" was written with reunification in mind. This is the reason for their subjectivism in disregarding the development of events and the intentions of others.

### Third Period -- From 1957 to The Present

In this period the IS discarded Pabloism completely and the SLL picked up the cudgels against it. As I pointed out above, the IS, with the Hungarian Revolution, returned to the Trotskyist position. This was clearly to be seen in the resolution "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism" adopted at the Fifth Congress of the IS in October 1957. Although it contains some vague points and erroneous concepts, this resolution on such principled questions as the nature of the Soviet bureaucracy and the political revolution left Pablo's revisionism behind and restored the traditional Trotskyist position. For example, the resolution states: "We consider the 'new course' of the Kremlin not as a movement of self-reform by the bureaucracy, but as a movement of self-defense by it. While promoting and even hastening the awakening of the movement of the masses by its objective consequences, especially by the divisions that it created from top to bottom of the bureaucratic ladder, the 'new course' was not, we considered, a substitute for, but rather a preparatory phase of, the political revolution of the masses against the bureaucracy."

This quotation shows that the IS dropped the central concept of Pablo's revisionism; i.e., the concept asserted by Pablo that the Soviet bureaucracy can reform itself under the "new course." (See Pablo's "The Post-Stalinist New Course.") This was what the SWP and I maintained in 1957 as constituting a political prerequisite for the reunification of the sections of the IS and the IC.

In comparing the resolution adopted by the Sixth World Congress of the IS in January 1961, "The Crisis of Stalinism" with "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism," it is clear that the former more clearly and firmly expresses traditional Trotskyist thinking. After criticizing Khrushchev's domestic policy of "reform" and his foreign policy of "peaceful coexistence" and the adoption by the Communist parties in the capitalist countries of the policy of a "parliamentary and peaceful path to socialism," etc., the resolution concludes: "Thus the contradictions of Stalinism have arrived at a degree of political ripeness eminently favorable for raising in more concrete terms the questions of the political revolution and the renewal of the communist movement, as well as that of the new mass international revolutionary leadership." (Fourth International, winter 1960-61, p.54.) Hence the resolution asserts that "the advance of our ideas, to hasten the formation of sections of the Fourth International in the workers' states, of mass revolutionary Marxist parties, and thus to prepare the political revolution in the workers' states and the revival of an international leadership of the mass movement." (Ibid., p.57.)

If we read the above quotation without factional prejudice, we ought to admit that the basic concept of Pablo's revisionism, such as "centuries of deformed workers' states," "self-reform" of the Soviet bureaucracy, "the Communist parties in different countries can, under the pressure of the masses, lead the revolution to the conquest of power," does not show in "The Crisis of Stalinism." Consequently we should openly declare that Pabloism, as we originally understood it, has completely disappeared; it no longer exists either in the IS or in its sections as an ideological current.

If we further examine the changes in the IS and its sections, we can see that what we used to call "the Pabloites" has broken up. In the IS itself, Pablo, who formerly was in control, was arrested by the Dutch authorities in a frame-up in 1960; and, after winning his case, had to leave the area where the IS functions.

The IS is not monolithic. At present they are discussing many differences. In addition, Posadas, who was a firm supporter of Pablo and in control of the "Latin-American Bureau," severed personal relationships with Pablo and broke from the IS. The original IS and its sections have thus become divided into at least three groupings.

How all the internal differences in the IS will work out, we do not know. But one thing is certain. "Pabloism" as we knew it no longer exists either theoretically or organizationally. We should therefore declare openly that we do not propose to unite with "Pabloism" but with the IS and its sections and on the basis of a political agreement to which all Trotskyist organizations can subscribe with a completely clear conscience.

It was in this period that Pabloism disintegrated. It was in this period, too, that for the first time since the split of 1953, all the

pre-conditions for the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement became completely fulfilled. Yet the SLL leaders, especially Healy, refuse to accept responsibility for promoting reunification. On the contrary, Healy is promoting a struggle against reunification. He declared in 1957 that there are no possibilities for reunification between the forces of the IS and ourselves because "the gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider." What is this argument based upon? It is based on the IS resolution "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism." In an attempt to justify the correctness of their conclusion that "the gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider," Comrade Sinclair, in an article "Under a Stolen Flag," criticized this resolution. Unfortunately, when Germain in reply to Sinclair's article published "An Unprincipled Maneuver Against Trotskyist Unity," the SLL kept silent. Such silence in relation to an opponent means, politically, an admission of error and an admission that the reply was correct. In fact we should frankly admit that Sinclair's criticism was biased and superficial and therefore basically incorrect. I have pointed out that the IS resolution contained some vague and even erroneous ideas, nevertheless basically it stood on the traditional position of Trotskyism.

