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Draft Political Resolution

Submitted by the IEC Majority Tendency

The aggravation of the crisis of the international imperialist system; the deepening of the crisis of the bureaucratic management of the economy and of the state in the bureaucratized workers states; the precipitous new rise of the struggle of the workers in numerous imperialist countries; the recovery of the revolutionary thrust of the masses in numerous colonial and semicolonial countries; the broadening, on an international scale, of a new mass vanguard composed of workers and youth acting independently of the traditional bureaucratic apparatuses of the Socialist and Communist parties, the unions and the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships in the colonial countries: the interaction of all these factors has dominated the world scene in the 1969-1973 period, and will continue to dominate it in the years immediately ahead of us.

It gives the epoch that opened in 1968 the character of a new rise of world revolution in which the proletariat, with its own forms of struggle and class organization, has a major weight. *This is the fundamental tendency in the evolution of the world since the Ninth World Congress.*

All the changes that have taken place since then should be seen within this general framework. The attempts of imperialism and the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies to renew and strengthen the "peaceful coexistence" accords—which appeared regularly, one after another, since the Geneva accords of 1954, and which were themselves the extension of prior accords between imperialism and the bureaucracy—only have a limited effectiveness in this context. They are the result not of a strengthening, but of a weakening of the forces seeking to maintain the social status quo in the world. While seeking, through accords of this type, to apply brakes to this weakening, and to stop the rise of the world revolution, neither imperialism nor the bureaucracies in power presently have at their disposal the means to effectively achieve their goal. *Only*

grave defeats of the masses in key sectors of the world revolution of today—notably in the large countries of capitalist Europe, in Japan, in Vietnam, or in Argentina—would be able to modify the world situation in a decisive manner and permit imperialism to once again generally pass over to the attack in order to impose its own solutions on the structural crisis that is shaking its system: the establishment of reactionary dictatorships; a brutal lowering of the standard of living of the masses; the preparation for and setting into motion of new, far-reaching counterrevolutionary wars.

For several years, what is on the agenda is neither such an ebb in the revolution, nor a reconsolidation of imperialism, but on the contrary the continuation of the revolutionary rise, the multiplication of capitalist crises of all sorts, the multiplication of powerful thrusts of the mass movement going towards the creation of situations of dual power, or passing straight through this threshold. The revolutionary Marxists, while warning the proletariat and the vanguard layers that this revolutionary rise cannot continue indefinitely, and that the absence of a radical proletarian solution to the crisis, due to the betrayal of the traditional leaderships, would end in tiring out the masses and permitting a capitalist counterattack to assert itself, should stake everything on the present rising dynamic of the proletarian struggles, seeking to objectively sharpen its cutting edge and, if possible, to make it consciously anticapitalist, to stimulate all the forms of organization of struggles that allow the proletariat to enter the path of creating organs of self-organization of the soviet type, and to advance along the road of building stronger and stronger revolutionary parties with more and more influence in the mass struggles—the only way to definitely insure the victory of the present rising wave of the world revolution.

I. The Deepening of the Crisis of the World Imperialist System

1. *The worsening of the situation of the international capitalist economy.*

The evolution of the world economic situation since 1969 has fully confirmed the political resolution adopted at the Ninth World Congress with respect to the end of the post-war period of relative stabilization and accelerated growth of the international imperialist economy.

The recession of 1969-71 hit the majority of the imperialist countries, although in varying degrees and not, in any pronounced way, all at once. It has been followed, since 1972, by new, accelerated expansion of production, except

in Italy. But this is a typical inflationary boom, marked by an acceleration of the inflationary process, which is worrisome for capital, and by a burst of speculative fever, especially as concern the price of raw materials, the price of gold, and of real estate. All this makes it possible to forecast that this inflationary boom will only be short term, and that the recession that will follow it, in 1974 or 1975, will be all the more synchronized as the upswing of the business cycle in 1972-73 has pulled along practically all the imperialist countries in its wake.

The crisis of the international monetary system, symbolized by the fall of the dollar and the elimination of its convertibility into gold for several years, is the result of the inevitable consequences of the use, for a quarter

of a century, of inflationary techniques in order to stimulate the economy in the USA and the growth of world commerce. The repeated setbacks the imperialists have encountered in their attempts to create a new international monetary system reflect both the deepening of the inter-imperialist rivalry, and American imperialism's inability to force the other imperialist powers to accept the solutions that best correspond to its own particular interests. The long-term repercussions of the crisis of the international monetary system can only be in the direction of deepening the instability and the crisis of the capitalist system as a whole, even if, on a much shorter range, they seem to artificially stimulate the economy by accelerating inflation.

At the base of the worsening of the economic situation of world capitalism is the reemergence of the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist mode of production, which were temporarily attenuated during the two decades that followed the second world war. The long-term decline in the rate of profit of the large trusts; their growing inability to finance their gigantic investment plans through self-financing alone; the decline in the portion of world commerce going to the colonial and semicolonial countries; the appearance of excess productive capacity in a number of "crucial" sectors of industry; the reappearance of massive unemployment in several imperialist countries: all these symptoms make it possible to predict recessions during the 1970s that will be much more serious than those of the 1960s.

The fact that in Western Europe and Japan these recessions will coincide with an organized force, a rise in the combativity and an anticapitalist level of consciousness of the proletariat unequalled in the past, makes the social and political situation exceptionally grave and explosive for capitalism. One can already predict that important layers of the proletariat in the advanced countries will refuse to pay the costs of unemployment, as they have refused up to now to pay the costs of inflation. Very severe struggles involving occupation, requisition, and expropriation of workplaces will break out in the course of the recession that is brewing.

2. *The increase in interimperialist contradictions*

The years which followed the second world war were characterized by a quasi-absolute hegemony of American imperialism within the capitalist world. This hegemony was based on the technological and productive superiority of the American economy; on the American monopoly of nuclear arms; on the primacy of the dollar; on the dependency of other capitalist powers on the flow of American aid, in order to build and reconsolidate their economies and their states, which were gravely shaken by the war and by the limited revolutionary rise of the years 1944-1948. The establishment of a series of politico-military alliances around the world, all revolving around the hegemony of American imperialism (NATO, CENTO, SEATO, OAS) capped the imperialist world system after 1945.

This situation was profoundly modified in the course of later years. The spectacular reconstruction of the imperialist powers of Western Europe and Japan had the result that, for the first time in the history of capitalism, the law of uneven development came into play against

the American bourgeoisie. The economy of the United States underwent a constant erosion of its advantages in productivity with respect to its principal rivals. The effort to simultaneously assure the extension of its exports of capital, the underwriting of the costs of its role as world cop of the imperialist system, the purchase of relative stability on its home front by accepting the maintenance and even a modest growth in the standard of living of the organized industrial proletariat, surpassed the resources of the American bourgeoisie. It resulted in a permanent deficit in the balance of payments and a rampant crisis of the dollar. The acceleration of inflation, caused especially by the war in Vietnam and by the need to pull out of the prolonged recession of 1969-1970, ended by causing the fall of the dollar and the international monetary system created at Bretton-Woods. This was the symbolic expression of American imperialism's loss of its quasi-absolute hegemony within the capitalist world.

Of course, American imperialism continues to occupy a position of relative superiority among the imperialist powers. If its rate of growth of material production and of its productivity are lower than those of Japan and the German Federal Republic for example; if its portion of world trade is smaller than the European Common Market's, its industry and revenues still surpass by a large amount those of capitalist Europe taken as a whole. It still possesses more capital invested abroad than all the other imperialist powers put together. Above all, the military superiority that it continues to exercise within the imperialist alliance is out of proportion with its economic and financial weight.

But the worsening of the interimperialist contradictions — which is a function not just of the change in the relationship of forces within the imperialist alliance, but also of the worsening of the structural crisis of world capitalism — has the inexorable tendency to pass from the commercial, industrial, and financial spheres to the political, and even the military, sphere. American leadership is seriously challenged and undermined within the world imperialist alliance. Some of American imperialism's countermeasures of self-defense — like the attempt to shift a portion of the total imperialist military costs to the countries of capitalist Europe and Japan, or the threat of withdrawal of the American armed forces from Europe — contribute to bring the moment nearer when first a European, and then a Japanese, nuclear force will express on the politico-military level, the change in the relationship of forces that has already occurred on the economic and financial level.

The efforts of American diplomacy to reorient itself from a so-called "bipolar" strategy toward a so-called "five-poled" (U.S. empire, capitalist Europe, Japan, USSR, China) strategy only constitute maneuvers within the framework of this interimperialist rivalry, and not a step toward a fundamental reversal of alliance. The class interests of Capital as a whole continue to take precedence in the end over considerations of rivalry, and there are tangible material reasons for this. The loss of capitalist Europe or Japan would be a death blow for the international bourgeoisie, including for the American bourgeoisie. Therefore the American bourgeoisie will remain fundamentally tied to the international imperialist alliances — while striving to modify the relationship of forces *within* that alliance, as its European and Japanese rivals and partners have done for years.

Thus, on the political plane, the deepening of the inter-imperialist rivalry is expressed, in the last analysis, by a crisis of leadership within the international bourgeoisie. The latter can only reestablish a unity of views and response at the price of more and more laborious negotiations. The reservations of the European bourgeoisie with respect to the American policy in Vietnam and the Middle East, the difficulties in the reconstruction of any international system whatsoever, the blows and counterblows that the different imperialist powers deal each other in the rush for raw materials and the markets of the East, or in the relations with the bourgeoisies of Latin America, are only some of the signs of this crisis of leadership, which gravely weakens the capitalist system as a whole.

3. *The new counterrevolutionary strategy of imperialism and the fate of the Vietnamese revolution.*

In the presence of all these growing economic, social, and political difficulties on the world scale, the fundamental strategy of imperialism was perceptibly modified in the course of the last few years. During the 1960s, it was centered above all on the direct military intervention of US imperialism, with the aim of arresting and smothering new revolutionary hotspots. The counterrevolutionary war of intervention that American imperialism unleashed in Indochina was the most striking expression of that strategy.

This ended in failure. Not only did the US military intervention not succeed in crushing the Indochinese revolution. But the monetary and political price paid for carrying out this operation proved to be higher and higher, and risked shaking the relative stability of bourgeois society in the United States itself. To repeat a war of the Vietnam type in the short-run in another country seems impossible for the American bourgeoisie.

The global counterrevolutionary strategy of imperialism has, under these conditions, evolved toward combining the creation of *regional counterrevolutionary instruments* thought to be capable of wiping out the revolutionary hotspots without direct intervention of US troops (although with a more and more ample military aid from imperialism) with *negotiations with the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies* to get them to step up their role as a brake inside the mass movement—with a view to preventing the revolutionary uprisings that could no longer be maintained within the framework of capitalism—in exchange for recognition of their de facto power over the countries they control.

The principal local counterrevolutionary forces that this counterrevolutionary strategy is based on are the Brazilian army in Latin America, the Israeli army in the Near East, the Iranian army in the Middle East, the South Vietnamese and Thai armies in South East Asia, the South African army in Africa. But the effectiveness of the South Vietnamese army is more than doubtful; the course of the revolutionary process in Indochina could progressively disintegrate it. And there are two gaping holes in this system. On the one hand Japanese imperialism is encountering great political difficulties regarding its militarizing to the point of being able to substitute for the American armed forces in East Asia. On the other hand, in Western Europe, the creation of a full-scale counterrevolutionary

striking force of the European bourgeoisies is encountering even greater difficulties, which has caused, among other things, the spectacular reversal of the Gaullist politicians in France, who today raise a ballyhoo for the maintenance of the American military presence in Europe.

One must not underestimate the effectiveness of some of these counterrevolutionary instruments. The Brazilian army and the Israeli army, without any doubt, weighed heavily in stopping the development of revolutionary situations in their respective regions. The evolution toward professional armies that take the place of armies based on conscription is a step toward the creation of a more effective counterrevolutionary striking force in Western Europe, and should be vigorously fought by the workers movement. Nevertheless, in its totality, this counter-strategy depends on the fate of the rise of the mass movements now taking place. Without a very serious political and social defeat of the Japanese and European proletariats, one cannot see how imperialism would be able to create a stable and effective military force in these key regions of the world.

In another connection, the ability of the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies to brake or to effectively betray powerful mass revolutionary movements, in exchange for a modus vivendi with imperialism, does not only depend on their intentions—which certainly run in that direction—but also on the strength of the revolutionary rise, on the relationship of forces between the old sell-out leaderships and the new vanguards within the mass movement, on the degree of control that Moscow and Peking and their agents exercise over the movement, on the repercussions of the changed relationship of forces in the mass movement inside the Communist parties themselves, etc. From this point of view, the situation today is fundamentally different from that of the 1944-47 period. The force, the cohesion, and the degree of control of the Stalinist apparatus—without speaking of the Maoist apparatus—over the international workers movement is much smaller, while the power and the autonomy of the mass movement is much greater. That is why it is entirely improper to speak of a new Yalta, in the sense of the ability of Washington, Moscow, and Peking to divide the world into spheres of influence and to maintain the status quo.

The fate of the Indochinese revolution is, in a way, the synthesis of all these trends that dominate the development of the world today. The force of the revolutionary thrust of the Vietnamese masses is such that it defeated American imperialism's systematic effort, stretching over a decade, to crush it by means of the strongest concentration of firepower ever known in such a small area. The mass opposition to the pursuit of this counterrevolutionary war had reached such a scope within the United States that it forced American imperialism to withdraw the bulk of its infantry forces from Vietnam. But the relative international isolation that the Indochinese revolution found itself in, the fact that the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies only gave it aid through an eye-dropper, while unceasingly stepping up their pressure in favor of a compromise, did not allow the revolution to realistically pursue the perspective of a military victory against U. S. imperialism's air war. Nixon's trips to Peking and Moscow contributed to demobilizing the antiwar movement within the United

States. In these conditions, the cease-fire that put an end to direct imperialist military intervention in Vietnam, and which was followed by the similar cessation of intervention in Laos and Cambodia, doesn't mean immediate and automatic victory of the permanent revolution in Vietnam.

It means that the Indochinese revolution is continued within a relationship of forces that is improved for it by the halt to direct American intervention, as long as this halt is not accompanied by a demobilization or disarming of the forces of the South Vietnamese NLF, nor by a halt to North Vietnamese aid to the revolution in the South, and as long as these forces as a whole do not cease in their efforts to overturn the puppet Thieu regime. But it means that the course of the revolution will take time; that for a period it will avoid full-scale frontal battles with the Thieu army; that the emphasis will move to the expansion of the agrarian revolution, to the consolidation of new organs of power set up in the countryside, to the attempt to achieve the politico-social disintegration of the counterrevolutionary army; to breathing new life into the struggle in the cities, especially through the struggle for the liberation of political prisoners, the reestablishment of civil liberties, against the high cost-of-living and speculation, for the right of refugees to return to their villages of origin.

The victories that the revolutionary forces won in Laos and above all in Cambodia facilitate the unfolding of the permanent revolution in Vietnam toward its victory. The threat of renewal of American bombing; the very large aid that Washington continues to give to the puppet Thieu; the "moderating" and capitulatory pressures that Moscow and Peking continue to exert on the Indochinese revolutionaries hold back, however, the march toward victory. In the last analysis, everything depends on the engagement of the living class forces on the ground, on their relationship of forces, on their willingness to fight, on the orientation and resolve of their leaderships. For an entire period, the situation will remain one of dual power from top to bottom in a large part of South Vietnam. The outcome of the revolution will without doubt be decided by its ability to extend this dual power toward the cities and above all toward greater Saigon. There again, the autonomous intervention of the proletariat, with its own forms of action and organization will probably mark the final phase of the Indochinese revolution.

4. *The resurgence of workers' struggles in Western Europe*

The resurgence of struggles of the Western European proletariat since the thunderbolt of May 1968 in France is the most spectacular expression of the preponderant place that the working class occupies within the present revolutionary rise, as opposed to the rise in 1949-1967, which was based above all on the colonial revolution. The breadth of these struggles, their more and more anti-capitalist objectives, and their growing political scope, which on several occasions led to objectively posing the question of power, coincide to place several of the key countries of capitalist Europe on the threshold of a pre-revolutionary crisis.

Beginning in 1968, *Italy* passed through a very deep social and political crisis that, in the second half of 1969, culminated in a prerevolutionary crisis. The working class

and other toiling layers were mobilized for years on end in struggles of a very great breadth, with a potentially anticapitalist dynamic.

This thrust, which acquired a pronounced united class character, was marked by egalitarian demands, by significant experiences moving in the direction of workers control (control over the pace of work, the size of the work force, etc.), by a questioning of the authority of the bosses as a whole, by the emergence of new bodies of proletarian democracy (workers delegates and councils of delegates). The occupation of Fiat-Mirafiori, the largest factory in Europe, and of other factories in Turin, five years after the beginning of the new stage, and at the end of a tough 6-month-long battle for the new metalworkers contract, is the most eloquent indication of the depth of a working class radicalization that has not run out of steam.

