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### THE CHINESE EXPERIENCE WITH PABLOITE REVISIONISM AND BURFAUCRATISM

(A Letter to James P. Cannon)

By S. T. Peng

". . . But the extremely unfortunate thing is that the IS has been entirely controlled and usurped by Pablo who utilizes this 'legal apparatus' to arrogantly proceed with the organizing of his conspiracy by arbitrarily excluding his opponents from the IS and secretly setting up his own clique or faction with the aim of seizing the leadership of a section or splitting the organization. This has rendered impossible any normal discussion according to the principle of democratic centralism, and thus obliged the SWP, led by Cannon, to adopt this exceptional action of today, to publish the Open Letter demanding the expulsion of Pablo and his agents from the International's leading organ. This is really unprecedented in the history of our international movement, and is an action of revolutionary nature. This action has become necessary not only to crush Pablo's attempt at usurpation, but also to gain time in which to rescue the movement, and to reorganize and coordinate it in time to confront the approaching new world war and revolution. If the mobilization of this struggle should be prolonged until the explosion of the Third World War, it would be too late." -- S. T. Peng.

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Dear Comrade Cannon,

Quite early this year I intended to write to you about the events and things which I have experienced and observed in person since my participation in the IS, and about the serious bureaucratic organizational tendency and revisionist political tendency represented by Pablo which, I was afraid, would eventually bring a crisis in our International. But out of "prudence" (this was also what Manuel advised me at that time) this letter was continuously postponed. Now the crisis has actually exploded with ferocity. I am therefore obliged to write this already retarded letter.

The reason for my writing to you is not only because you are the founder and leader of the SWP, the leading section of the world Trotskyist movement, but also because you closely collaborated with Trotsky in completing the Transitional Program and in founding our International, and led several victorious struggles over a long period of time against opportunism, sectarianism and revisionism. No less important is the fact that you fought through the whole epoch of the Comintern, in its ascendancy under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky and in the subsequent period of initial degeneration under the control of Stalin, and have thus obtained rich and profound experiences, which have since become a part of the most precious lessons in safeguarding and advancing our movement. I believe that with your rich experience and the capacities of the SWP, and your collaboration with the genuine Trotskyists of other countries, it is possible to overcome the present crisis.

The "Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World" recently published by the SWP, though quite exceptional and unprecedented, is nevertheless necessary for saving the International from the extremely grave immediate danger. This "exceptional action" can be proved necessary and justified here too by the painful experiences of my personal participation in the IS during these two years.

Despite the fact that I became responsible for activity in the Trotskyist movement in China more than twenty years ago, it was hardly possible to maintain an intimate relation with the International and to participate in its activities because of the particular conditions in which I was placed: constant oppression and extreme persecution by all kinds of reactionary forces, often resulting in a state of isolation. When Mao's party came to power, I was obliged to leave China and come abroad. I then cherished great hopes that on the one hand, I could submit to the International a detailed report of the events which had occurred in China in recent years to facilitate a common discussion that would result in a correct resolution and general orientation for the Trotskyist movement in China and the other backward countries of the Orient. On the other hand, I was prepared to contribute within the limits of my capacity my own experiences to the leadership of the International to help it in advancing our movement. But the experiences of these two and a half years have shown that the reality is completely different from my original aspirations, for I saw with my own eyes a frightful crisis brewing, growing, spreading and penetrating more and more into the different sections of the International. This has greatly disturbed and pained me and made it difficult for me to remain silent.