Five years have passed. It is intolerable to continually postpone the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement; but the SLL leaders have declared again and again that "Pabloism has not changed, if it has, it has only become more crass in its theory and more bureaucratic in its organization." What facts and documents is this new judgment based on? The SLL leaders have not yet told us. In recent years, especially during the past year, in their published documents against reunification and against Pabloism they have never based their arguments on facts and documents or pointed out concrete evidence that Pabloism "has become more crass in its theory and more bureaucratic in its organization." All they do is repeat over and over Burns' discovery in 1957 that "Pablo has not changed his political method" (see Letter from Burns to Cannon, May 1957) or that the Pabloites "departed from Marxist method," and similar empty abstract talk. In fact they cannot find any evidence because the documents and the facts, as I have pointed out above, stand exactly contrary to the statements of the SLL leaders.

It is true that the SLL leaders have condemned Pablo's policy of supporting the FLN in the Algerian war and especially Germain's policy in the Belgian general strike as evidence that Pabloism still exists and is even flourishing in the IS. But they overlook the fact that in comparison with the policies of Pablo and Germain, their own policy of supporting the Messali Hadj faction in the Algerian war was worse. (See my article "Suggestions and Proposal on Unifying the World Trotskyist Movement," pp.4-5.)

The argument now in current use among the SLL leaders against Pabloism is that the IS recognized Cuba as a workers' state. It is true that the resolution adopted by the Sixth World Congress of the IS in January 1961 makes the following statement: "In the eminently transitional period through which the revolution is now going, Cuba has ceased to be a capitalist state, and is becoming a workers' state through the application of nationalization measures of October 1960." (Fourth International, winter 1960-61, p.48.) But the recognition of Cuba as "a workers' state through the application of nationalization measures" not only had no connection with Pabloist revisionism, it has, on the contrary, firmly held to the traditional point of view of Trotskyism on the question of judging the nature of a workers' state. On the question of the nature of the Cuban state, the SLL leaders' opposition to the

position of the IS and the SWP is proof that they have departed from Trotskyism and have accepted Shachtmanite revisionism. On this point I have criticized them above in detail.

On the basis of documents and facts, I have analyzed the disintegration of Pabloism and the dispersement of the Pabloites. This is sufficient to show that the SLL leaders are wrong in stating that "the gulf between Pabloite revisionism and ourselves grows wider and wider," or "Pabloism has not changed, or if it has, it has only become more crass in its theory and more bureaucratic in its organization." The judgment of the SLL leaders not only has no basis; it is contrary to fact. Consequently, it is quite obvious in view of the breakdown of Pabloism that when the SLL leaders continue to call for a struggle against Pabloism, their real purpose is to block unification under pretense of a struggle against Pabloism.

I must therefore point out once again that when Pabloism was developing and was in control of our movement (in the first period indicated above), the SLL leadership as represented by Burns were not opposed to it -- on the contrary, they supported it. During the period of struggle against Pabloism led by the SWP (in the second period), the SLL leaders did not publish a single document criticizing or exposing Pablo's revisionism. But when Pabloism began to succumb under the attack of the SWP and to disintegrate still further under the impact of the Hungarian Revolution; when even the IS and the majority of its sections had returned to the traditional position of Trotskyism; when the political basis had been prepared for the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement; when the absolute majority of the Trotskyists are demanding reunification, the SLL leaders declare that "we propose to ~~continue~~ to combat Pabloism."

This is equivalent to saying, "we propose to continue to combat reunification"!

In order to block unification, the SLL leaders oppose the transitional steps required to realize it. Thus any organizations or individuals who strongly support reunification are regarded as "the enemy,"; all are condemned as "accepting the political method of Pabloite revisionism"; all are considered to be compromising with or surrendering to the Pabloites. Their accusation that "the SWP has set a false course and is drawn irresistibly into the morass of Pabloite revisionism," is a typical expression of this ill will. This is slander. Here I should like to point out that the firm stand for reunification taken today by the SWP as well as its firm stand against Pabloist revisionism and bureaucratism yesterday is equally Trotskyist and equally in the interests of the world Trotskyist movement; while the SLL leaders' opposition to reunification today as well as their support of the revisionist policies and bureaucratic methods of Pabloism yesterday both constitute unprincipled maneuverism against Trotskyism for factional and even personal interests.