The *French* proletariat, which has lived through the stirring experience of the general strike and factory occupations of May 1968, did not go through an ebb in the following period. Its subsequent struggles, breaking out first among the most recently proletarianized layers although condemned to isolation by the CP's policy, which completely focused on the perspective of an electoral victory of the "Union of the Left," acquired a broader and broader scope and progressively radicalized in 1973 (strike for workers control at EDF in Brest; strike of the OS [semi-skilled workers] at Renault; LIP struggle).

The *Spanish* working class has undergone, since the strikes against the death sentences of Basque militants by the War Tribunal at Burgos in 1970, a progressive politicization of its struggles. Even when they break out over questions of wages, these struggles tend to raise political demands (freedom for political prisoners, the right to form trade unions, etc.) and to be transformed into a direct confrontation with the forces of repression and the Franco regime. Thus the slogan of the revolutionary general strike—which our Spanish comrades were the first to counterpose to the CP's orientation for a peaceful general strike aiming at liberalizing the regime without touching its capitalist structure—was successively shown to be appropriate in Ferrol, Vigo, San Andean, and Pamplona, where such general strikes actually broke out on a local scale, in response to the repression of strikes that were purely economic in the beginning. Propaganda for the preparation of a revolutionary general strike on a national scale acquires, under these conditions, a growing resonance in the vanguard of the Spanish proletariat.

In *Great Britain*, millions of workers have replied with fierce resistance to the attempts first by the Wilson government, then the Heath government, to smash the workers militancy by having antiunion legislation adopted and by increasing unemployment. The miners strikes, with their use of massive pickets around the electric power stations, and the political general strike of May 1, 1972, against the Industrial Relations Act, mark what are so far the high points of these battles, which have resulted in a pronounced radicalization within the unions and the left wing of the Labour Party, as well as a notable growth of political currents to the left of the Labour Party.

Even in *West Germany*, where the proletariat entered the period opened by the end of the long postwar boom with a very low level of class consciousness (as a result of the victory of fascism, the war, the division of the country, the disastrous effects of the Soviet occupation, the

triumphant anticommunism during the cold war, the unexpected economic success of capitalist reconstruction), the resurgence of workers struggles made itself felt. From the wildcat strikes of September 1969 to the spontaneous political strikes against the "Barzel coup" of 1972 and to the wildcat strikes of the summer and autumn of 1973, the renewal of the combativity of the West German proletariat is undeniable, even if it still lags behind, in breadth and depth, that of other large capitalist countries of Europe.

These phenomena are equally at work, even if at a slower pace and with a more reduced scope, in the smaller European countries like Belgium and Denmark. They mark a general tendency that will spread, under different forms, to most of the capitalist countries of Europe, especially if the breakthrough toward a revolutionary crisis is achieved in some important countries.

The appearance of a temporary situation of dual power in Northern Ireland in the course of struggles for civil rights, and the situation of endemic civil war that continues in that country, equally reveal the degree to which the situation for Big Capital in Western Europe has become unstable.

The importance of the present resurgence of workers struggles in Europe is revealed above all by three features: first of all the fact that the workers' demands and actions take a more and more distinctly anticapitalist character, of which the various variants of the demand for workers control are the clearest expression; then the instinctive thrust of the workers toward the independent organization of struggles (strike committees, elected strike committees, general assemblies of strikers controlling the strike committees) i.e., their more and more distinctly anti-bureaucratic character; finally a synchronization of the rise of workers struggles in *all* the large countries of Europe, a synchronization that was not known in 1919-20, 1923, 1936, or 1945-48, and that largely prevents one or another of the large bourgeois states from playing the role of cop on a European scale. The role played by the immigrant workers—the most exploited layer of the proletariat in a number of European countries—in internationalizing the struggles and their most radical forms, should be particularly noted. All these indications do not lie. They allow one to foresee, in the near future, the most important revolutionary wave that the European proletariat has known to date, prepared and stimulated by the prerevolutionary situations that had existed several times since 1968 in several countries and that the bourgeoisie was not successful in crushing. The fact that the entire resurgence of the struggles from 1968-73 has occurred while the workers' standard of living has not yet been strongly attacked makes it possible to predict an even more precipitous rise in struggles when it will be so attacked in the years to come, which cannot fail to happen.

5. *The rise of Japanese imperialism and the contradictions*

The spectacular expansion of the capitalist economy of Japan is one of the most important of the phenomena that have modified the world situation in the course of the last twenty years. Rebuilt by American imperialism to be a counterweight to the strength of the USSR in

Asia and to the victory of the Chinese revolution; nourished by the effects of the Korean war and the second Indo-chinese war; having the advantages of the most modern technology in important industrial sectors like metallurgy, naval construction, the precision industries, and the electronics industry, Japanese imperialism exploited to the hilt the industrial reserve army it still had in the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, to first throw itself into a commercial, and then a financial, offensive on the world market.

As a result of that offensive, it largely dominates the economies of South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines; it is plunging toward the "peaceful" conquest of Indonesia, Singapor, Hong Kong, and Thailand; it is the number one commercial partner of the People's Republic of China and Australia; and it is beginning to penetrate the Pacific coasts of the U.S., Canada, Mexico—all while already achieving, in Brazil, annual capital investments greater than those of the United States. This commercial expansion corresponds not only to the need to find outlets for its giant industry and fields of investment for its excess capital but also to its haunting poverty in raw materials, which had already launched it on the road to expansion—at that time military—in the period before the second world war.

The economic growth and the commercial and financial expansion of Japanese imperialism were, however, of necessity accompanied by a considerable rise in the number of workers, in the weight of the proletariat in Japanese society, and in the degree of organization and combativity of the working class.

For an entire period, it could seem as though the peculiarities of bourgeois society in Japan would slow down the formation of class consciousness among the majority of the workers for a long time. The importance of the industrial reserve army; the breadth of the so-called traditional sector of industry; the paternalistic structure of modern industry; a wage system largely based on seniority; the division of the union movement—all these factors appeared to confine the most combative layers of the proletariat to the public sector. But the boom of the 1960s ended up overcoming these obstacles. The combativity of the industrial proletariat increased in a precipitous manner in 1972-73. At the same time, the full employment created favorable conditions for an accelerated rise in wages, which the workers viewed as being a result of their struggles. Thus their confidence in their own forces was considerably developed.

The political predominance of the Liberal-Conservative Party thus finds itself undergoing a slow but steady erosion. The winning of the principal municipalities by Socialist-Communist coalitions makes it possible to predict that the Socialist Party, no doubt allied with a liberal pacifist wing of the bourgeoisie, will take over the government. The objective function of the coming to power of such a government will be to introduce the reforms necessary to try to stabilize Japanese capital, operating in an international economic and social climate different from that of the last two decades. The entry of the SPD into the West German government had an analogous function. But coinciding with a combative thrust of the Japanese proletariat and with an aggravation

of the economic and social contradictions of capitalism in this country, this political change will stimulate the radicalization of not-negligible sectors of the Japanese working class, and will begin to undermine the reformist ideology and illusions.

6. The decline of American hegemony and the crisis of Bourgeois society in the USA

Of all the important imperialist countries, the United States is the only one in which the proletariat is not yet participating in the spectacular resurgence of struggles of the last years. Revolutionary Marxists should give particular importance to the theoretical and political analysis of the causes of this delay, which is tied to the great historical delay in the formation of political class consciousness by the American proletariat, without, however, being identical with it. For an entire period, the international hegemony of American imperialism, and the advantages of the American economy in the area of productivity could explain this calm, which has lasted since 1946-47, through the modest but relatively constant rise in the standard of living of the workers in the USA. However, these factors have come into play less and less for several years. The advantages of the American economy in the area of productivity have been pared down or disappeared. The real wages of the American proletariat taken as a whole have stopped rising since the escalation of the war in Vietnam. The difference in the standard of living with respect to Western Europe is progressively reduced.

Without doubt, sections of the proletariat of the United States have been marginally drawn into the successive waves of radicalization of the 1960s; especially among Black workers, young workers, Chicano workers, female workers, antiwar movement. Here and there, in the public sector, among the agricultural workers, among the railway workers, in several wildcat strikes in heavy industry, one has been able to see harbingers of what the future explosive rise of the American proletariat will be. But the bulk of the work force has not yet begun to stir in the United States.

One cause of this backwardness should, without doubt, be sought in the fact that the union bureaucracy and the aristocracy of labor have systematically sacrificed the interests of the majority of the proletariat to those of the well-organized minority. In this way, the basic weight of inflation and unemployment fell, during the last two decades, on the less organized layers, on the racial minorities, on the newly industrialized regions. The absence of a centripetal thrust of the working class also explains the sectoral fragmentation of the radicalization, which, in the absence of a solution of a total socioeconomic alternative to monopoly capitalism, in turn delays a massive entry of the proletariat onto the political arena.

Meanwhile, the decline in American hegemony in the world, and the accelerated change in conditions within which the accumulation of capital in the United States is accomplished, does not cease to undermine the stability of bourgeois society there. Among other things, this society has seen, in the course of the last ten years, a massive revolt against its basically racist structure; the largest

mass movement ever seen in history against a counter-revolutionary war of their own bourgeoisie; a very broad questioning of the bourgeois family; the massive loosening of the classical "values" of the bourgeoisie. If these successive waves were able to be electorally retrieved by the bourgeois two-party system—basically because the bulk of the proletariat has not yet entered into action, and because the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies powerfully aided Nixon in demobilizing the antiwar movement—the traditional structures of power are not any the less severely shaken for it, objectively as well as in the eyes of the masses.

The Watergate scandal is the clearest expression of this shake-up. It expresses the deep differences between sectoral interests and in political orientation that tear the American bourgeoisie apart, differences that the Vietnam war had already revealed. It equally expresses the growing difficulties that American Big Capital encounters in adapting its traditional methods of government to national and international socioeconomic conditions that are rapidly changing.

Consequently, the most probable variant for the immediate future in the United States is neither the prolongation of the present temporary decline in the mass movements of revolt, nor the rapid evolution of the country toward a military-police type dictatorship, even of the fascist type. It is, on the contrary, that of an explosive new thrust of the mass movement, this time centered on workers' struggles set in motion in reaction to inflation, unemployment, the deterioration of conditions of life, work, and environment—phenomena that will be aggravated in the course of the next recession. The revolt of important sectors of the proletariat against the union bureaucracy's policy of class collaboration, against its acceptance of successive wage freezes and of the incomes policy, will stimulate this resumption of workers' struggles, will give them a more pronounced character that is both anticapitalist and antibureaucratic, and will deal heavy blows to the bourgeois two-party system, again placing the creation of an independent, mass labor party on the order of the day.

The progressive radicalization of the Canadian working class, illustrated by the two great recent class conflicts—the general strike of public services in Quebec in 1972, the strike of the railway workers in 1973—which both led to a violent, head-on conflict between strikers and unions on the one hand, and the bourgeois state apparatus on the other, represents a not inconsiderable stimulant to the future, if not the next, workers' radicalization in the United States.

7. The struggle of the semi-colonial proletariat for its class autonomy.

One of the most striking features of the development of the colonial revolution in the course of the last years was the gradual conquest of autonomy of action—including political action—on the part of the proletariat in a growing number of colonial and semicolonial countries. This phenomenon results from the interaction of several factors, among which the progress of industrialization in these countries, and the open bankruptcy of

the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois nationalist leaderships play a preponderant role.

The weight of the proletariat, and more especially of the industrial proletariat, is rising in several semicolonial countries, even if the neocolonial or "dependent" industrialization—i.e., partial, skimpy, dominated by the "multinational" trusts—has scarcely reduced the massive unemployment and the misery of the shanty-towns. The conflicts between this proletariat and not only the foreign capitalists but also "national" capital and even governments with an "anti-imperialist" veneer, tends to grow. At the same time, the inability of the governments to resolve the fundamental problems of the underdeveloped society and economy, the ties they maintain with imperialism, oblige them to make the masses bear the weight of the industrialization that has begun. Inflation, high cost of living, unemployment, crises of housing and basic public services, illiteracy, stagnation if not decline in living standards, suppression of civil liberties, frozen wages, prohibition of strikes: such are the problems the workers and poor peasants always find themselves faced with in these countries.

That's why the political credit that the traditional nationalist leaders had, thanks to some real, even though partial, gains of the anti-imperialist struggle, is being progressively dissipated. The loss of prestige of the "reformist" military regime in Peru (which, among other things, has repressed workers strikes very harshly), the decline in influence of the post-Nasserite leadership in Egypt, not to speak of that of the Baa'th in Syria and Iraq, the discreditment of the Bandaranaike government in Ceylon, are some illustrations of that general tendency. It is probable that the return to power of Peronism in Argentina will provoke a differentiation and a progressive erosion of the influence exercised by this current within the broad masses of the proletariat and the radicalized student youth of Argentina.

The case of India is particularly characteristic in this respect. After Nehru's death and the appearance of a massive famine in important sectors of this subcontinent, the hold of the Congress Party on the Indian masses had undergone a pronounced decline. The ultra-opportunist policy of the CPI and of the CP (M), a policy of governmental collaboration, of alliance with the possessing classes and their parties, of repression of popular movements, of use of violence against other tendencies of the workers movement, fragmented the promising rise of the mass struggle, above all in West Bengal and Kerala, served as a brake on their mobilization and eliminated the perspective of a solution of replacing the Congress Party on a national scale. Thanks to several adroit maneuvers within the country (break with the most corrupt politicians of the "syndicate") and abroad (aid to the war of national liberation of Bangladesh and victory over Pakistan), Indira Gandhi was able to reestablish the political hegemony of the Congress Party to a degree unknown for 10 years.

But this restoration of an appearance of stability can be of only short duration. The new difficulties of grain supplies, which broke out in 1972, reveal that none of the causes of the crisis of 1965-69 have been eliminated. New internal fissures appeared within the Congress. The social differentiation in the village, the misery and ab-

sence of perspectives of the agricultural workers, the untouchables, and the small farmers become increasingly worse. In these conditions, the initiative can again pass to the side of the proletariat.

The proletariat instinctively seeks to overcome the effects of the division of the trade unions through the appearance of a system of factory delegates. It even begins to show an active solidarity with the village poor (solidarity strike of the workers of Bombay with the strike of the agricultural workers of Maharashtra). The outcome of the Indian proletariat's movement to gain political initiative within the process of the permanent revolution will depend on the building of a revolutionary leadership of the proletariat and on its capacity to take a correct orientation toward the agrarian revolution. But the progress made along this route by the spontaneous thrusts of the masses will greatly facilitate the building of this leadership, if the revolutionary-Marxist nuclei follow a correct policy and intervene in the struggles of the masses with a spirit of initiative and a sense of responsibility.

In a more general way, the clearly proletarian forms taken by the struggles of the masses in numerous semicolonial countries have become pronounced: strike of metal workers in Egypt; of the Ovambo workers in Namibia; union agitation and strikes of the Black proletariat in South Africa; general strike with factory occupations against the Bordaberry putsch in Uruguay; Popular Assembly in Bolivia. The setbacks suffered were a function of the insufficiency of a new revolutionary leadership, which especially implies insufficiencies on the plane of creation of organs of dual power of the soviet type, on the plane of arming the masses, and on the plane of alliance with the working peasantry. But the progress achieved toward the political autonomy of the proletariat within the process of the colonial revolution underlines the fact that the solution of these shortcomings is today easier than it was before, and allows one to predict disquieting perspectives for imperialism in several colonial and semicolonial sectors.

The entire evolution in Latin America confirms the absence of any objective base for an even slightly prolonged period of bourgeois democracy once the mass movement rises in an impetuous way. Of course, the vigor of this movement can force the "party-army" of the bourgeoisie to temporarily replace regimes of bloody dictatorship with so-called "reformist" regimes. But if these are not successful in channeling and turning back the combativity of the masses, the armed and bloody repression is quickly reintroduced into the agenda. This is what happened in Bolivia in 1971, in Uruguay and Chile in 1973. It will also happen in Argentina.

The effects of a grave defeat of the proletariat by the army can, moreover, be more prolonged and have weightier consequences than foreseen, as is shown by the example of Brazil, where imperialism and the "national" reactionaries were able to create, for nearly a decade, a relatively stabilized sector of Latin America that serves as a counterrevolutionary pole for the entire continent and attracts important capital investments for that very reason. But it results in a considerable numerical and social strengthening of the industrial proletariat, which will end by undermining the conditions of this temporary stability.

8. *Some specific cases of development of the colonial revolution since 1969.*

Some cases of development of the colonial revolution since 1969 merit a particular attention, given the role as catalyst that they have played or can play in much wider geographic areas. We specifically mean the Chilean revolution, the Palestinian revolution, and the revolution in the Portuguese colonies in Africa.