Now let me relate in a chronological order what I witnessed and experienced in person during this whole period, as follows:

At the Third World Congress, a "Far East Commission" was set up with the aim of holding a more or less penetrating discussion of the Chinese question and proposing a resolution on this important question to the World Congress to proceed on a broader discussion and eventual adoption of a more fully and correctly elaborated resolution. I was then designated as the reporter on this question. But before my report had gone half-way, the representative of the IS, Comrade A. of India, who was in charge of the Commission, suddenly made a motion interrupting my report on the pretext of "security," and demanded that this Commission proceed to vote for the adoption of the two previous resolutions on the Chinese question, i.e., the two adopted by the 7th and 8th Plenums of the IEC. I was quite surprised and expressed my indignation and protest. I declared that the Far East Commission was created by the Congress which stood above all the other organisms, and therefore could not simply submit itself to any instructions to cease functioning that were issued by the IS which was itself to be reelected. If the Far East Commission had the task of merely proceeding to vote the previous resolutions, then it was completely superfluous. And I reminded them that it was constituted for the purpose of reaching a more correct decision after an all-round discussion according to the development of the events and new realities. At the same time, I stated that since I was requested to make the report, I had the responsibility and right not only to complete my report, but to listen furthermore to the opinions of the delegates present (whether or not they agreed with or were against my report) and thus to obtain a conclusion endorsed by the majority of the Commission to submit to the Congress. Thanks to my protest and the objection of the great majority of the Commission regarding A's intervention, I was reluctantly allowed to finish my report. But without passing to any discussion, the Far East Commission was terminated; in reality, it was aborted.

The inconclusiveness of the Far East Commission was mainly due to the fact that the representative of the IS, hearing my report in the first session, feeling that my views did not conform to theirs, and being afraid that my views would influence the comrades present, did not hesitate to interrupt me in the midst of the report in a domineering manner. This was later revealed in the "explanation" of Livingston who attended the second session in place of A. He said, "The IS had not expected such a development of the Commission." In other words, they had not expected me to express in my report views different from theirs. To the representative of the IS, it seemed that the Commissions created by the Congress had the sole task of justifying or proving the correctness of the IS's previous resolutions or views by employing new facts and arguments. Otherwise, they would not hesitate to hand down orders to stop Commission proceedings.

To adopt such an arbitrary attitude toward important political problems (since all the delegates of the Congress considered the Chinese question as the most important immediate problem) and to exercise such control over the Commissions created by the Congress are practices far removed from the tradition of Bolshevism. This was my first unpleasant impression after coming here.

My discontent about the Far East Commission was of course sensed by Pablo. His explanations were made through Burns and the responsibility was attributed to A. in the explanations. Besides, Burns said that Pablo was willing to accept the opinions of others and hoped that I would participate in the IS to collaborate with him, especially to undertake more responsibility on the colonial and semi-colonial questions in the Orient. Although I was not quite satisfied with Burns' explanations, I was still prepared in all sincerity to collaborate with Pablo and others in order to serve the development of our movement.

Immediately after the Congress there exploded once again the divergences and conflict between the majority and the minority in the French party. The crisis involved in this conflict culminated at the beginning of 1952. During the two meetings of the IS when the French question was discussed, Pablo always stressed the incorrigibility of the bad tendency of the majority leaders and the necessity of adopting severe measures. The opinion I expressed invariably was that because the majority represented the overwhelming majority of the party, among whom there were a large number of industrial workers in important sectors, we should still do our best and utmost to convince the majority of the comrades, especially the worker comrades, even though certain leaders at the top had manifested bad tendencies. (At that time, I also had certain bad impressions about a few leaders of the majority. But I must admit now that my bad impressions were formulated chiefly as the result of my excessive confidence and trust in Pablo and the minority in their portrayal of the majority leaders.) For this purpose, I said, it was necessary to carry out a universal and thorough political discussion in the French party, and if necessary to extend this discussion to the other sections of the International. In this manner, it would not only be possible to find the demarcation of different political views of both sides, but also to exploit this occasion for elevating the political level of the members as a whole. This opinion did not meet with any objection. Pablo, however, proceeded entirely according to his own plan.