Finally, I should like to call the attention of comrades to the fact that in seeking political arguments against unification, and in opposing any organizations or individuals that seek unification, particularly the SWP, the SLL leaders have developed a series of sectarian concepts, and have become a fanatically sectarian tendency. If this tendency is not checked in time, it will bring harm to the world Trotskyist movement and disaster to the Trotskyist movement in Great Britain. The most serious political

question today in the world Trotskyist movement, in my opinion, is no longer Pabloist revisionism (this is long past) but sectarianism as represented by the SLL.

Consequently for our movement to move forward, the most important task before us is to combat and overcome this sectarianism. To accomplish this task effectively, the earliest possible reunification of the world Trotskyist movement is a necessary prerequisite.

IV.

TO CONTINUE THE SPLIT OR TO REUNIFY THE MOVEMENT?

At the beginning of this article I repeated an observation I made in 1961 that "the leadership of the Socialist Labour League seek to obstruct and hinder, by whatever pretexts and measures, the unification of the world Trotskyist movement, ignoring completely the interests of the movement as a whole." Since the SLL leadership agreed to establish a Parity Committee in relation to the discussion on reunification, this "tendency" has grown even clearer. Especially after the leaders of the SLL read the SWP's document "Problems of the Fourth International — and the Next Steps," which expressed the determination of the SWP to encourage and promote reunification of the world movement, they immediately declared: "The Socialist Labour League is not prepared to go any part of the way with revisionism, and will fight to the end." ("Trotskyism Betrayed," p.2.) They declared further in the same article: "It is in the construction of the revolutionary party in the U.S.A. itself that the necessity of defeating the SWP leadership's revisionism is the most urgent." This declaration not only expresses the SLL leadership's flat refusal to make any move toward unity with sections of the IS but it voices its wish to "defeat" the SWP leadership for pressing for unification. Why then do they continue to participate in the Parity Committee which was set up in relation to the demand for unification? They answer this question as follows: "The defeat of Pabloite revisionism inside the world movement is an essential precondition for the establishment of an international democratic centralist structure. We do not want minority rights in an international organization dominated by Pabloism. The differences have grown greater since 1953 and we are going to utilize the discussion to prove this." ("A Comment on the Declaration of the 23rd Plenum of the IEC by the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labour League.")

Two points stand out in this declaration:

(a) The sole purpose of the SLL leadership's participation in the Parity Committee is "to utilize the discussion to prove" that "the differences have grown greater since 1953." In other words, they are attempting to utilize the discussion on unification to "prove" the impossibility of unity. This also means that they are attempting to convert the Parity Committee, a preliminary step toward unification, into an instrument for defeating unity!

(b) The leaders of the SLL state: "We do not want minority rights in an international organization dominated by Pabloism." This clearly reveals that they do not think their opinions are so correct that they can "defeat Pabloism" by utilizing "minority rights in an international organization" to win a majority of comrades. Furthermore, it is clear that their version of "an international democratic centralist structure" is one in which their faction always holds the majority so as to control this "structure." Otherwise, they will not join or help in establishing such "an international democratic centralist structure" because they "do not want minority rights"!

Then what is the basic purpose of the leaders of the SLL in refusing to unify with sections of the IS and in being prepared to break with any organization or individual who presses for unification? The answer is: to maintain the status quo in a world Trotskyist movement that has been split since 1954, to maintain the status quo of the IC and to perpetuate SLL control of



the IC through the secretaryship<sup>1</sup> so as to be able to have the IC advocate the extremely sectarian line developed and insisted upon by the SLL in the past year. This is the blueprint of the leaders of the SLL when they emphasize "the reorganization of the Fourth International," "the establishment of an international democratic centralist structure," and "the building of revolutionary parties in every country."

But in drawing up the above "blueprint," the leaders of the SLL completely overlooked the tremendous changes in time and circumstances. The situation is not the same today as in 1953, and not the same as in 1957 when for the first time they succeeded in disrupting unity moves. In the past nine years (1954-63) the following important events have occurred:

(a) The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU liquidated the cult of Stalin and admitted many of Stalin's crimes. The Polish and Hungarian revolutions testified to the inevitability of the political revolution in the Soviet bloc. The dispute between China and the Soviet Union came into the open, breaking up the monolithism of the Stalinist parties. A non-Stalinist revolutionary grouping led a successful revolution in Cuba. All this testifies to a very favorable situation for the Trotskyist movement. Consequently it is urgent to reunify so that we can take full advantage of this favorable situation.

(b) Pablo's revisionism suffered a fatal defeat at the World Congress called by the IS in June 1954 when such supporters as Clarke, Lawrence, Mestre and Co. left the movement after being opposed by the Trotskyists led by the delegates of the Ceylonese LSSP. Subsequently, under the impact of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions, the IS turned away from Pablo's revisionism and went back to traditional Trotskyism, as is clearly shown by the documents of the Fifth and Sixth world congresses of the IS. These changes decisively ended the political differences which caused the 1953 split and laid the foundations for the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement.