The Chilean revolution appeared at the vanguard of the Latin American revolution after the defeat of the Bolivian revolution in August 1971. Of course, the Allende regime possesses several features of a Popular Front government, of collaboration with bourgeois parties. But, from the start, it differed from a classical Popular Front regime by the fact that it openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on the road of socialism, and that it openly based itself on the organized workers movement.

That does not mean that the Chilean CP and SP had a more progressive character than their French and Spanish counterparts in 1936, or their French and Italian counterparts in 1945. This corresponded to a greater depth of the mobilizations and the revolutionary consciousness of the masses, especially under the influence of the victory of the Cuban revolution, and of a stronger far-left vanguard. The traditional workers parties could not channelize and apply brakes to the ardor of the masses unless they asserted their willingness to enter on the road to socialism.

What was revealed in Chile is, therefore, more a new demonstration of the *bankruptcy of reformism*, i.e., of the attempt to arrive at socialism by the "legal" and "peaceful" road, within the framework of the institutions of parliamentary bourgeois democracy, without destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus, than an experience of coalition government with the bourgeoisie.

In fact, the attempt of a wing of the bourgeoisie and of the leaders of the Unidad Popular to deal with the Allende government as a classical Popular Front regime came to grief as a result of the extreme polarization of forces in the country. The working class was more and more radicalized. It was less and less ready to allow itself to be channelized into the framework of bourgeois parliamentarism. It began to create organs of dual power, to arm itself, and to bring the class struggle into the army itself. Under these conditions, the bourgeoisie decided to move before a generalization of the situation of dual power took place, and it set the coup d'etat of September 11, 1973, into motion. The Chilean workers movement is paying heavily for having left the initiative to the enemy, for having delayed the generalized organization of organs of the soviet type, for having delayed the general arming of the people, for having equivocated in the face of the compelling need to seize all the stocks of food and merchandise, while striking a deathblow against the black market and the capitalist middlemen. The Stalinist and reformist leaders, who were until the end prisoners of their criminal myths regarding the bourgeois army's alleged "respect for the constitution," and alleged "democratic and humanist tradition," bear the overwhelming responsibility. The "humanist" officers will now repress, torture and massacre on a grand scale, confirming

the lesson of the entire history of contemporary class struggles: when private property is in danger, the bourgeoisie is ready to make rivers of blood flow in order to defend its contemptible exploitation.

The heroic resistance the Chilean workers and the vanguard militants set into motion against the military coup d'etat shows, however, that the Chilean bourgeoisie and American imperialism will not install their bloody dictatorship with impunity. The depth of this resistance has already gone beyond that of the Brazilian, Bolivian, or Uruguayan proletariats after the coups d'etat in these respective countries. It will without any doubt be continued under multiple forms, including perfectly justified armed resistance. All the Latin American and international workers and revolutionary forces will aid the Chilean resistance, just as all the proimperialist and reactionary forces will intervene on the side of the Chilean counterrevolution. The social and political polarization will be sharpened through it in numerous countries of Latin America, including in Argentina. The Chilean bourgeoisie will learn at its own expense that the fruit of its crimes of the summer of 1973 will be a bitter fruit.

After the mortal blow that the defeat of the UAR in the "Six Day War" had dealt to Nasserism, the Palestinian resistance appeared for several years as the spearhead of the Arab revolution. This was due to the fact that, driven to despair and risking expulsion from their lands or being reduced to the rank of third-class citizens for the second time in 25 years by Zionist colonization organized as a conquering state, the Palestinian people were ready to mobilize themselves on a large scale in a radical and revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle. For their part, certain bourgeois and petty-bourgeois Arab leaderships, above all those of the UAR and Syria, utilized the popularity of the Palestinian cause to divert the attention of the masses from the burning revolutionary tasks in their own countries.

The defeat suffered by the Palestinian resistance first at the hands of the hangman Hussein, then from the Lebanese regime, weak though it was, does not in itself constitute a condemnation of the armed struggle it had adopted. It expresses the weakness of the *politico-social strategy* followed by all the organizations of this resistance, including the illusion that it would be possible to defeat Zionism in the confrontation in Palestine alone or on its borders, and to this end, of subordinating the revolutionary⁶ process within the other Arab countries to the material aid that the existing Arab governments could give.

However, Zionism, in as much as it is allied with imperialism, cannot be defeated except by the anti-imperialist mobilization of the laboring masses of the Arab nation as a whole. This means that it is necessary to subordinate all calculations of logistic support of the Palestinian resistance to the need to mobilize the workers and poor peasants against the existing regimes, all of which to varying degrees, remain subservient to imperialism or collaborate with it. Only a dynamic of permanent revolution in the entire Middle East will make it possible to deal death blows to imperialism and Zionism. The Palestinian resistance could, and can again, play the role of detonator of such a revolutionary process, on the con-

dition that it opts squarely for that strategy. To build the cadres and the leadership that will orient the Arab revolutionary movement in that direction is the principal task of the Fourth International in the Middle East.

The progress made by the anti-imperialist armed struggles in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, is beginning to weaken Portuguese colonialism. At the same time, this crystallizes the tendency of the racist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia to come to the aid of this decrepit colonialism. If a victory of the African liberation movement were to appear to be close at hand in Angola

and especially in Mozambique, a military intervention on a large scale by the white racist regimes would be probable. It would almost certainly result in military aggression by all of them against Zambia and Tanzania, who are guilty of aiding the Rhodesian guerrillas, as well as against other African states; and south of the Equator, it would provoke a generalized and bloody confrontation between the white colonists and imperialism on the one hand, and the African laboring masses on the other. The repercussions that such a confrontation could have in South Africa, and in the United States, and for the world imperialist economy, would be laden with consequences.

II. The Worsening of the Crisis of Bureaucratic Power in the Bureaucratized Workers States

9. *The economic crisis in the USSR*

The economic crisis that the Soviet Union is today undergoing, and which has many common features with the one that shook the country on the eve of Stalin's death, and then ten years later, before the fall of Khrushchev, was the determining factor in leading the team of Brezhnev-Kosygin-Podgorny to seek a rapprochement with American imperialism, a rapprochement conditioned by a cease-fire agreement in Vietnam. Other factors undoubtedly pushed in the same direction, particularly the desire of the Soviet bureaucracy to apply the brakes to the dynamic of the Indochinese revolution and to prevent it from accelerating the revolutionary process in all of Southeast Asia. The desire to "neutralize" imperialism, including obtaining its tacit support in the event of a military conflict with the People's Republic of China, equally influenced this process. But the Kremlin's pressing need to alleviate the difficulties it is encountering in the management of the Soviet economy have certainly weighed more heavily on its decisions than these considerations.

In the last analysis, these difficulties can be reduced to a central factor: the impossibility of making a more and more complex planned economy, in a highly industrialized country, work without the control, verification, and creative, public and democratic initiative of the broad laboring masses, that is, without a system of democratically centralized management of the economy by the producers themselves. The monopoly of management in the hands of a privileged bureaucratic layer, which subordinates the collective interests to the defense of its own privileges and to the power on which these privileges are based, causes immense waste and constant disproportions in the development of the Soviet economy. Periodically, these wastes and disproportions cause declines in the rate of growth, which lead to difficulties in supply and menace the principal safety valve of the regime since Stalin's death: the nearly constant growth, even if it is modest, of the standard of living of the masses.

Incontestably, these economic difficulties have nothing to do with the periodic crises of overproduction or the recessions that regularly hit the capitalist economy. They attest to the different social nature of the Soviet economy

as compared to the capitalist economy. To the extent that these difficulties are aggravated by the fact that the Soviet economy has become that of a highly industrialized country, they even attest, in their fashion, to the impressive progress made possible by the planned economy. But above all they show that the system of bureaucratic centralization, which characterizes the functioning of the Soviet economy under the dictatorship of the bureaucracy, has reached an impasse, and that it becomes less and less effective.

The successive waves of economic reforms that the leaders of the bureaucracy have experimented with since Stalin's death — introduction, then suppression, of the *sovnarkhozes* [national economic councils]; introduction, then blocking, of the so-called Liberman reforms, etc. — all represent attempts to get out of this impasse without touching the fundamental cause of the illness: the absence of democratic control of the management of the economy by the mass of the producers and consumers themselves, on all levels of this economy. The hybrid combination of different forms of planning, of bureaucratic centralization and decentralization through the vehicle of the market, without the mass of workers having any real possibility of democratic control and inspection of the establishment and execution of the plan, the level of stocks, on the flow of production, tends in general to substitute a series of new contradictions to those that each reform seeks to alleviate. In place of the "narrow self-centeredness of the enterprises" (i.e., of the bureaucrats on the factory level, whose privileges depended on the realization of the plan in physical quantities) in the Stalin epoch, the Khrushchev reforms substituted "regional self-centeredness" within the *sovnarkhozes*. The Liberman reforms brought "self-centeredness of the enterprises" back into effect without seriously increasing the effectiveness of the management of the bureaucrats, whose revenues were tied to the "profit" but who weren't able to either fix prices or modify the total amount of salaries.

The economic rapprochement with the imperialist countries can be considered as the equivalent of a new economic reform of an analogous genre. The Soviet bureaucracy hopes for two advantages from it that will break through the bottleneck that is retarding economic growth in im-

portant areas: to overcome the technological backwardness with respect to the imperialist countries in certain sectors: automobile, electronic, chemical industries; to obtain the necessary investment resources to accelerate the economic development of Siberia. Since agricultural production barely suffices for feeding the country, and since industrial consumer goods don't have the necessary quality to be sold on a sufficient scale in the West, the sole massive compensation that the Kremlin can offer for the large-scale importation of machinery produced in the imperialist countries is the export of raw materials. This kind of export corresponds moreover to the present needs of the international capitalist economy and creates the objective basis for the present commercial rapprochement.

But one shouldn't exaggerate the scope of these East-West exchanges, nor their possible structural repercussions. The Soviet raw material resources available for export to the imperialist countries on the short or medium term are limited, and this restricts the limits of export of capitalist merchandise to the USSR. This will not go beyond a few percentage points of the foreign trade of the imperialist countries, i.e., a negligible fraction of their national product. This will be, moreover, the object of a ferocious competition between the various imperialist powers, each wanting to increase its share at the expense of the others. The whole Nixon commercial offensive in East-West commerce is at bottom only an attempt by American imperialism to overcome a serious delay in this area with respect to the imperialists of West Germany, Japan, Britain, etc., who have been carrying out a similar offensive for more than a decade. There is thus no reason to suppose that it will appreciably alleviate the severity of recessions in the 1970s.

On the other hand, the importation of foreign technology may permit the acceleration of the growth of certain industrial branches in the USSR, but it will not resolve any of the structural contradictions that caused the present difficulties. It will not reconcile the material interests of the bureaucrats who run the enterprises with those of an optimum development of the economy, any more than it will reconcile the material interests of the producers with a bureaucratic form of management, whose wastage and theft, evident on an enormous scale, discourage any systematic attempt at rationalization of production on the part of the workers. Moreover, the introduction of "mixed enterprises" in the Soviet economy will not be able to avoid further deepening the contradictions between the logic of the plan and that of the market.

10. *The political crisis in the People's Republic of China*

The political crisis that is shaking the Chinese bureaucracy has now lasted nearly 15 years (since the Lushan Central Committee meeting of the Chinese CP). The successive phases of this crisis, caused by the objective problems of beginning socialist construction in a country as backward and as agricultural as China was, the complication of the problems resulting from the dictatorship of the bureaucracy, the different solutions advanced by different factions of this bureaucracy to these problems, the entry of vast social forces into action, their reciprocal correlation as well as their relations with different factions

of the bureaucracy, have today led to a situation in which the bureaucratic degeneration of the Chinese revolution has reached a higher level than in the previous stage. Without attributing merits it doesn't have to the more "left" faction of Lin Piao and Chen Po-ta, it is necessary to underline that it has above all been since the fall of this faction (1970-71) that the conservative features have become generalized in the foreign, domestic, and economic policy of the Chinese government, features already visible in some respects since the phase of liquidation of the "cultural revolution": spectacular right-turn in Chinese foreign policy (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Iran, Spain, etc.), culminating in the visit of Nixon to Peking; reestablishment of a policy centered on "material incentives" in agriculture; reestablishment of the principle of "individual profitability of enterprises" in industry; new accentuation of inequality in wages, which had been reduced during the "cultural revolution"; etc. This impression is confirmed by the return to their former positions in the CCP apparatus of numerous old bureaucrats who were detested by the masses for their abuse of power and for the privileges they amassed during the period from 1949-65, and who were removed during the "cultural revolution," a return symbolized by the reentry of Teng Hsiao-ping and his associates into the CCP Central Committee.

Of course, the use of the term "bureaucratic degeneration" within the framework of the Chinese revolution, by analogy with its use by Trotsky within the framework of the Russian revolution, requires numerous adjustments. In contrast to the October socialist revolution, the Chinese socialist revolution gave birth, from the beginning, to a workers state that was bureaucratically deformed to an incomparably greater extent than the USSR in the epoch of Lenin and Trotsky. The proletariat there never directly exercised power by means of soviets. In contrast to the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR, the bureaucratic degeneration of the People's Republic of China does not thus imply a political expropriation of the proletariat following a political counterrevolution, a Thermidor, but rather an accentuation, first quantitative then qualitative, of the phenomena of bureaucratization.

In another sense, the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR was the product of an uninterrupted process of ebbing of political activity by the proletariat and of strengthening of the privileged bureaucratic layer, stretching over a dozen years. In the People's Republic of China, on the other hand, the political activity of the proletariat, extremely limited during and after the revolution of 1946-49, underwent a first rise in 1956-57 during the "Hundred Flowers" movement, and a second, much more pronounced, rise in 1965-68, during the ascending phase of the "cultural revolution." This also reduced the material privileges of the bureaucracy and, in general, the social inequalities in the country. It is with respect to all these specific features that the use of the term "bureaucratic degeneration" in the framework of the Chinese revolution takes on a precise meaning: the break-through, if not the triumph, of socially conservative tendencies; the affirmation of the legitimacy of new material privileges; the justification of a policy of class collaboration with imperialism and factions of the possessing classes in power in the semicolonial countries, under the cover of the need to "maneuver" between the various adversaries of the People's Republic of China. All this testifies to the existence

of a bureaucratic layer whose common political interests are asserted particularly against the "anarchist and egalitarian excesses" of the left wing of the Red Guards.

The change in attitude of imperialism toward the People's Republic of China, first shown by European and Japanese imperialism since the 1960s, then by American imperialism from the beginning of the 1970s, greatly contributed to putting the Chinese bureaucracy definitively on the road of "peaceful coexistence," in the same way that the changing attitude of the international bourgeoisie towards the USSR, beginning with the conclusion of the Laval-Stalin military pact, definitively settled the adherence of the Kremlin to the international status quo. The radicalism of Maoism in the 1960s had not been solely verbal, but real, as was the case of the ultraleftist radicalism of the Kremlin in the "third period." The passing over to a policy of international collaboration with imperialism corresponds in the two cases to both a new stage of international policies, and to a new stage of conservatism of a consolidated bureaucracy.

With respect to the relationship of forces with the masses, these remain more unfavorable for the Maoist bureaucracy than they were for the Soviet bureaucracy. There is neither apathy nor terror on a large scale in the People's Republic of China today, as was the case in the USSR in the epoch of Stalin. The present Mao-Chou En-lai leadership is now trying to widen its base by modest increases in the standard of living of the masses, after Mao had played the card of politicization, allied with the Lin Piao-Chen Po-ta group. The turn to the right runs up against, and will run up against, political reactions within the youth and the vanguard of the working class, which the recourse to nationalism and to the argument of the need to find a diplomatic counterbalance to the armed forces that the Kremlin has massed on the Chinese frontier, and to accepting sacrifices for national defense, will only be able to partially neutralize.

11. *The Yugoslav crisis of 1971-72*

The contradictions underlying the Titoist variant of bureaucratic power have begun to ripen in an accelerated manner since the economic reforms of 1965. They reached an explosive degree in 1971-72. These contradictions are basically those between the limited self-management on the level of the enterprise, on the one hand, and the mechanisms of economic centralization that deny self-management (bureaucratic planning and "socialist market economy") on the other hand; and those between the economic self-management on the level of the enterprise, on the one hand, and the bureaucracy's monopoly of political power (absence of real workers power on the political plane) on the other hand.

Since the reforms of 1965, the rapid development of unemployment, the growing social inequality, the soaring of the primitive accumulation of private capital, the increased ties between the Yugoslav economy and the international capitalist economy, have provoked an accelerated socio-political differentiation in the country. The technocratic and managerial layers of the bureaucracy, in growing symbiosis with the private sector, began to openly undermine the rights and powers of the workers within

the framework of the self-management system. They sought to reduce these rights and powers to a simple question of distribution of the annual net revenues, working to reestablish the total power of the directors under the pretexts of technocratic efficiency and the primordial imperative of competition. The workers, for their part, rose up more and more against the attacks on their rights and their standard of living, against the privileges of the *nouveaux riches* and the excesses of the "socialist market economy." The number of strikes multiplied. The working class' discontent found a centralized expression at the time of the national congress of Yugoslav trade unions in 1971. A politicized youth vanguard set about to formulate left-wing solutions following the university explosions of 1968.