It then happened that Pablo attended the Plenum of the Executive Committee of the French party last January (1952) and announced on the spot the suspension of the 16 majority members of the EC from their function. The fact is that the IS had not made any decision of this kind. Among the five members of the IS, three were completely ignorant of this decision: Germain and Manuel were both outside of the country, and I was not informed beforehand, although I was in Paris. Besides, only the IEC is entitled to sanction or suspend the function of the members of the executive committee of a section formally elected, even if they had committed grave political errors, and even violated discipline in action, while the IS is not at all entitled to this right. Moreover the IS did not make such a decision! Pablo's suspension of the IS members of the EC of the French party from their function by borrowing the name and authority of the IS fully exposed his unrestrained personal dictatorial conduct in abusing authority and in violating our organizational tradition.

After Pablo's suspension of the majority leaders, Germain returned to Paris; he came to see me and asked my opinions about this event. The gist of what I told him was about as follows: The political views of the majority of the French party were still limited to

divergences on tactics, and had not yet passed over to a general discussion. To take an organizational measure at that moment was entirely inappropriate. Besides, the measure employed by Pablo had not been approved by all leading members of the International and was therefore nothing but an arbitrary action in violation of our organizational traditions. Expressing his complete agreement with my position, he told me in addition that the leaders of the majority were all very active, and Pablo, etc., had previously praised them highly; and now they were suddenly described as not worth a penny, and even threatened with being completely thrown out of the movement! In saying this, Germain was not able to restrain his indignation.

In order to discuss the aggravated situation produced by this act of suspension adopted by Pablo, the IS called an enlarged IS meeting (which could be considered as the preparatory conference of the January 1952 Plenum of the IEC). At this meeting, Germain, J. of the German section, L. of the Italian section and I were all against the measure taken by Pablo. But the latter still tried obstinately to defend himself, saying, "The previous session of the IS decided on the necessity of adopting a severe measure, and the members who were present at that session should all be responsible for it." But what was the real content of this so-called "severe measure"? Under what conditions should it be applied? About these Pablo had never said a word and of course we could not have made any formal decision on them, and in reality we had not at all made such a decision. But Pablo utilized the "severe measure" mentioned before as an "algebraic formula" and he pretended he had obtained everyone's agreement to fill this formula himself with the "arithmetical figures," that is, the suspension from their function of the 16 majority members of the EC of the French party. This further exposed Pablo as a deliberate and systematic intriguer.

This enlarged IS meeting should have seriously examined the mistake of Pablo's act of suspending the EC members of the French party and should have challenged his authority to do so, in order to open the road for a reasonable solution of the question of the French majority. But Pablo exerted his strongest pressure by threatening and maneuvering to prevent any discussion of this problem, and turned round to propose negotiation with the French majority in another attempt for compromise. That was nothing else than to nullify in effect the suspension of the majority EC members, and to form a leading Committee containing both the factions, with Germain, representing the IS, as the arbitrator. This was the sole result of the February session of the IEC. Here, again, it was evident that Pablo was playing intrigues to cover up for the moment his absurd conduct toward the leadership of a section and to prepare the way for his revenge. Thus the question of the French majority became more and more involved in confusion and could not be solved correctly -- which is proved by the outcome later.

Having seen Pablo's arbitrary action on the question of the majority in the French party and his intrigues, I strongly felt that frightful consequences would result if the IS were to submit completely to the handling and control of Pablo. With this apprehension, on a trip to the south of France I had a formal conversation with Manuel, who was already there. I pointed out to him that Pablo's suspension of the 16 members of the EC of the French party from their function all by himself disclosed very serious weaknesses in the IS

itself, which deserved our serious observation and attention; since we have lost Trotsky, only the formation of a collective leadership could avoid internal crises and confront external events. At that time, I still considered that Pablo was indispensable for the leadership but that he should not be permitted to act arbitrarily on his own will. Moreover, I believed that as far as important political and organizational questions were concerned, not only was the IS not competent to make certain decisions, but that even the IEC was also not adequate (since the members who could be present at IEC meetings were limited), and that the IS should seek the opinions of responsible and experienced leaders and co-thinkers throughout the world.