(c) Events of the past few years, especially the Cuban Revolution, caused new differences within the world Trotskyist movement, especially within the IC. On such basic questions of the Cuban Revolution as the nature of the state, the nature of the Castro regime and the nature of the revolution itself, the SLL has completely departed from Marxist methodology and principles and the Trotskyist tradition and has fallen into the mire of revisionism and sectarianism. On the other hand the great majority of the sections of the IC and the IS have remained faithful to the traditional positions of Trotskyism. This provides a firm political basis for unification.

(d) In the first six years (1955-60) of its existence, the IC, under leadership of Healy, was totally unable to take any effective action. On such important historic events as the denunciation of Stalin at the Twentieth

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<sup>1</sup> The secretary, an SLL leader, arbitrarily violated the resolution passed at the World Congress of the IC in June 1958 which decided that "each section sends only one delegate to the IC meeting." He decreed that the British and French sections are each entitled to two delegates at IC meetings. Consequently it is easier for them to establish a mechanical majority at ordinary sessions. This is a perfect example of what the SLL means by "establishment of an international democratic centralist structure"!

Congress of the CPSU and the Polish and Hungarian revolutions, the IC proved incapable of producing a political resolution. In the past year, Healy has sought to impose on the IC the extremely sectarian viewpoint of the leaders of the SLL in the form of such resolutions as "The World Prospect of Socialism." He even sought to get the IC to carry out the line which the Chilean comrades termed "political hara-kiri." This passed beyond the tolerance level of most sections of the IC.

Even under the impact of these new events, the leaders of the SLL were not moved. Seeking to maintain the status quo of a world Trotskyist movement that has been divided since 1954, they still try to use the excuse that "the differences have grown greater since 1953." Are we not in the illusory world of a Don Quixote? If we were to continue in this course, even without meaning to it would destroy the world Trotskyist movement.

The situation now is very clear. On the one hand a great majority of sections of the IC and the IS earnestly and urgently want to terminate the split in the world Trotskyist movement and unify the movement on a common political basis as soon as possible so as to strengthen the Fourth International, re-establish a common international leadership, and fully restore the political positions and organizational traditions of Trotskyism ("full freedom in discussion and complete unity in action" and "democratic rights of the minority"). Only in this way can the Fourth International most effectively help sections in each country to build a revolutionary mass party.

On the other hand, the Latin-American Bureau under the control of Posadas and the SLL headed by Healy still insist on continuing the division and are even prepared for a new split. Politically speaking, the tendency of Posadas is a mixture of opportunism and sectarianism and the tendency of Healy represents an extreme form of sectarianism. But both are headed towards disaster. As for organizational principles and practice, they appear the same. Posadas, for instance, did not want to be in a minority in the IS and ended by splitting. He also practiced tight bureaucratic control over the sections of the Latin-American Bureau and is very hostile toward the SWP because of its stand in favor of unification. Healy's SLL openly declares that they "do not want minority rights in an international organization. . . ." But within the SLL the atmosphere appears to be far from that of model proletarian democracy.<sup>2</sup> Healy's hostility to the SWP is even sharper

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<sup>2</sup> The short-lived existence of minority tendencies in the SLL does not speak well for Healy's organizational methods. The list of expulsions in the past few years makes depressing reading. In one instance expulsions occurred on the very eve of a national convention. If we compare the internal life of the SLL with that of the SWP, the contrast is glaring. In the SWP there is full discussion on all important questions such as the Chinese People's Communes, the nature of the Chinese Communist party and its regime, the problem of the Cuban Revolution, and the question of unification. On all these questions, the SWP not only publishes all the documents of a minority, but always permits a minority to make its own reports in opposition to the majority at National Committee meetings and at the National Convention, and generally grants the minority representative equal time even though the majority may have to cover topics on which there is agreement. No one is ever expelled for expressing opposition to the leadership; in fact years go by in the SWP

than that of Posadas due to his declared intention of seeking to "defeat the SWP leadership." It is not accidental, as we see, that the SLL leadership are resolutely opposed to unification and are prepared to carry out a new split.

To continue the split and head more and more toward disaster or to re-unify and revitalize the world Trotskyist movement? It is time for Comrade Healy to choose.

January 14, 1963

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without a single expulsion for any reason. On the contrary, the minority retain their posts, are permitted to continue to hold their opinions and, in a regulated way, the internal discussion continues. Does the SLL have such internal democracy? We have not heard any reports describing it, but we have heard many stories about contrary practices. Are these stories completely without substance as Healy maintains?