This process of socio-political differentiation was combined with a growing tension between the nationalities. The political cadres of the "developed" nationalities sought to progressively reduce the contributions of "their" republics to the economic growth of the "underdeveloped" republics. A wind of nationalism, nourished by the growing regional inequality, began to blow across the country, provoking tensions that were grave for the survival of the Yugoslav federation.

The pressure and the threats of the Soviet bureaucracy were another element complicating the socio-political differentiation. After the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the armies of the Warsaw Pact, reactions of self-defense appeared all over Yugoslavia, as was the case in the People's Republic of China, since the governments of the two countries felt themselves targeted for a possible repetition of the Czechoslovak precedent. The active hostility that existed between Belgrade and Peking for 15 years faded away almost from one day to the next. Preparations for a general arming of the people and a massive guerrilla war against possible aggression on the part of the Soviet bureaucracy were especially effective in Croatia and in Slovenia. This provoked a strong reaction by the Kremlin, which took the form of stepped-up pressure on Tito to put an end to the decentralization of political power.

The provisional solution of the crisis that was reached in 1972, resulting from the interaction of all these complex tendencies, is thus not without sociopolitical ambiguity. Tito, basing himself on the central military apparatus and reflecting the interests of the political wing of the bureaucracy, hit the technocratic and managerial wing hard. The increase in social inequality and in the private sector, the progressive disintegration of the planned economy, were stopped cold. In this sense the Yugoslav workers felt their pressure had been crowned by a first success.

But the repression struck not only the right but also the far-left. Elements of socialist democracy which seemed to have been won many years before, were reduced or suppressed. The relative freedom of public discussion and press were partially reduced. Methods of slander, of lying accusations, of use of the secret police, even within the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, in violation of socialist legality, were put back into effect. A stricter political centralization and control by the bureaucracy were assured.

In short, the events of the period from 1968 to 1972 have confirmed that the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia remains a bureaucratically deformed workers state.

The thesis according to which capitalism has already been restored there was shown false in the light of facts. Political power is not in the hands of any bourgeoisie, but rather in those of the Titoist bureaucracy, whose attachment to collective property and to planning, the source of its privileges, was verified at the time of the 1972 crisis.

These events have, moreover, confirmed that self-management of enterprises does not in itself constitute either a guarantee against bureaucratization or a guarantee of socialist democracy. Only the exercise of political and economic power on all levels, including the national level, by the working class, through workers councils and their congresses, can radically reduce the weight and the threat of the bureaucracy. The struggle against the dangers of restoration of capitalism as well as the struggle against the power and privileges of the bureaucracy depend, in the last analysis, on the independent activity of the proletariat. To assert that the restoration of capitalism has already been achieved, or that the proletariat is powerless before the bureaucracy's monopoly of political power, is to underestimate, in an unacceptable way, the Yugoslav proletariat's potential for counterattack and for militancy, which increasingly asserted itself in the 1968-72 period and will continue to assert itself in the years to come.

12. The interaction between the rise of workers militancy in capitalist Europe and the rise of the political revolution in Eastern Europe.

The precipitous resurgence of the workers struggles in capitalist Europe, and the approach of prerevolutionary or even revolutionary crises in several key countries of this continent, will have profound repercussions on the revitalization of the activity and class consciousness of the proletariat of the bureaucratized workers states of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In fact, between the rise of the socialist revolution in Western Europe and the rise of the antibureaucratic political revolution in Central and Eastern Europe, a growing interaction will begin to show itself in the years to come, vividly cutting through the more isolated development of the political revolution in the 1950s, symbolized by the isolation of the Hungarian revolution of 1956.

On the one hand, the tumultuous workers struggles that are in the process of unfolding in Western Europe, and that will unfold there more and more, introduce unquestionable stimulants into the consciousness of the proletariats of Central and Eastern Europe, reaffirming their confidence in their class forces. The fact that the military menaces on the European frontiers of the "socialist camp" are reduced — one of the by-products of the policy of "détente" followed by the bureaucracy — and the fact that massive forces struggling for socialism have appeared in Western Europe, revives and stimulates independent activity of the working class in Central and Eastern Europe. Just as the movements of student revolt in the 1960s in West Germany, France, and Italy had real echoes among students in Yugoslavia, Poland, and Hungary, and in the German Democratic Republic as well, even if on a modest scale and with differing degrees of politicization from one country to the other, so too the current upsurge of workers struggles in capitalist Europe will facilitate the entry into action of important sectors of the

working class in Central and Eastern Europe. The bureaucracy is perfectly conscious of this, and, in consequence, multiplies its efforts to accompany the tourist and commercial "opening" toward the West with a more severe ideological and political control over the masses of the countries in which it is in power. The effectiveness of this combination is doubtful, at least in several countries of "popular democracy."

On the other hand, the forms and the content of the workers struggles in capitalist Europe; the way they renew the most advanced and richest tradition of democratic self-organization of the masses, with the aim of replacing bourgeois society with a society where the workers will be effectively the masters of their fate in all areas of social life, will liberate energies and forces to assure a renewal of Marxism and communism among young workers and intellectuals of the bureaucratized workers states of Europe.

One of the greatest obstacles on the road to this renaissance is the degradation of Marxism to the level of a state religion by the bureaucratic masters of these countries, and their cynical manipulation of it to justify and cover over the social inequality and the exclusion of the masses of workers from the direct exercise of power. This perversion of Marxism; the break in continuity as a result of the physical destruction of the old revolutionary cadres of the working class; the difficulties in resurrecting debate and political life in the conditions of the bureaucratic dictatorship: all create enormous obstacles to the young generation of rebel workers and intellectuals being able to rediscover the true sources, the essence of Marxism-Leninism, and to redevelop ties with its tradition. The appearance of an example of revolutionary socialism and independent organization of the masses in real life in Western Europe will permit the counterposition of the true face of socialism to the hideous mask that Stalinism has imposed on it in Eastern Europe ten times more effectively than its appearance just in books. The renaissance of Leninism in Eastern Europe and in the USSR will in this way be greatly facilitated.

13. The program of the antibureaucratic political revolution

The experience of the "Prague spring" and of the Yugoslav crisis; the balance sheet of the Chinese "cultural revolution" and of the new opposition movement in the USSR; the experience of the Baltic port workers' strikes in Poland in 1970 and the process of political differentiation going on in Hungary and the GDR have considerably enriched our acquaintance with the dynamic and program of the antibureaucratic political revolution.

The interaction between the deepening of the objective contradictions, the growing differentiation within the apparatus, the entry of the masses into action, has in each case been the mechanism determining a loss of control by the bureaucracy over entire social groups (workers, students, intellectuals). It was not, in general, the working class that first went into action (except in the German Democratic Republic in 1953 and in Poland in 1970). The movements of intellectuals are generally ambiguous, and often serve as a vehicle for, along with demands moving in the direction of socialist democracy, demands of economic "liberalization" and "rationalization" that may

express the preoccupations and material interests of the technocratic wing of the bureaucracy, that are clearly hostile to the class interests of the proletariat, and resented as such by it. The deeper has been the influence of Stalinism, the more Marxism was discredited as a "state religion" in the eyes of the critical youth, the greater is the ideological confusion, and the more are reactionary tendencies able to emerge within the intelligentsia and other oppositional layers alongside tendencies that are really communist and close to revolutionary Marxism.

As soon as large working masses move into action, however, it is not confused ideological motivations, but objective class interests that determine the social nature of their movement. Nowhere has the proletariat shown the slightest tendency to demand that the factories that it built at the price of enormous sacrifices should be ceded or sold to private owners, or to support demands moving in this direction on the part of other social groups. Nowhere has it called for broader rights for the factory directors or for the supervisory personnel. Nor does it call for a spread in the range of salaries or a growth in social inequality. Apart from improvements on the level of consumption, including housing, leisure time, holidays, and social equipment, the fundamental tendency of these demands focuses on the democratization of the structures of power and of planning: free and democratic election of trade-union committees in the factories, the right of these bodies to veto the decisions of the managers; refusal to give the factory managers any rights regarding lay-offs and guarantees of full employment; regaining of freedom of the press, association, meeting, right of workers to strike, right to create political associations—thus to create parties—that respect the constitution, i.e., that respect the abolition of capitalism; complete reestablishment of Leninist norms of internal democracy including the right to have tendencies and factions within the CP, return to strict socialist legality, with the dismantling of the secret police, the liberation of political prisoners, the dissolution

of forced-labor camps, the rehabilitation of all those who have been condemned for offenses or crimes not committed, the reestablishment of full rights of free defense in all trials; election of workers councils, organs of political power and of management of the economy by the proletariat, on all levels of the state and the economy.

These demands thus furnish the skeleton of the program of the political revolution, to which specific demands relating to the concerns of the student youth and the *intelligentsia* must be added: freedom of artistic and literary creation, of scientific research, of ideological debate, without censorship or interference by the authorities in power; reestablishment of real equality between nationalities, and especially the right for each nation to be administered in its own language by citizens elected by it; vigorous opposition to any material attack, in practice, on the federal structure of the USSR, the People's Republic of China, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, suppression of all tendencies towards "Russification," "Han chauvinism," "Serbization," or "Czechization" of republics or territories inhabited by the national minorities of these federations.

In the Soviet Union itself, the phenomena of discrimination and national oppression provoked more and more virulent reactions on the part of the youth who are in the process of losing the political apathy produced by the Stalinist terror and the bureaucratic perversion of Marxism. To defend the right to self-determination of the minority nationalities, and especially the right of the Ukrainian people to an independent Soviet Ukraine, doesn't only correspond to the duty of revolutionary Marxists to support all the just democratic demands of the masses against national oppression. It is also the only way to prevent the legitimate reactions of the Ukrainian masses against this oppression from taking an anti-Soviet and antisocialist orientation, but instead rejoin, after the victory of the political revolution and the restoration of Soviet democracy, a USSR reconstituted on a truly federal basis.

III. The Crisis of the Traditional Workers Leaderships and the Building of the Fourth International

14. *The evolution of the Communist and Socialist parties*

In the course of the last years, the crisis of the traditional workers organizations was intensified under the combined effect of the resurgence of workers struggles, the deepened structural crisis of the imperialist system, the crisis of power of the bureaucracy in the bureaucratized workers states, and the appearance of a new vanguard of a mass character.

The closer collaboration of the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies with imperialism intensifies this crisis even further. For the "détente" has a contradictory effect on the reciprocal relations between the traditional workers organizations, and on their relations with the masses. In dissipating the climate of "cold war" and militant anticommunism among the Social-Democratic and trade union leaders and cadres of several imperialist and semi-colonial countries, the "détente" facilitates collaboration and lasting agreements between the SPs and CPs in several countries.

Despite the strict reformist limits, namely, the objectives of class collaboration, that the leaders of these organizations assign to agreements of this type, they unleash an objective dynamic of unity of action within the working class, they increase the confidence of the workers in their own forces, and they contribute in this way to the process of raising the combativity and radicalization of the proletariat. But the results of this dynamic limit the freedom of maneuver of the traditional leaderships by making quite clear the price they would have to pay in order to carry out a turn to the right that coincided with the resurgence of these struggles.

Thus, for the first time since 1935, a spectacular rapprochement between the Soviet bureaucracy and imperialism is not accompanied either immediately or in the short-run by an analogous turn to the right by numerous CPs. As was already the case at the time of the intervention of the Warsaw Pact armies in Czechoslovakia in August 1968, the present orientations of the French CP, the Italian

CP, the Chilean CP, and most of the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries, while remaining principally determined by the needs of the Kremlin, are carried out, compared to the past, more as a function of the electoral needs of these parties and the need they feel to "stay close to" their mass base, than as a function of the immediate needs of the Kremlin's diplomacy.

The same thing, moreover, applies to the Maoist groups. These justify in general — as a whole or with nuances — the right-turn of Chinese diplomacy, noting the need for Peking to avoid "the encirclement" of the People's Republic of China. But they don't at all apply, at least at present, the same right-turn to their own activity in the advanced capitalist countries and to their relations with the bourgeoisie, even when this bourgeoisie is courted by Peking.

The effects of the Sino-Soviet conflict, of the crisis of the international Communist movement, which is deepening, have the same result. The number of CPs that are keeping their distance from Moscow and Peking alike (like the Japanese CP, the CP (M) of India, and to a certain extent the Spanish CP) is increasing and will increase. The criticisms with respect to specific aspects of the policy of the CPSU, especially concerning repression against the national minorities and against the dissenting intellectuals, will spread, even if in a prudent and dishonest manner.

What was said above in no way means to imply the existence of any "leftward movement" in the long-term strategy of the pro-Moscow CPs. Quite the contrary. The long-term strategy is more than ever neo-reformist, revolving around the "electoral roads to socialism." The process of "social-democratization" of the CPs is continuing. The taking of distance with respect to Moscow generally accentuates this process. What is involved is only a tactical adaptation to the radicalization of the masses, within the framework of this reformist orientation. Any attempt of the CPs to continue to systematically hold back the struggles and to oppose themselves to all the workers' anticapitalist demands and forms of self-organization, even in the face of a tumultuous rise in struggles, could only accentuate the tendencies to go beyond the CPs, and would clearly weaken the hold of the apparatus over the masses. Without excluding *a priori* the possibility that this will happen in this or that country, the most probable variant is nevertheless one of more flexible maneuvers and adaptations on the part of CPs faced with the precipitous rise of the mass struggles.

An analogous remark applies, on the whole, to the mass Social-Democratic parties. These remain fundamentally attached to class collaboration, bourgeois parliamentarism, defense of the capitalist order, including against workers on strike. The greater weight, in their midst, of members of the administrative apparatus of the bourgeois state and of the nationalized sector of the capitalist economy further accentuates the tendency of the Social-Democracy to espouse at certain moments the positions of the bourgeois state even against the reformist unions.

But experience has also shown that a Social Democratic party that stops having any important mass base within the proletariat also stops having any electoral base, and any chance to increase its patronage positions within the bourgeois parliamentary democracy. That is why

even the mass Social Democratic parties are also susceptible to the effects of the mass radicalization and of the tumultuous rise of workers struggles. This is expressed in the search for a new working-class base, or an enlarged working-class base, especially by the French SP, the Spanish SP, the Dutch SP, the Labour Party, the West German SPD, the Chilean SP, etc. The repelling effect of Stalinism and the ultra-opportunism of the CP continue to exert on newly radicalized layers of the working class, above all working class youth, contributes to this process. It is equally expressed by the development of new left-wing tendencies and their radicalization, which is already perceptible within the Labour Party in Great Britain and the Spanish SP.

15. *The new mass vanguard*

The appearance on a world scale of a new vanguard of a mass character for the first time since the creation of the Communist International constitutes one of the principal features of the new rise of the world revolution since 1968. It results from the coincidence of the resurgence of revolutionary struggles on an international scale since the victory of the Cuban revolution, and the deepening crisis of imperialism and of the traditional workers parties.

This new mass vanguard can be characterized in the most succinct fashion as the totality of forces acting independently and to the left of the traditional bureaucratic leaderships of the mass movement. What is involved is both a social and a political phenomenon, with the new vanguard including the radicalized layers, those that have gone into action, of the youth, the working class, women, the majority of which is unorganized, but an organized fraction of which is part of or follows the far-left organizations; Trotskyist, centrist, Maoist, Mao-spontaneist, etc.

In itself, the appearance of this new mass vanguard expresses both the potential for building very much stronger revolutionary organizations than in the course of previous decades, and the delay experienced in the building of these organizations. This delay means that revolutionary Marxism does not exercise, from the outset, a hegemony over this layer, that it finds itself in competition with all sorts of centrist and ultraleft currents, and that the often considerable forces of the vanguard with a mass character can be drawn into tragic explosions, isolated from the bulk of the working class forces. The example of the JVP in Sri Lanka is the most typical illustration of this.

The relations between the revolutionary Marxists and the forces of this new vanguard are complex. On the one hand, the revolutionary Marxists must carry out an uncompromising ideological and political struggle against the various centrist or ultraleft deviations from Marxism. On the other hand, they must strive toward unity in action around common objectives in the anti-imperialist, anticapitalist, and antibureaucratic struggles. It is through the combination of unity in action and political differentiation that the goal of transforming the bulk of the forces of the new vanguard into a lever capable of qualitatively modifying the relationship of forces with the bureaucratic apparatuses can be attained. It is through this combination that the ability to lead much broader mass struggles

and more advanced forms of mass self-organization than in the past can be won. It is also through this combination that pressure can be exerted on the mass union and political organizations themselves to accelerate the processes of internal differentiation within them. The ability of our organizations to go beyond the stage of propagandism and to intervene in struggles with proposals for appropriate action will play a determining role in this struggle to win hegemony within the new vanguard, and to strengthen our organizations qualitatively and quantitatively.