After I had expressed these views as stated above, Manuel said that he agreed with the fundamental idea expressed by me on collective leadership and would reexamine the question of the French majority, and that he intended to have a sincere conversation with Pablo the next day. But before Manuel could talk with Pablo, the latter started a violent and brutal attack on me in Manuel's presence. Perhaps this was why Manuel cancelled his intended talk with Pablo.

When I returned from the south to Paris (in the middle of May, 1952), Pablo had framed up two charges to launch a fierce attack on me -- "attempting to injure the prestige of the International" and "liberal action" (which meant violation of discipline). The "facts" he enumerated were: we (my wife and I) had slandered the International in front of an Australian couple; after returning to Paris, we had again slandered the International before the Vietnamese comrades; and we had moved from one hotel to another lodging without giving him notice beforehand. When I first heard about these ungrounded charges, though extremely enraged, I still restrained myself and requested Pablo to meet me in order to clarify the misunderstandings. But he was so arbitrary as to refuse my request, and declared that the "stories mentioned by him were true and facts." Hence I realized that Pablo was deliberately and systematically attempting to trap me by slanders in order to discredit me and further to exclude me from the IS. I was therefore obliged to request the IS to discuss the matter of all these calumnies against me by Pablo.

At the IS meeting I proved with indisputable facts that all the charges made by Pablo against me, such as hurting the prestige of the International, etc., were completely false, and could be disproved by the testimony of the Australian couple and the Vietnamese comrades. As to the charge on my "liberal action," it was still more absurd. The explanation is very simple: as I was not able to pay high rent in the hotel, I was forced to seek help from the Vietnamese comrades to get a cheaper lodging, and it was not at all necessary to give a notice to Pablo beforehand. I asked him to make a reply and explain his calumnies against me with concrete facts. He was not only not able to explain but started to shout and declared, "I am the General Secretary, I have my rule about things!" I told him, "The General Secretary has no privileges, and our rule is democratic centralism. Nobody is entitled to be dictator, to slander and constrain others." Finally a resolution was proposed by Germain on the dispute between Pablo and me, which was generally as follows: there were no facts to prove that I had attempted to discredit the International and to violate discipline, but also that Pablo had not slandered me. This was a clever resolution to please both sides without

any justice done to the truth. My statement was: I would not accept such a kind of resolution and I reserved my right to appeal to the conference of a higher body.

I consider that when the General Secretary of the IS slanders another secretary at his will with the charges of "discrediting the International" and "violating discipline," it is not at all an ordinary "personal dispute" nor "trivial" but a serious phenomenon within the leading apparatus concerning the question of organization and functioning of its component members. In other words, this is a most naked expression of base bureaucratic methods to exclude personal opponents. This kind of phenomenon was quite frequently seen in the Stalinist parties, but was unprecedented in our own movement.

Afterwards, Burns told our daughter that through the independent observation of the Australian couple he learned the details of how Pablo's wife treated us, especially my wife, tyrannically, and that was not less than madness, and he was sympathetic with us. But he said that it was by mistake that Pablo accepted his wife's account as the truth, and he urged us not to insist on an "appeal." Meanwhile, Manuel also did his best to dissuade me from doing so, saying that if I made this matter public, Pablo would not be able to continue his function, but who then was to replace him? In short, he persuaded me to leave it alone. For the sake of "preserving the integrity of the movement in general" I refrained from making any further protest. Nevertheless, I have always thought that the calumnies made by Pablo are not only inexcusable but express a dangerous tendency considering the position he holds. If he were in power, he would very probably have committed all those persecutions Stalin had done in the past.