The new vanguard with a mass character was in large measure the product of the progress achieved by the world revolution through the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions. At the same time, to a lesser degree, it was stimulated by the image of the Chinese "cultural revolution." The question is posed of whether the right-turn of the Chinese leadership, the less pronounced, but nonetheless real, right-turn of the Cuban leadership (the approving attitude with respect to "military reformism" in Peru, Panama, and elsewhere, with respect to the policy of Allende in Chile, with respect to Peronism in Argentina), and the cease-fire in Vietnam will be able to have the effect of causing an ebb if not a disintegration of the new vanguard.

This vanguard is basically susceptible to two contradictory pressures. The fact that the resurgence of workers struggles is continuing and even broadening in numerous imperialist and semicolonial countries, and the fact that the crisis of bourgeois society as well as the crisis of the system of bureaucratic power in the bureaucratized workers states still is deepening, unquestionably favors a parallel broadening of the new vanguard with a mass character. The temporary ebb of the student radicalization in certain countries (United States, Japan) is, or will be, compensated for by the growth of the working-class radicalization, above all of the working-class youth.

But the right-turn of the Chinese and Cuban leaderships, and the setbacks to the centrist or ultraleft mass organizations based on the new vanguard (for example the Naxalites in India!) can cause disarray in its midst and give rise to processes of reabsorption into the traditional organizations, at a time when the revolutionary Marxists prove too weak or incapable of filling the void created by these setbacks. The political and organizational initiatives of our own organizations are thus an important factor for the fate of the new vanguard with a mass character. The conditions are favorable for carrying out a successful offensive against Maoism, which was dealt a very grave blow by the right-turn of Peking's diplomacy. But this offensive will not profit our own movement on a large scale, i.e., will not end up in a considerable strengthening of our own organizations, unless it is not confined to the ideological arena and is accompanied by initiatives in action that make it possible to galvanize, unite, and strengthen the whole vanguard against the reformist and Stalinist apparatuses in the mass struggle. Otherwise, it will be the reformist and neo-reformist organizations that will end up profiting from the crisis of the Maoist currents, through the decomposition of a part of the new vanguard.

16. *The Fourth International*

Since the Ninth World Congress (Third Since Reunification), the Fourth International has made important progress, the biggest since its founding. It now has sections and sympathizing groups in about fifty countries. A dozen of them have increased the number of their members five or ten times in the 1969-1973 period. Trotskyist cadres and militants have played an important role in strikes and union struggles of national importance, especially in France, Italy, Spain, Sri Lanka, Argentina, Bolivia, Switzerland. As in the preceding period, they have played a leading role in struggles of the student youth involving tens and sometimes hundreds of thousands of college and high school students, especially in France, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Mexico, Japan, Colombia. Revolutionary forces already hardened in combat have joined the Fourth International, especially the ETA VI in the Basque country.

Nonetheless, the numerical forces and the organizational influence of the Fourth International remain quite modest, out of proportion to the confirmation of its program and general orientation by events, and to the far larger influence that revolutionary Marxist ideas exert in the world. This lag is basically explained by the following factors:

a) A very marked unequal development between the breadth of the radicalization—especially the working-class radicalization in numerous imperialist and semicolonial countries, and its politicization. Despite the very pronounced resurgence of the mass workers struggles in numerous countries, the political consciousness of the working class is rising at a much slower pace. The formulation Trotsky used to characterize the crisis of consciousness of the proletariat—the skepticism of the old generation and the inexperience of the new—continues to remain largely valid, although to a lesser degree than in 1938, 1948 or 1958.

b) The appearance of the new mass vanguard since the second half of the 1960s, which favored the more rapid building of the Fourth International, was not in any way accompanied by a process of political homogenization. Given the complexity of the present world situation, the organizational weakness of the Fourth International at the beginning of this new revolutionary rise, the attractive force exerted on the radicalized youth by the ideologies identified with victorious revolutions like Castroism and Maoism, the politically organized portion of the new vanguard was found everywhere divided between the Trotskyist, Maoist, and centrist currents and is very often fragmented into a swarm of grouplets. In several important countries, different organizations claiming adherence to Trotskyism sought to win new cadres and militants, in competition and sometimes in violent public polemics against each other, which could not help but increase the confusion of the large vanguard. Finally, the predominantly college and high school student social composition of the new vanguard, during the initial phase of its formation, favored a process of development of tiny groups and the multiplication of variants of sectarianism and opportunism.

c) The rapid growth of Trotskyist organizations, and their being confronted with struggles and responsibilities often out of proportion with their past history and their degree of maturity, have created difficulties for the correct resolution of the many delicate tactical problems that generally appeared in the mass struggles, not to speak of the revolutionary struggles. The education of new cadres and of mature national leaderships inevitably slows the growth of the organizations, in the same way that the political and organizational strengthening of the international center retarded the growth of the world movement.

d) Many of the organizations of the Fourth International continue to manifest a sectarian attitude on the question of recruitment in not exploiting all the opportunities offered for substantially strengthening their ranks. They underestimate a basic aspect of the Leninist theory of organization, namely the understanding of the fact that it is only within the revolutionary organization that one can really become a revolutionary militant.

e) Finally, the international bourgeoisie, which considers the Fourth International a real menace against the reign of Capital, has for that reason intensified its repression against our movement, and in this way place supplementary obstacles on the road of our growth.

To understand the obstacles mentioned above does not in any way imply considering as secondary the social obstacles that slow the building of a revolutionary, mass International: the weight of Capital and of its ideology, which continue to dominate bourgeois society; the weight of the Stalinist, Maoist, reformist apparatuses, basing themselves on enormous material resources. The enumeration of the previously mentioned factors restraining a more rapid growth of the Fourth International is above all done with the aim of underlining the factors the revolutionary Marxist forces can directly take in hand, the obstacles they themselves can help to eliminate.

17. Specific tasks of the Fourth International in the forthcoming period

The building of the Fourth International takes place through the building in different countries of sections and sympathizing organizations that educate cadres, intervene in the mass struggles, engage in combat for immediate demands, democratic demands, and transitional demands, as well as for the transitional program as a whole, and take the necessary initiatives in action that make them appear little by little as the nucleus of a new revolutionary leadership to replace the bureaucratized traditional leaderships in the workers movement. The building of the Fourth International is thus inseparably linked to the struggle to raise the level of consciousness of advanced layers of the proletariat and the poor peasants, to the struggle for the self-organization of the masses under the most varied forms, which correspond to the concrete stage that the class struggle has attained in each country in the present circumstances.

Beyond these normal tasks of the national organizations of the Fourth International, there are tasks that are specific to the World Party as such, that correspond to the ever more precise demands of the internationalization of the economy, of politics, of the class struggle, in the imperialist

epoch in general and in the present phase of this epoch in particular. Whatever may be the shortcoming that our movement shows in this regard, as a result of its obvious material weaknesses, it is the only one that is conscious of these needs, that generally formulates them, that educates its cadres, its militants, its sympathizers and the larger sectors of the vanguard and masses that it can influence, in this spirit, and that is beginning to resolve them, in a deliberate way, within the limits of its possibilities. Under present conditions, the specific tasks of the Fourth International are especially the following:

a) To carry out the campaign of international support for the Indochinese revolution, and for the other revolutionary struggles in progress in the world: the Palestinian revolution, the revolutionary movements in the Portuguese colonies, the Irish freedom struggle, the Chilean resistance, etc.

b) To develop movements of solidarity on a European scale, and if possible on a larger scale, with the strikes and workers struggles that either confront the multinational trusts or have an exemplary aspect such that they can accelerate the growth of proletarian class consciousness on an international scale (such as the struggle at LIP).

c) To develop a movement of international solidarity with the immigrant workers, as well as an international campaign against racism and xenophobia, the immigrant workers manifestly being the number 1 scapegoat whom the new fascist-like far-right in numerous countries in Europe and elsewhere is being formed.

d) To develop a movement of international solidarity, involving the entire workers movement, with the victims of repression directed against the revolutionaries of the imperialist and semicolonial countries, such as the campaigns that we have organized for the defense of Argentine political prisoners under the military dictatorship, and against the decree dissolving the Ligue Communiste.

e) To develop an international movement of solidarity with the victims of the repression that is directed against the political dissidents and the oppressed nationalities in the bureaucratized workers states.

f) To develop an international campaign against the attacks that are multiplying on the right to strike, on the freedom to set up strike pickets, on the total freedom of the trade unions to negotiate wages, against the incomes policy, state arbitration of wage conflicts, the growing integration of the unions into the bourgeois state, etc.

g) To expose on an international basis the new betrayals of revolutionary struggles by the Moscow bureaucracy (Cambodia, Iraq, Sudan, Sri Lanka, India, Palestine, Vietnam, etc.) and the Peking bureaucracy (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Iran, Spain, Vietnam, etc.).

h) To begin an international discussion, which can be public, of a draft of a complete program of the Fourth International, of which the transitional program is only a part, as Trotsky had clearly stated.

i) To develop the theoretical analysis of a series of phenomena that have been insufficiently examined in the course of the last years, such as the precise stage at which the state and society in Cuba are found, the reasons for the delay of the proletariat of the large factories in the United States in moving into massive action, the agrarian question in India and the response in terms of demands

and program that must be brought to bear on it, the development of a more specific transitional program for the bureaucratized workers states, the programmatic response to the global crisis of bourgeois society.

j) To develop press and publication instruments for

the leadership of the International, with the goal of making possible a more rapid flow of information and political elaboration for the benefit of the sections and the sectors of the vanguard they already influence.

September 1973

Let's Discuss Political Differences, Not Old Wives' Tales

IEC Majority Tendency's Reply to the Minority Faction Declaration

A new stage has been opened in the preparatory struggle prior to the Tenth World Congress (the fifth since Reunification): *The minority tendency has decided to transform itself into a faction.* Basically, it justifies this step by the existence of a "secret faction." This was supposedly revealed by the discovery of a letter from Comrade Barzman, a member of the SWP, which corroborated other facts from the past. This supposed "secret faction" intended, in the words of Comrade Barnes (SWP Discussion Bulletin No. 27, July 1973), "to settle accounts with the SWP," to change the leadership of this organization; moreover, it has allegedly hampered democratic preparation for the world congress. The declaration of the minority faction, "The New Situation in the Fourth International" [*International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 15, October 1973], is for the most part made up of accusations that stem, as we will show, from old wives' tales. They are being used to avoid debate on the political differences. We regret being obliged to devote too much space here to denouncing this gossip before clarifying the actual conditions under which the world congress is being prepared and before indicating the political differences that separate the majority and the minority. It is these differences that must be discussed and resolved by the world congress in order to determine the political line the Fourth International will follow in the period ahead.

The 'Barzman Letter'

In the SWP, two minority tendencies had been formed in the course of the discussion preparing for its August 1973 convention, tendencies that are, moreover, considering the possibility of unifying. In a general way, they openly asserted that they were in agreement, to a greater or lesser extent, with the positions of the International Executive Committee majority. Several comrades in these minority tendencies had asked to join the IEC Majority Tendency. The leadership of the SWP—as well as the United Secretariat—had been informed of the relations that were naturally established between these minorities and the international majority. There was nothing secret about it; meetings were held in the sight of and with the knowledge of everyone, in particular at the time of the LSA/LSO convention in Canada in April 1973. Comrade Delfin gave an account of his conversations with the different tendencies at a United Secretariat meeting. During a trip through Europe, Comrade Barzman, a member of one of the SWP minorities (Internationalist Tendency), met some militants from some of the sections, some of the leading members of the Majority Tendency. In a letter to his tendency comrades, he reported some gossip, some impressions, and also some proposals intended to insure

the integration of the SWP comrades into the majority tendency and to coordinate the majority's efforts during the preparatory discussion for the world congress. Comrade Barzman's letter contains some unfortunate statements. But this letter in no way permits one to talk about a "secret faction" or to attribute to anyone the aims denounced by Comrade Barnes.

In an international discussion within the *World Party* that we are, tendencies and factions are inevitably *international*. It is normal that their members discuss among themselves the documents they are presenting and their participation in debates. No comrade can be forced, in the name of discipline to the national organization, to take a certain position in the international debate. One cannot therefore accuse members of the SWP minority of having committed "disloyal acts," or an "anti-party" action by entering into a so-called "foreign alliance," as as they were accused on the floor of the SWP convention by the leaders of this organization. (See, in Appendix I, the statement by Comrade Livio Maitan to the SWP convention.) The SWP minority comrades have only claimed for themselves the same rights exercised by members of the SWP leadership when they participated in forming first an international tendency and then an international faction; these could only have been formed after holding preliminary discussions, which no one can characterize as a "secret faction."

A reading of Comrade Barzman's letter shows that far from constituting a "secret faction," the international majority had, on questions where it was not bound by documents, a freedom to hold differing opinions that certainly does not exist in a faction. It also shows that the SWP minorities were not the product of "foreign" scheming against the SWP. Thus, Comrade Barzman wrote: "They [the IEC majority] seem to consider the I. T. as a bonus from heaven that they did not work to create." In fact, Comrade Barzman's letter reveals only the normal exchange of opinions between comrades collaborating on the defense of their opinions in the international discussion. The SWP leadership's "discovery" of this letter and the commentaries this leadership made regarding it were in no way intended to educate the SWP membership; on the contrary, the commentaries sought to evoke, on the eve of the SWP convention, passionate, irrational reactions, a closing of the ranks around the leadership in the face of a threat that allegedly confronted the party, a threat created by an international "secret faction" that supposedly found unscrupulous people in the SWP who would agree to form an alliance with foreigners and engage in a plot against the leadership and the party. This amounts to creating a bogeyman and thus preventing the great majority of SWP members from studying the

political positions of the SWP minorities and the international majority.

We shall take brief note of the whole list of other accusations, where the supposed intentions of the international majority have been grafted onto a few facts that have not always been reported accurately, intentions that the minority faction gratuitously attributes to the international majority by virtue of "deduction," or "induction."

The United Secretariat's intervention at the last IMG convention was intended, according to the faction, to aid one group (Howard-Petersen) against the Jones group. With the exception of the tiny IMG minority faction, all the other members of the British section will find this accusation ridiculous. On the one hand, except for the "Tendency," all the groups asked the United Secretariat to state its position on the situation and the perspectives in Great Britain. On the other hand, these groups (apart from the "Tendency") adopted this document, after amendments and additions, as the basis for defining the general orientation of the section's work. Finally, the intervention of the United Secretariat representative at the convention (April 1973) helped in reaching a solution that insured a majority in the leadership to the strongest of the minorities, the Jones minority; at the same time, this intervention opened up the possibility for a debate on a clearer political basis.

Political support to a tendency, the faction asserts, meant laying the groundwork for a split in the Spanish organization. In reality, the split there was the result of an increasingly prolonged debate that paralyzed the LCR's capacity to intervene publicly in the ongoing mass struggles. If there was a scandalous administrative intervention, it was Comrade Camejo's proposal, without anyone's authorization, that the two tendencies be given parity in the Political Bureau. This proposal encouraged all the inclinations the Spanish supporters of the international minority have shown for continuing the debate forever and paralyzing public intervention, thus making a split inevitable.

In Canada, the crisis of the LSA/LSO is not the product of interventions by the majority (which has even abstained too long from giving its opinion), but from the brutal and inept measures taken by the Canadian leadership. They refuse membership to militants who have publically announced their support to the Fourth International and who have declared they are prepared to accept the discipline of the Canadian section. The political reason for this refusal is that these comrades are supporters of the majority line in the International.

In Australia, the SWL did not respond to the Communist League, which asked them two months before the visit of Comrade Tariq Ali to establish a parity committee to make the preparations for this visit, until after the visit. Comrade Tariq Ali nevertheless met with the Political Bureau of the SWL and spoke before groups of this organization, although he was *publicly* attacked at a big meeting in Sydney by the SWL (at the same time as by the Spartacists and the Socialist Labor League), which did not publically defend the positions taken by the last world congress on China and Latin America. Although Tariq Ali's visit make the International widely known in Australia, *Intercontinental Press* refused to publish a

report on the visit . . . so as not to give rise to objections on the part of the SWL. Such was not the case for the visit of Comrade Novack, who refrained from meeting with the comrades of the Communist League.

In so far as the "la Verdad" group, now the PST, is concerned, the SWP leadership has never stopped seeing sordid plots. They reproach Comrade Maitan for having written a letter—the Domingo letter—to another comrade (who published it on his own), where an opinion is expressed on the political evolution of Comrade Moreno over the years, an opinion that Comrade Maitan had previously formulated several times at meetings of the movement. Since when can comrades not correspond on political problems without being accused of carrying out "factional activity." Moreover, it is necessary to have a persecution mania to deduce from the contents of this letter the existence of a plot dating from the Reunification and aimed at the SWP.

We have already responded above to the accusations launched against the majority as a whole and the SWP minority comrades. We reaffirm here the right of every member of the International to have discussions with other members, verbally or in writing, without that being considered *ipso facto* as forming a "secret faction." Tendencies and factions do not come about through miracles; they are the result of a process that includes a previous exchange of opinions. It is in Stalinist organizations that conversations between comrades are condemned as "factional activity"; in these organizations the only faction is the highest leadership, where there is no minority (if one arises, it is expelled), and this faction is "legally" covered against such an accusation by virtue of the fact that it is the leadership.

Democracy in the International

The SWP leadership has continued to complain loudly about violations of democracy on the sole pretext that there have been some delays in the publication of discussion bulletins in French. The leaderships of every section—large or small—are acquainted with such delays and recognize that they are not the product of undemocratic intentions. Taking into account the actual delay in publishing the French bulletins, and also of the delay in writing some of the bulletins (of both the majority and the minority), the United Secretariat majority proposed at the April 1973 session that the date of the congress, set by the International Executive Committee for the summer of 1973, be postponed until the end of the year. By the time of the September 1973 United Secretariat meeting, the delay in the French-language publication of all the preparatory contributions for the Tenth World Congress had been overcome. The minority's main argument thus no longer holds. The minority has been able to exercise in the International all the democratic rights it could demand.

Having said that, we do not share the minority's point of view, which measures democracy by the number of bulletins, by the documents published, if not by the number of lines of type. We would go so far as to say that the avalanche of long documents is, to some extent, prejudicial to democracy. Some of them risk not being read, or being read too rapidly. In the small sections, only a part of

the documents will be translated. The two tendencies have, to a certain extent, prevented other points of view from being expressed. For us, democracy is not measured by the quantity of material produced, but by the possibility for the cells to be able to discuss in depth some documents submitted to a vote, some articles detailing the differences. Moreover, we cannot help but mention that this avalanche has also had the result, especially for the weaker sections, of requiring a considerable amount of time for insuring the translation, publication, and the enormous expenses — which, unfortunately, have been disproportionate in relation to expenditures made during the same period for external activities.

The SWP leadership that complains loudly about violations of democracy in the International has a completely different concept of democratic centralism once it is directly concerned. Since the Ninth World Congress it has continued to support a minority in the IMG (visibly linked to it in a factional manner since that time) and has found, on occasion, that the minority's representation is insufficient in the leadership bodies, although it has, with 6 percent of the votes, a member on the Political Bureau. But *the SWP leadership has refused any representation in its National Committee to minorities who constitute 9 percent of the membership of the SWP.*

We do not know of any section of the International that has taken such a serious measure, which contradicts the tradition and the spirit of the statutes of our movement. The SWP leadership says the discussion in the International is not democratic enough, and demands more time for this discussion. But at the same time it halts discussion in the SWP on the same questions, all the while knowing it cannot avoid reopening this discussion very soon in order to conform with the April 9 United Secretariat resolution (see Appendix II). Under the pretext that the discussion has not yet been formally opened in the Young Socialist Alliance (a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International) the SWP minority comrades who are also members of the YSA do not yet have the right to defend their own positions when debates are held on international questions.

A double standard — such is the actual practice of the SWP leadership. They permit themselves many things, but are scandalized if comrades of different tendencies do scarcely a tenth of what they allow themselves. The SWP leadership is thus permitted to publicly attack members or organizations of the International (whether it be an article by Tom Kerry against Tariq Ali in the *International Socialist Review*; or the public attack, concerning the Sallustro affair, against the Argentine PRT, which was at that time still a member of the International); but it will not tolerate, in so far as it is concerned, the slightest observation, even internal, on the part of another section or even of the international leadership. It protests the fact that the document on building the European sections has been published in the magazines of several sections, forgetting that this document had been adopted by the IEC as the basis for the activity of these sections and not only as a discussion document; but it is coming more and more to use its magazine essentially as a factional organ (Camejo's article against "Guevarism"; the article on Vietnam attacking Pierre Rousset's book, a book most of its readers are unfamiliar with; the pub-

lic polemic in the last *ISR* against the Vietnam resolution adopted by the November 1972 IEC Plenum, under the guise of a response to a letter from a reader).

Moreover, the minority that accuses the majority of having organized a "secret faction" has for a long time behaved in a more than cavalier manner in regard to the International, its functioning, and its statutes. Since December 1972, the representatives of the minority have stopped participating in the day-to-day United Secretariat Office, subordinating the interests of the International as a whole and of its public activity to the interests of their tendency or factional activity. Furthermore, the Moreno organization is "organizing" a group in Uruguay without ever going through the United Secretariat or even informing it of this organization's activities, an open violation of Article 32 in the statutes. Recently, the United Secretariat even learned accidentally of the close relations that apparently exist between the PST and a "sympathizing group" in Paraguay, a group whose existence the United Secretariat has never received any sign of.

Does the Faction Formed by the SWP Want the World Congress to Be Held?

The proposal by the faction formed by the SWP to again postpone the world congress, formulated at the United Secretariat meeting of September 1973, testifies to a total indifference to the functioning of the International in the way that its statutes require (statutes that were written by leaders of the SWP for the December 1965 world congress). We say *require*, because the statutes constitute the procedures that govern the way we function. In normal times, internal problems do not raise any serious statutory difficulties. On the other hand, in periods of internal tension there must be strict adherence to the statutes, if we do not want a situation in which everyone feels free to act as they please. The statutes provide for an interval of three years between world congresses.

Thus, according to the statutes, the world congress should have been held in 1972. The IEC Plenum at the end of 1971 recognized, however, that differences were appearing and that more time was needed for them to become clarified, and unanimously decided to postpone the congress to 1973. The discussion, without being formally opened, was begun. The December 1972 IEC Plenum formally convened the world congress and opened the discussion. At this plenum the minority proposed the end of 1973 as the date for the world congress. The majority adopted the summer of 1973 as the date, thus allowing eight months for discussion, although the statutes provide for only six months. In April 1973, as we have already said, the majority, recognizing the delays that had occurred, proposed that the United Secretariat move the congress back to the date previously proposed by the minority. The minority then opposed this date and proposed the spring of 1974. At the same time, the United Secretariat *unanimously* adopted a resolution (see Appendix II) that specified conditions that would have to be met for the world congress to be valid, specifically stating that these were independent of the date of the congress.

By common agreement, the date of the congress was

submitted to consultation by letter with the members of the IEC. They agreed, by a vote of 24-to-16 (19-to-13 counting only full members, and not the alternates), to the date proposed by the majority. At the September 1973 United Secretariat meeting, however, the minority no longer held to its proposal for spring 1974, *but asked that the congress be postponed indefinitely*. The minority thus deliberately ignored the vote by the members of the IEC, it in fact ignored the unanimous resolution adopted by the April 1973 United Secretariat meeting, and it ignored even its own previous proposals and seeks to impose, on the basis of nothing but its own wishes, an indefinite postponement. It is not the rights of a minority that are violated by this; it is the rights of the majority that are called into question.

This succession of demands for a postponement, with changing motivations, and the way the minority has ignored its own previous proposals, can mean only one thing: *the faction formed by the SWP leadership does not, at present, wish to see the world congress held.*

It does not want this congress held within a relatively short period of time because it knows that it will be in a minority and it does not intend to apply the decisions of this congress. It is this fact that creates a grave danger for the International.

The minority comrades have circulated the rumor that we would like to change the statutes to strengthen their "centralist" aspect. What is involved is not that but rather the *application* of the statutes, especially Articles 8 and 12, concerning the sections' obligations to apply the decisions of the world congresses. They declare that we wish to exclude them from the International. This is an absurd statement; the majority has absolutely no intention of taking administrative measures within the International.

To justify in advance this rejection of discipline, the minority is beginning to raise doubts as to the Trotskyism of our movement. How can one explain otherwise the last sentence of the resolution from the recent SWP convention, which calls for forming a faction "for a Trotskyist Fourth International"?

We are concerned about the danger of a split in the movement, say the documents of the international minority. In our opinion, these dangers can only be combated by strict adherence to the procedures of democratic centralism:

- scrupulous regard for democratic procedure in the preparatory period for the world congress;
- application by the minority of majority decisions made at the congress, and respect of the right of the majority to lead the day-to-day work of the movement.

Comrade Hansen's argument (which has been repeated several times since December 1972) that prolonging the discussion period would make a détente more likely and, thus, the unity of the International, has unfortunately not been confirmed by events. On the contrary, prolonging the debate well beyond the limit provided for by the statutes is now provoking a cumulative tension that is resulting in national splits. It is now necessary to pull the emergency cord on this dangerous process, reverse the engines, and open up a period of détente in which public activity and building the International will take precedence over internal debate.

We would like to clarify one point in order to avoid

all misunderstanding. We state that we will not take administrative measures regarding a section or a sympathizing organization. But we take note of the fact that the Canadian section has begun expulsion proceedings against comrades in the minority there who are accused of having publically defended the line of the Ninth World Congress on Bolivia, which is contrary to the line of the last Canadian convention. We therefore serve warning that we will not accept the expulsion of these comrades from the Fourth International for the sole crime of having adhered to its statutes. If comrades of the minority sink to such senseless measures, which clearly violate international democratic centralism, we will be obligated to propose appropriate measures to the Tenth World Congress so that those who are expelled remain members of the Fourth International, without affecting any statute of the Canadian section, or any other section.

World Party or an Alliance of Sections

The leadership of the SWP has denied having an inclination toward a federalist conception of the International, as Comrades Alain Krivine and Pierre Frank had criticized it for in their article "Again, and Always, the Question of the International" (*International Information Bulletin* reprint). In particular, they called attention to the following phrase from an article by Comrade Barnes, where it was solely a question of "collaboration" between leaderships of "real organizations"; it was not a question of the International as a world party based on democratic centralism, and it made rather short work of the small sections:

"The principal condition for international organization is international collaboration between leaderships developed out of the experience of real organizations fighting to build mass revolutionary Trotskyist parties in every country." (*International Socialist Review*, April 1971, p. 35.)

After first limiting themselves to a verbal defense, the SWP leadership then committed it to writing in an article by Hansen. (*International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 12, July 1973, "The Underlying Differences in Method.") But far from refuting the criticisms of Comrades Krivine and Frank, the article confirms and reinforces them. We quote Comrade Hansen at some length:

". . . prominent members of the IEC Majority Tendency have been contending that the SWP leadership has a "federalist" concept. . . .

"The general concept of a team of international leaders who could meet on a day-to-day basis has much to commend it. The opinion that such a team could constitute the international leadership of the Fourth International is nevertheless unrealistic, as I see it. The actual leadership, as it has existed since the founding of our movement, has been exercised by those engaged in battle on the national fronts; that is, the leadership of the sections, working in collaboration with the few comrades they have been able to maintain at an international center. Resources to achieve much more than that have not existed and still do not exist.

"Over the years, the SWP has favored recognizing this

reality. This is the source of the unfounded accusation that it has a "federalist" concept. . . .

"At the bottom of the differences that exist on this question are two concepts. . . . One concept is that of a central group living in one town that not only works on broad analyses, on drawing together the main lessons of experiences in various parts of the world, but on overseeing the sections, particularly the application of tactics laid down for entire continents.

"In fact, since there is more often agreement than disagreement on the broad analyses, those placed in charge of this or that continent, or group of countries, become "troubleshooters" on the application of tactical lines. They may be incapable of organizing or holding together so much as a branch or cell in their own countries; but they do not hesitate to get off a plane and throw the weight of the International Center into complex problems that the Comintern itself in the days of Lenin and Trotsky would have handled with the greatest caution and tact. One of the worst effects this can have is on the development of national leaderships.

"Against this concept is the view held by the SWP, among others, that as much as possible should be done to strengthen the center but that there should be no illusions about the limitations *under present circumstances*. The central team should concentrate on broad analyses, on assembling and circulating information, on taking up political questions within the framework of congress decisions. In relation to the sections, the efforts of the team—as part of the actual working leadership on an international scale—should be directed toward helping in the development of national leaderships. While no absolutes can be laid down, in general the central team should not try to "run" the international or intervene in the internal life of sections.

"Recognition of the current limitations faced by the Fourth International does not alter our adherence to the principle of democratic centralism. It means simply placing the emphasis on upholding the program of the Fourth International and its political decisions and eschewing organizational intervention and crackdowns in the sections. This was the way it was when Trotsky was alive." (pp. 42-43.)

Let's leave aside the malicious insinuations about the "troubleshooters" who travel by airplane; it is certainly not aimed at the leaders of the SWP, who undoubtedly never take planes. Let's also leave aside the distortions of the majority's proposals. The majority is not asking for the center to be strengthened so that it can intervene at random in the internal life of the sections. It counterposes to the minority's concept of a center that is above all an administrative and informational center, the concept of gathering a team of comrades capable of day-to-day *political elaboration* and political leadership of the International.

In the lines quoted above from Comrade Hansen, there is a sentence that rejects the accusation of federalism. But everything else—several paragraphs—defends such a concept without ambiguity. An international center? Yes, if it limits itself to the generalities on which everyone can agree. To concern itself with the sections, to assist them in their day-to-day activities? No, replies Hansen, we don't want to be subjected to "troubleshooters."

Finally, the article by Hansen cited above ends its exposition on the functioning of the International with the following sentences:

". . . both sides should do their utmost to advance projects and actions where collaboration is possible with a minimum of friction. Defense work, solidarity actions, common publication projects, are good examples." (p. 43.)

It is the same sentence from Barnes that we quoted above, except that it is explicit as what the collaboration between the leaderships could involve. It is the clearest possible expression of a federalist concept of the International. A political orientation adopted by a majority is out of the question; so too are elected leading bodies that conform to democratic centralism. What good would it serve to hold a world congress whose decisions would have the force of law for the entire International when one thinks that there must be "two sides," which get together around a minimum basis—some projects, some actions—avoiding frictions as much as possible. In Hansen's document, it is no longer even a federation of national organizations; it is a federation of tendencies or factions that he has in mind.

With this concept of the International in mind, one must call attention to a flagrant contradiction in the faction declaration. On the one hand, it states that its platform includes the general line of the article by Hansen that we have just quoted at some length. On the other hand, it says:

". . . we will do the utmost to construct a strong center. . . ."

Which of these two statements is the faction's real position: we will build a strong center, and, the resources for doing this are lacking? Actions always speak louder than words, and the actual practice leaves no doubt: the faction would be for a "strong center" if it were able to have a majority in it; it will not find the means for such a center in the event that it turns out to be a minority. If anyone has the slightest doubt about this, let's take a look at its translation into terms of resources, which have some importance in the capitalist world in which we have to keep our organization alive.

Through a narrow interpretation of the statutes that is contrary to the interpretation of most sections (a percentage of the sustainers of the national organizations, and not of its income), the comrades have up until now been content with devoting resources to their world activities that are not in accord with their considerable total resources. Basically, they do no more than cover their own activities in this plane.

In the document cited above, one reads, among other things, that resources for maintaining an international center do not exist. In the course of the discussion preparing for the SWP convention, Comrade Massey explained to the leadership the difficulties the minority had in insuring both its financial contributions and its tendency expenses; he received the following response from the leadership:

"The national office of the party does not 'bear the expenses' of any tendencies, factions, or other groups." (*SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 31, No. 27, "Letter From Jack Barnes to Bill Massey, p. 60.")

Now look at these lines from the resolution the SWP leadership put to a vote at that organization's recent convention:

"4. The convention proposes to the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency that in the light of the new developments it discuss converting itself from a tendency to a faction.

"5. The convention instructs and empowers the incoming National Committee to use all the forces and resources at its command to struggle for a democratic world congress and a Trotskyist Fourth International." [Motion adopted by the August 1973 SWP convention under the point on the world movement.]

No quibbling over the words will be able to change the real meaning of all these declarations: no resources for an effective international political center, no resources to enable a tendency to meet, but plenty of resources to the minority's faction struggle. As a matter of fact, there are many comrades in the International who, being aware of the amount of resources mobilized by leading members of the SWP for trips made for factional reasons, will think that the SWP convention vote only sanctioned the existing practice.

We suggest a rereading of point 4 above. To our knowledge, this is the first time a leadership has put to a convention vote, not a political document presented by a tendency or a faction, but a document that amounts to the adherence by a national organization to a faction or a tendency. This is a vote that has extremely serious implications, especially for members who are either opposed to this faction, or who, while voting for its political line, do not wish to be formally associated with the faction. We would hope that the authors of this resolution did not realize the seriousness of the vote they called for at the SWP convention.

The term "alliance" with which the SWP leadership reproaches the members of its minorities is in reality the perfectly appropriate term for characterizing the concept of the International set forth in Comrade Hansen's article. It is especially appropriate for characterizing the practice of the SWP since the Ninth World Congress. Since the time of that congress the SWP leadership, which was in a minority on some questions there, has, each time it thought it necessary, ignored the decisions of the congress and of the leading bodies elected by this congress, trying in these cases to obtain an on-the-spot compromise between the tendencies that began to emerge at the Ninth World Congress.

The SWP leadership realizes that it will again be in a minority at the next world congress — it has acknowledged this verbally several times in the statements of its observers during United Secretariat meetings. It knows that it will never be harassed because of its opinions, it knows that the majority does not have the slightest intention of applying its concept of the International in a rigid fashion, or of provoking splits by intervening bureaucratically. But the SWP leadership is unwilling to have a world congress acknowledge the Trotskyist concept of the International as the World Party. It hopes that through its pressure it can delay the world congress indefinitely, and thus continue to prolong, and even deepen, a situation in which the International is suffering considerable harm.

For more than two years, the members of the interna-

tional leadership have seen their external activity largely paralyzed; they have had to devote most of their time to internal struggles and to seeking compromise agreements; they have been unable to take positions on some political problems; they have scarcely been able to follow the activities of the sections. Such a situation is intolerable and cannot be prolonged without engendering grave danger for our entire movement. Many sections are complaining that the international leadership is no longer acting as a leadership should. This is why it is impossible to postpone the world congress indefinitely. On the contrary, holding it with the shortest possible delay will permit our movement to take a position on at least a few essential questions, and also to designate a leadership that will have the authority to lead the International. Only a world congress can put an end to the present dangerous and intolerable state of our movement, despite the extent that it has reached.

What Questions are Involved in the International Discussion?

Since the last world congress the SWP leadership, and now its faction, has tried several times to sidetrack the political debates in the International by putting great emphasis on alleged scandals caused by the conduct of leaders of the majority. The SWP leadership "discovered," one after another, a "Domingo letter," a "secret letter" to the PRT, the "Barzman letter," and many other things. In each case, according to their version, you have on one side the good SWP, the naive SWP, the democratic SWP, the honest SWP, and on the other side the maneuvering, crafty international leaders, dissembling their thoughts, cooking up plots, etc. On the one hand, you have an SWP leadership that is as spotless as the driven snow, supporters of democracy in the International; on the other hand, foreign leaders who for years and years have dreamed of nothing but deceiving the International and organizing plots and splits in the SWP. In their documents, the leaders of the SWP do not shrink from using the strongest epithets and the most extravagant accusations against the leaders of the International majority: they are supposedly the source of hypocrisy and cynicism, they are allegedly of doubtful integrity, etc. One can be certain that our common adversaries will not fail to become aware of these words and make use of it, not so much against the comrades personally but against our movement itself. This movement has nothing to do with gossip and scandalous accusations; it is political debate that is called for.

We have confidence in the members of the Fourth International, who are Marxist enough not to let themselves be misled by these scurrilous accusations, not to let themselves be taken in by "explanations" of the history of our movement that portray it as a struggle between the good guys and the bad guys, "explanations" on the basis of good and evil, like those priests use at First Communion ceremonies. Nor will they allow themselves to be taken in by diversionary tactics that try, through subterfuge, to avoid debates on the fundamental elements of the real questions in dispute. The differences in the

International concern the analysis of the world situation, the perspectives, the methods for building revolutionary parties, etc.

In the lines that follow, we are going to try to list the principal questions on which differences exist and to indicate where these differences essentially lie.

a. *The international situation and its perspectives.* The minority has yet to formulate its position on this question in a document, it will do so sometime in October. From reading the SWP press and from a recent report by Comrade Barnes, it seems that the differences flow from the following: the political line of the majority emphasizes the revolutionary rise that is at present under way that expresses the deepening of the crisis of imperialism and of bureaucratic power, a rise that only profound defeats (of the European or Japanese proletariats, in Vietnam and Argentina) can crush. The minority declares, on the contrary, that the "détente" resulting from Nixon's trips to Peking and Moscow constitutes a fundamental turn in the world situation, the most important since the "cold war." Great differences as to the political line our movement must follow cannot fail to flow from these two different starting points. We are obviously ready to make adjustments if the minority changes its views on this point; but that would surprise us, because they have pushed ahead, though with some confusion, in this direction since the beginning of the year.

b. *The orientation in Latin America.* The differences are not, as the minority claims, bound up in the dilemma: guerrilla warfare (urban or rural) or party building. The differences lie first in the analysis of the situation, then in the question of whether this situation—considering the profound structural crisis in Latin America—can develop gradually without leading to an unavoidable confrontation after a "democratic" period of relatively short duration. If it cannot, the task is to prepare the masses and the vanguards for armed confrontations. In our opinion, the entire debate is condensed in the following lines from a report Comrade Barnes gave April 26 to the SWP National Committee:

"In Chile and Argentina we now see the unfolding of an offensive by the workers and their allies likely to provide them with a *period* of relatively favorable conditions to carry on the class struggle—a class struggle more and more directed toward a fundamental break with the bourgeoisie. As a by-product of this revolutionary class struggle, they can win significant concessions from the ruling classes, including greater democratic rights on the political arena." (*SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 31, No. 12, June 1973, "The Unfolding New World Situation," p. 11. Emphasis added.)

This was said about four months before the coup d'état in Chile! Three weeks before the coup d'état in Uruguay, *Avanzada Socialista*, Moreno's paper, explained with all seriousness that there would not be a coup d'état, given the rise of the mass movement! The failure to comprehend the following—that in Latin America, perhaps more so than in any other continent, any threat to bourgeois order would have to bring about, not "greater democratic rights," but a confrontation with the armed forces—led to an emphasis on electoral activities in place of calling on the masses to be vigilant and to take up arms. Here is where

the real differences on Latin America lie.

c. *Stalinism.* On the question of Vietnam, the minority tends to see the signing of the accords as a serious defeat for the Vietnamese revolution, whereas the majority sees it as a situation that, while not without danger, is at the outset more favorable to the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

However, the discussion on Vietnam and China has raised fundamental problems that are even more important than the differences on the conjuncture. The different positions on conjunctural matters may eventually be rectified by one side or the other as a function of the flow of events. On the other hand, we consider the differences on the fundamental problems as being very serious, because articles by certain minority comrades constitute the beginning of a revision of revolutionary Marxism on this matter. According to them, Stalinism is allegedly petty-bourgeois in nature, any bureaucracy of a workers state, any leadership of a workers state that comes out of a Communist Party would be petty bourgeois and Stalinist. From this it follows that petty-bourgeois parties (among others, the one in China) would be able to overthrow the capitalist regime and begin a process of permanent revolution. The majority rejects this obvious revision of the theory of permanent revolution. It believes that a CP (like those in China, Yugoslavia, and Vietnam) cannot lead a victorious revolution except by yielding to the pressure of the masses and making a *de facto* break with the Kremlin's interests; it remains a bureaucratized workers party, but it is no longer a Stalinist party. For the majority Stalinism is, as Trotsky explained, a unique historical phenomenon flowing from the bureaucratic degeneration of the first workers state in its long isolation; it is not a universal phenomenon.

c. *The national question.* The discussion on the Mideast and about different movements of national liberation has shown that the SWP leadership identifies a *national liberation movement* (which we support against imperialism and its agents) with *nationalism*, which is a bourgeois or petty-bourgeois ideology that we fight, including in colonial and semicolonial countries. The differences on this question stem from the minority's concept that a "consistent" defense of democratic slogans leads to socialist revolution. To be a "consistent" nationalist, say the members of the minority, is to enter the road toward socialism. The majority totally rejects this concept. There is no continuity between bourgeois or petty-bourgeois democracy and socialism. This difference goes back to the different understanding we have of the permanent revolution and of the direct relationship between the solution to fundamental social questions and "national independence."

d. *Women's liberation.* In the name of the same concept of the relationship between democratic slogans (which it is necessary to defend) and socialism, the minority comrades have maintained that "consistent" feminism leads to socialism. In practice, this has led the SWP to participate in the women's movement without introducing class differences. The majority rejects such concepts: our men and women comrades cannot align themselves with the slogans of the feminist movements; they must defend the

demands of women but also raise the problems of the class struggle for socialism.

e. *Building revolutionary parties and mass work.* We draw special attention to the differences that were clearly expressed in the discussion on the European document. According to the minority, to build revolutionary parties, Trotskyists must combine mass work—carried out in the mass movements, in the name of these movements and at their level—with general socialist propaganda. Furthermore, this has been the practice of the SWP in the past years, pushing "single issue movements," and getting out general socialist propaganda in its press. And *The Militant* has usually remained, insofar as the question of the Vietnam war is concerned, on the level of the antiwar movement, rarely pointing out that the Vietnamese are defending a socialist revolution. The majority is obviously in agreement on the necessity of working in mass organizations, of creating when necessary, more or less broadly based organizations (e.g., the FSI [Front Solidarité Indochine—Indochina Solidarity Front] in France). But the majority believes it is necessary for the Trotskyist organizations to intervene in the struggles with its own slogans. To be content with general propaganda and to remain on the level of the mass organizations is to have a mechanical view of the relationship between the masses, the mass organizations, and the revolutionary party. The "level" of the mass organizations is an arbitrary choice; the masses or a part of them can at times be behind the mass movements and at other times ahead of them. The SWP's concept on this question opens the door to opportunist dangers, on the part of centrist politicians as much as within our very movement, by adapting to these movements. The minority's position on this question is a retreat in relation to the orientation defined at the Ninth World Congress which, taking the world situation into account, implied that our organizations would go beyond essentially propagandistic formations (as we were compelled to be in the past) and become formations that intervene in struggles with a view toward exercising, if possible, even if on a small scale, a leading role.

By retreating from this turn and by reducing the role of our sections, as such, to a propaganda role, the minority actually denies them the right to take any action on their own, including, of course, any action of minority violence. It is only through propaganda that it claims to educate the masses on the question of the use of violence.

Finally, by limiting the role of our sections to propaganda, the minority closes the door to any understanding of the broad vanguards that have appeared in the last few years and, as a consequence, does not understand the necessity of winning political hegemony in this broad vanguard through unceasing political battle on the problems of the day and through our capacity for initiative. This political hegemony must permit us to intervene with this broad vanguard in order to, on the one hand, modify the relationship between the rank and file and the leaderships of the traditional organizations, and on the other hand, modify as well the relationship between the revolutionary Marxists and the reformist and bureaucratic leaderships.

f. *The nature of the International.* The differences on

this question have been set forth above, quite fully.

It is the totality of these differences that leads us to characterize the minority as rightist, as was stated in the document "In Defence of Leninism: in Defence of the Fourth International." We repeat: it is these differences, which really exist, that explain the tensions in the International; it is these differences that must be discussed. There are already enough documents to allow for a full and fruitful discussion.

Toward the Next World Congress

At its September meeting, the United Secretariat set, by majority vote, the date for the Congress, and it unanimously decided that the congress would only vote on a limited number of questions (see Appendix II).

It goes without saying that the majority tendency rejects the minority's grotesque proposal that the majority transform itself into a faction. We have never dreamed of forming a faction. *We are and we remain a tendency.* We are a tendency that refuses to recruit widely, that recruits, with a view toward the world congress, members of the leading bodies of the sections, except in those organizations where the comrades of our tendency have not received the representation due to them in conformity with the principles of democratic centralism. We are a tendency because we do not forget for a moment that we, as the majority, have the principal responsibility for the activity of our organizations, for their internal life as much as for their external activities. We are a tendency based on the documents presented collectively; comrades can present, under their own responsibility, documents pertaining to the political line of their respective sections, without engaging the international tendency as a whole.

There can be no doubt but that the overwhelming majority of the organizations will be present at the world congress on the date previously set by the United Secretariat. The minority faction that called for postponing the congress cannot do otherwise than be there itself to make its positions known during the debates. We are certain that, without reducing their external activities appreciably, the sections will immediately take the necessary measures to insure that the preparatory discussion moves along well and that they have their best representation at the congress. However great the differences may be, it is not true that the unity of the International is necessarily in danger. Both the majority and the minority assert that they wish to maintain this unity, whose destruction would serve no one's interests. The political discussion will help clarify the differences. It will be an opportunity to raise the political level of a great number of new members and it will insure the reinforcement of the political homogeneity of our sections. At the conclusion of this discussion, the world congress will have—we think it is useful to repeat this—the necessary authority to define a political line and elect the bodies that will be responsible for leading our international movement on the basis of this political line. By acting in this way, we will give ourselves and the entire international workers movement a practical lesson in democratic centralism. On the basis of this world congress, the Fourth Inter-

national will strengthen and add to the progress it has made since the preceding congress. It will intervene more frequently and more vigorously in struggles to lead the world socialist revolution to victory.

Forward to the coming world congress!
Long live the Fourth International!

The Majority Tendency of the
International Executive Committee

Appendix I: Statement of Comrade Livio Maitan to the August 1973 SWP Convention

I did not want to intervene on organizational questions and even less on nominations. However, after the report by the nomination committee I am compelled to make a brief statement.

We consider the decision to reject any representation of a minority as alien to the traditions and the rules of the Fourth International. Two examples are well known to you: the British section assured adequate representation to a minority even smaller than the Internationalist Tendency. The Canadian section adopted the same rule.

Do you consider that the SWP is a special party?

Last point: the terminology used by the reporter who spoke in terms of anti-party elements is quite alien to the Trotskyist movement and actually it is in the tradition of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Appendix II: Motion Adopted by the United Secretariat (April 9, 1973)

In view of the backlog of translations still to be done of documents submitted to the preparatory discussion for the next world congress and the number of documents already announced for presentation in the coming weeks, it appears unlikely that these can be placed in the hands of the rank and file before the conferences of the sections are held to choose delegates for the next world congress.

To overcome this difficulty and thus help assure a fully democratic discussion and election of world congress delegates, the United Secretariat therefore unanimously recommends to the membership of the I.E.C. postponement of the world congress. In accordance with the new date it also recommends that the final date for submission of material be set approximately three months in advance of the world congress. The United Secretariat is not bound to translate and publish material submitted after that date.

All national pre-world congress conferences should be re-scheduled to be held as close to the world congress as practical, but not earlier than 6 weeks before the congress. Some comrades have expressed fear that the delay in translating documents might be part of a process that would bring into question the autoritativeness of the next world congress.

The United Secretariat is of the unanimous opinion that fulfillment of the following conditions, *regardless of the date of the congress*, will assure recognition of the statutory authority of the decisions of the next world congress by all sections, sympathizing groups, and international tendencies of the Fourth International. [Emphasis added.]

1. A fully democratic preparatory world discussion.
2. Translation and circulation at least into English, French and Spanish of all documents submitted before the final deadline.
3. The democratic election of delegates to the world congress.
4. Democratic conduct of the congress.

Appendix III: A New Proof of Obstruction

At the September 1973 meeting of the United Secretariat, the representatives of the United Secretariat minority revealed in a striking manner the obstructionist attitude they have in regard to the world congress.

1. They once again heavily stress the supposed delay in the publication of documents for the discussion. They constantly add increasingly senseless demands upon the international leadership, while at the same time restricting more and more the leadership's financial resources. First, it was a matter of publishing the discussion documents in English and French. Then in English, French, and Spanish. Now, it would seem to be a matter of publishing them in English, French, Spanish, and German! Why not in Japanese, Chinese, Swedish, and Arabic as well? The aim is clear: to avoid having the world congress held, and if it is held nonetheless, to avoid having its decisions recognized.

At the same time that the minority is complaining about the delay in the publication of documents and is asserting that this delay makes it impossible for the world congress to be held on the date set by the IEC majority, it proposes *a new postponement for the document deadline*. No matter that at the September 1973 United Secretariat meeting 40 new contributions were submitted. We can estimate that if the document deadline is pushed back to December, we will find ourselves confronted with 80 new contributions. That would lead to the assertion that "the translations would not be ready in time," then a new demand for a postponement of the congress, thus more time for submitting documents, etc. One cannot help but state that obstruction is the goal of all these maneuvers.

2. The list of "documents not available in French" added by the minority to its motion presented at the September 1973 United Secretariat meeting reveals the same obstructionist attitude. According to the statutes, the discussion period is opened by the International Executive Committee. The United Secretariat had decided by common agreement to establish a list of preparatory documents for the congress. We vigorously reaffirm that *all the documents submitted for the preparatory discussion for the Tenth World Congress by decision of the United Secretariat, and which arrived at the United Secretariat Office by September 1, were translated, printed, and sent out by September 15. There is therefore no longer any delay whatsoever in French-language translation and publication.*

To assert the contrary, the minority uses three subterfuges:

- (a) it draws up a list of documents that arrived after September 1;
- (b) it includes on its list a document that had already been printed by September 1;
- (c) it includes on its list 15 documents *that had all been published in French in 1969-70* (with the exception

of a summary of the proceedings of the Ninth World Congress and of a polemical exchange between the United Secretariat and the IKD [Internationalist Communists of Germany], which had nothing to do with the preparatory discussion for the world congress), and demands that they be *reprinted!* Some of these documents had been printed in runs of 6,000. The minimum run had been 2,000. Never has anyone included in the preparatory documents for a world congress the documents of the previous congress, under the pretext that the same question had been debated there. Furthermore, the minority comrades had never made the demand formally, undoubtedly because they would have been embarrassed to state that 150 documents were not enough. . . .

Let's leave this game of obstruction aside to those who are amused by it. We are certain that the members of the Fourth International will consider a discussion based on 150 documents from 24 countries to be democratic.

3. The minority claims that the draft of the majority resolution comes too late to permit a wide international discussion. Let us point out in this regard that:

(a) Comrade Barnes announced April 26 to the SWP National Committee that the international minority was preparing a political resolution, a resolution we have not yet seen.

(b) A political resolution, unlike theses, must be written as late as possible to avoid having it lose its conjunctural character by the time it is distributed publically (generally a few months after it is written). To do otherwise would be to subordinate the interests of the International to factional considerations.

(c) Nothing can stop a tendency, a group of delegates, or even a delegate, from submitting a resolution to the congress. Any other procedure would block the democratic

process of debate *until the congress has taken its vote*, would tend to freeze the debate in its initial phases, and would strike a blow at the sovereignty of the world congress, which is total.

Appendix IV: Second List of IEC Majority Tendency Members

(The first list appeared in *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 4, April 1973, p. 52.)

Luis (Argentina), Fernandez (Argentina), John MacCarthy (Australia), Fideel (Belgium), Levi (Belgium), Ugo (Belgium), Ribeira (Brazil), João (Brazil), Clelia (France), Jebracq (France), Lourson (France), Ludo (France), Michaloux (France), Radot (France), Roger (France), Tisserand (France), Jan (France), Rops (France), Toussaint (France), Verla (France), Franz (Germany), Petra (Germany), Winnie (Germany), Boyd (Great Britain), Clynes (Great Britain), Harney (Great Britain), Jones (Great Britain), King (Great Britain), Klein (Great Britain), Smith (Great Britain), Tettadoro (Great Britain), Giri (India), Ram (India), Sami (Iraq), Micha (Israel), Arie (Israel), Elie (Israel), Mikado (Israel), Nabil (Israel), Jaber (Lebanon), Cristofel (Netherlands), Gerard (Netherlands), Celso (Spain), Esquerro (Spain), Martínez (Spain), Simon (Spain), Santiago (Spain), Luis (Spain), Stenenson (Sweden), Bloom (Sweden), Lucifer (Sweden), Lundberg (Sweden), Antonio (Sweden), David (Sweden), Lune (Sweden), Konrad (Sweden), Stefan (Switzerland), Karl (Switzerland), Albertine (Switzerland), Barzman (United States), Hedda Garza (United States), Massey (United States), Shaffer (United States), Don Smith (United States).

On the Question of Armed Struggle in Latin America

Submitted by the IEC Majority Tendency

1. For a series of reasons that were spelled out in the resolution on Latin America at the Ninth World Congress and that are peculiar to that continent at this stage, any turbulent rise of the mass movement must soon confront a resolute attempt by the army to crush it and to establish a military dictatorship. The experience since 1969 has completely confirmed the correctness of this analysis, in Uruguay and Chile as well as in Bolivia.

Given the experience of the Cuban revolution, the numerical and social strengthening of the proletariat and the decline in the control of the traditional leaderships over the most combative layers, the bourgeoisie and the various petty-bourgeois formations succeed less and less frequently in diverting the explosive mass movements. They no longer dispose of sufficient economic resources to be able to eliminate the most basic causes of the masses' explosive discontent, or to be able to noticeably and permanently improve their material conditions. But the bourgeoisie still has at its command sufficient political and military resources to be able to confront the rise of the masses through the resolute intervention of its principal instrument, the "army-party." That is the objective and specific reason for the increase in the number of bloody confrontations between the Latin-American proletariat and armed reaction.

This does not mean that the bourgeoisie is unable to concede any economic or political (democratic) reforms to the masses, nor that a bloody dictatorship is the only form of government it can presently opt for on this continent. When the mass movement is still at a relatively low point, the bourgeoisie can permit itself the luxury of certain reforms without fearing a rapid and explosive escalation of demands (military "reformism" in Peru for five years, the present situation in Venezuela). When the mass movement begins to raise its head under a dictatorship, the ruling classes can opt for a regime enjoying a certain popular base to a regime of "gorillas," in order to be able to divert the upsurge for a certain period, to avoid its generalization, and to slow its transformation into a revolutionary situation (change from the Barrientos dictatorship to Ovando's, then to the Torres regime in Bolivia; the change from Onganía to Lanusse and to the return of Perón in Argentina). But the key element in all these maneuvers always remains the degree of control they hold over the mass movement. When the latter begins to escape all control, the explosiveness of social contradictions and the rapid polarization of social and political forces in Latin America leave the bourgeoisie no other choice but to attempt to crush the proletariat by brute force. In the conditions of such an upsurge in the mass movement, there is no possibility for a "constitutional," bourgeois-democratic regime of any significant duration.

This is the essential lesson of the unfolding of the class struggle in Latin America since the Ninth World Congress, confirming the fundamental projection of the resolution of that congress on Latin America. Any strategy and any

tactic of the revolutionary Marxists that does not start from this essential reality, that avoids giving a clear reply to this question, or that tries eclectically to advocate some contradictory variants, will prevent the vanguard from playing its essential role in such a phase: to prepare the masses, their organizations, and the vanguard itself for the inevitable confrontation, once a certain threshold of mobilization has been crossed.

2. The strategy of armed struggle in Latin America, for which the Ninth World Congress declared, expresses the clear consciousness of this correlation of social and political forces in all countries of the continent where a powerful rise of the mass movement is taking place. It signifies above all the duty of revolutionary Marxists:

(a) to continually warn the masses against any illusion that they can escape armed confrontation by extending their democratic or economic struggles. It is precisely the stepping up of the mobilization that makes armed confrontation inevitable in the short run, in the present social, economic and political conditions in Latin America.

(b) to untiringly popularize the necessity for the general arming of the workers and poor peasants in self-defense bodies that become workers, peasants, and popular militias. "Arm the proletariat and its allies with the desire to arm themselves" becomes the number-one propaganda task when reaction's coup d'état proves probable if not inevitable in the near future.

Nor is any strategy for the conquest of power possible if the working masses are not also convinced of the necessity for armed struggle, and have not already passed through the necessary experiences and skirmishes in this respect. When the prerevolutionary situation approaches a revolutionary situation, when the sharpening of class contradictions draws near to its culminating point, the incapacity of the proletariat and its vanguard to adopt a concrete orientation for seizing power, based on the arming of the masses, implies the inevitability of a bloody and momentarily triumphant initiative of the Latin American counterrevolution. For considerations of defense as well as offense, the refusal to place the question of arming the masses at the center of political attention thus means, under these circumstances, taking a course toward certain defeat.

(c) to reject any spontanéist illusion that expects the workers to be armed through a sudden, unforeseen, and spontaneous outburst from the rank and file and postpones the political and practical preparations for arming the masses until other supposedly primary tasks have been accomplished (that is, until the eve of a mythical "insurrection," which will never occur under these conditions).

(d) not to remain content with general and abstract propaganda in this area, but to undertake initial pilot-projects, to enter into initial actions that are carefully calculated for the effect they can have in increasing the combativity of the masses and their will and capacity

for arming themselves. The revolutionary Marxist organization must take this road as soon as it has crossed a minimum threshold of cadre accumulation that allows it to anticipate creating armed detachments of the party without the functioning of these detachments undermining the party's accomplishment of its tasks in the realm of penetrating the working class, doing trade-union work, carrying out propaganda and agitation, and continuing the consolidation and strengthening of the organization as such.

In this sense, the formation of armed detachments of the party is an aspect of an overall strategy of armed struggle. In this phase of turbulent rise of the mass movement, formation of these detachments must fill the precise function of preparing, facilitating, propelling, and accelerating the arming of broader and broader vanguard of the workers and peasants; that is, its function is to promote the creation of workers, peasants, and popular militias.

3. When the intensification of the class struggle has resulted in a temporary victory of the military dictatorship, and when experience has demonstrated to the masses that effective struggle against this dictatorship by trade-union, semilegal, routine methods is completely insufficient, it is perfectly legitimate to prolong the resistance against the threat posed by the dictatorship through armed resistance in the form of guerrilla struggle. This is what happened after the establishment of the Batista dictatorship in Cuba, after the establishment of the Barrientos dictatorship in Bolivia, after the military coup in Brazil. This is what is happening again today in Chile.

A guerrilla struggle of this sort is, however, only effective under the following conditions:

a) that the masses understand its necessity as a result of their experience, that it is to some degree a result of that experience; and that it thereby receives growing support, first political, then material, from the masses;

b) that the period of confrontation between limited groups of partisans and the counterrevolutionary army is not continued too long. That means that guerrilla war as a tactic is successful if it becomes progressively transformed into civil war on a broader scale, as in Cuba; or if it fuses with a new rise of the masses resulting from the stimulating effects guerrilla war has had on them and the concessions that the ruling classes are compelled to make to avoid such a civil war in the immediate period (this is roughly what happened in Argentina in recent years).

Unless a revolutionary Marxist organization is present—an organization capable of judging correctly the evolution of the objective situation and the mood of the masses, and of subordinating the use of a particular form of struggle to the overall interests of the proletariat and the revolution—there is a very real danger that the guerrilla struggle (which, strictly speaking, is only a particular and episodic form of armed struggle) will be transformed into a fetish to which all other forms of struggle of the proletariat and its vanguard are subordinated, if not sacrificed. The defeat of guerrilla groups that reject the principal teachings of Leninism in this regard translates this potential danger into reality.

The Fourth International firmly rejects the illusion, and the foquista, Debrayist concept long encouraged by the Cuban leadership, that the action of limited nuclei, deter-

mined to take military initiatives, can represent a motor force of the revolutionary struggle and replace not only the action of the Leninist party but the mobilization and organization of the broad masses, which in the last analysis are considered auxiliary elements.

It is important not to confuse the initiatives of limited armed groups that are prolonging the resistance of the masses against the dictatorship, with a generalized civil war (or war of national liberation) of the Vietnamese type, a war resulting from a revolutionary upsurge under the leadership of a party that has won hegemony within the mass movement. A similar situation could occur in Latin America when the revolution, having triumphed in one country, is confronted by a military intervention with superior resources at its disposal, from U.S. imperialism or one of its Latin American "stand-ins" (in particular the Brazilian army). It would then involve the international, even continental extension of the civil war that had been initially victorious in one country. But in any event, such a situation presupposes what is still far from being achieved in any Latin American country: the existence of a revolutionary leadership already enjoying broad support from the masses, and thereby capable of engaging in large-scale and organized armed resistance against the "national" and international counterrevolutionaries.

4. The Fourth International defends the strategy of armed struggle within the framework of its overall programmatic approach toward problems of strategy and tactics that are posed by the rise of the revolutionary process in a whole series of Latin American countries.

The strategy of armed struggle is combined with the struggle for the Transitional Program as a whole to the extent that the necessary mobilization of the masses for the program's national-democratic and working-class demands itself leads increasingly to violent confrontation with the counterrevolutionary army, that is, to the question of the arming of the masses and to political and organizational preparation for this.

The strategy of armed struggle is part of the general strategy of the permanent revolution in these countries. None of the fundamental problems of Latin American society and its underdevelopment can be resolved without the conquest of power by the proletariat allied with the poor peasantry. Without a systematic preparation of the proletariat for the arming of the masses, any plan of struggle for power directed against the "army-party" of the Latin American bourgeoisie is irresponsible and becomes a deadly trap.

The strategy of armed struggle is part of the central effort of the Fourth International to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership through building new mass revolutionary parties. Unless it provides a concrete answer to the problems posed by the rise of revolutionary struggles, such a party cannot be built. One of the most burning questions raised in the very course of the class struggle in Latin America is what to do, given the succession of military coups, and the repeated crushing of the most promising mass movements in one country after another, what to do given the total failure of "foquismo."

When they possess the minimum forces necessary to do so, the revolutionary Marxist organizations must consider the creation of armed detachments of the party—in the conditions elaborated above—as a special task within

the framework of their overall orientation. In any case the experience of the Argentine PRT [Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores—Revolutionary Workers Party] has demonstrated that whatever political and organizational errors were committed, the revolutionaries who had been satisfied with literary and academic proclamations in this regard when they were in the Moreno organization were able to take a necessary and salutary turn toward the creation of armed detachments of the party, and were able to influence the course of political events in their country.

The theory that the preparation and launching of armed struggle must be subordinated to the development of propaganda within the bourgeois army, which will allegedly create the political preconditions for armed struggle, has been disproven by the events in Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Chile. These experiences confirm that this theory involves a misunderstanding of the uneven pace of the maturing of revolutionary consciousness among the vanguard workers and peasants on one hand, and within the army on the other, as well as a lack of understanding of the prevailing political, organizational, and psychological difficulties that mark the outbreak of widespread mutinies within the bourgeois armed forces. If important self-defense forces of the masses capable of welcoming and protecting the rebel soldiers do not exist at that moment, the first significant incidents of indiscipline within the army will be put down with particular savageness and may even be the signal for a coup by the extreme right. The bourgeoisie understands that it cannot, under any circumstances, tolerate the disintegration of the last effective political instrument it possesses. The necessary propaganda in the army must be matched by the strengthening of the armed detachments of the party and growing successes in the formation of armed detachments of the proletariat and the poor peasantry.

In another respect, the case of the majority of the Argentine PRT has also demonstrated the danger of militarist deviations when the turn toward the formation of armed detachments of the party has been carried out successfully. These deviations consist of neglecting tasks that are indispensable under these circumstances, the tasks of political agitation and propaganda, systematic evaluation of the

class consciousness of the workers, struggle against the influence of reformist, class-collaborationist, or confused petty-bourgeois nationalist ideologies, as well as the tasks of patient, systematic work in the plants in order to constantly extend the party's roots in the class. Never assign absolute priority to one aspect of revolutionary activity, but integrate it into an overall strategy of preparing the masses for the formation of organs of dual power and the revolutionary conquest of power: this is the concept of the Fourth International with respect to the creation of armed detachments of the party in the specific conditions where this is shown to be necessary and possible, as in certain countries in Latin America today.

5. The resolution of the Ninth World Congress committed errors of analysis and perspectives, especially in underestimating the possibility that the reactionary forces could crush the mass movement for a long period (Brazil) or could keep it up for a fairly long time at a controllable level (Peru). When defining the specific forms of the armed struggle, the resolution used some elliptical, one-sided, and simplistic formulations that telescoped several successive phases of this struggle and underestimated the possibility and the necessity of advancing from limited armed detachments to the arming of the worker and peasant masses as the rise of the mass movement reached a certain level. It minimized the crisis of the Castroist current incorporated in the OLAS [Organización Latinoamericana de Solidaridad—Organization of Latin American Solidarity], a crisis that was nonetheless already manifest in 1968-69.

All these errors opened the door to sometimes sterile polemics. A current in the International still refuses to draw the necessary lessons from all the costly defeats of the mass movement, disarmed or taken by surprise by the initiatives of the army in Latin America. This current was able to concentrate its fire on false targets, to blur the essential content of the debate, with negative consequences not only for the internal life of the International but above all for the political and organizational arming of the sections in Latin America. In other words, in light of the successive experiences of Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Chile, it is high time to bring the discussion back to the real questions and alternatives. Such is the aim of the present statement.

Two Corrections

The following note was received from Comrade Mintoff: In the translation of the Mintoff/Sonja declaration "Why We Have Joined the International Majority Tendency" (*International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. X, No. 11) I found a few translation errors and/or omissions which I would ask you to correct in order to avoid possible misunderstandings.

Page 9, you translate ". . . that involve more than practical matters," whereas in the German original it reads ". . . Meinungsverschiedenheiten, die mehr als nur *pragmatischen* Charakters sind." So it's "pragmatic," not "practical."

Also it should say "authors of the European document," not "author."

Page 10, your translation reads: ". . . including rural guerrilla warfare," while the literal translation from German is: ". . . including *also, under certain conditions*, rural guerrilla warfare."

* * *

Two paragraphs are incorrectly placed on p. 10 of "The Red University Strategy vs. the 'Irreversible Turn'" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 19). The paragraphs beginning "The Communist League Political Bureau's . . ." and "Does the Greek student struggle . . .", incorrectly printed under "D. Right to an education," should be read as the last two paragraphs under the previous subheading, "Greece."