During a whole year, from my arrival in Europe until the 11th Plenum of the IEC in June 1952, I was allowed to make a report on the Chinese question only at the Third World Congress and the Far East Commission, and there was never any exchange of views or discussion of this question in the IS. Even when the draft resolution was submitted to discussion in the IS, I was not invited to express my views. Besides, I had not heard in person what position was adopted by Pablo before he expressed his views at the 11th Plenum. Only indirectly I learned that Pablo assumed that Mao Tse-tung had completed all the fundamental theses of the Permanent Revolution, that the Chinese CP had already become a centrist party, and that Mao's regime was a proletarian dictatorship. Frank's position was entirely unknown to me then. Only Germain had exchanged some views with me, but he declared that on the Chinese question his position was the most moderate. Thus on a question as important as China, the IS leadership had not even exchanged views with me, or had deliberately avoided doing so beforehand. It was not at all intended to have a collective discussion in order to arrive at agreement on a correct position as the basis for the resolution to be submitted to the IEC for discussion and adoption. On the contrary the IS leadership launched a sudden attack at the IEC meeting against the views which they considered to be erroneous, with the sole aim of gaining a majority to adopt their own draft resolution, and hastily made an end to the whole discussion on this question. In this way I discovered that the leading members of the IS were not prepared for a

sincere discussion and mutual consultation to facilitate collaboration, but deliberately struck blows by all means against divergent views. This was particularly noticeable in Pablo who openly stressed at the IEC session that there existed a sectarian faction in the Chinese section which must be got rid of. (These words were not included in the published remarks of Pablo in the special issue of the International Bulletin on "The Report and Discussion on the Third Chinese Revolution.") The sectarian he referred to was obviously me, and the reference was a threat and prelude to pushing me out of the International. I was not overawed by his bureaucratic threat, but once more it was demonstrated that Pablo was prepared to deal with the Chinese comrades with the same methods that were employed against the majority of the French section.

I believe that you already know the content of the resolution of the Third Chinese Revolution; my criticisms of this resolution, e.g., "A Few Remarks to Serve as Amendments to the Draft Resolution on the Third Chinese Revolution," were sent to you two months ago, so it is not necessary to repeat them here. I have only one more point to make on this. When this resolution arrived in China, it not only failed to clarify the original divided views but enhanced the confusion and bewilderment. Aside from the comrades who oppose the resolution with theoretical arguments and facts, even those who are in agreement with it have quite diverse interpretations among themselves. Consequently, it has not been possible for them to elaborate a program of action with majority agreement on the basis of this resolution. The worst thing is that nobody can find a perspective for the Chinese Trotskyists in this resolution. For instance, a responsible comrade, F., who is completely in agreement with this resolution said, "We must dissolve our organization in order to participate effectively in mass activities led by Mao's party." This is evidently a liquidationist attitude. Another comrade, Y., said more frankly, "The Resolution of the International is correct, but there is no perspective for us Trotskyists." This is pessimism through and through. Thus, the whole organization was politically disarmed and disoriented, and hence involved in endless organizational disputes, and was more and more approaching the edge of disintegration.

Naturally I do not intend to say that the resolution of the IS is entirely responsible for such a dangerous state into which the Chinese organization was led. I would say rather that this is the result mainly of the objective situation -- the victory of Mao's party, its persecutions, and the incomparable pressure weighing down upon us. But it is an undeniable fact that the resolution of the International did not make a reasonable and correct analysis and explanation of this objective situation nor did it point out a convincing perspective and orientation for the Chinese organization.

First of all, this resolution is a mixture of Pablo's revisionism and Germain's conciliationism (i.e., conciliation with Pablo), filled with theoretical fallacies, factual errors and self-contradictions. These together with its idealization of Mao's regime and illusions on its perspective, make it a strong expression of the tendency of conciliation with Stalinism. The liquidationism and pessimism which prevailed among the Chinese comrades was originated from here. Therefore I can say that Pablo's revisionism, that is,



his conciliation towards Stalinism, has already caused frightful consequences in the Chinese organization. This deserves serious concern among all comrades.

At the 12th Plenum of the IEC, November 1952, the IS let me report on the organizational situation in the Chinese section for the first time. When I reported the news of the incessant and systematic persecution of Chinese Trotskyists by Mao's regime during these recent years, the whole meeting was greatly shaken. The Italian, L., rose and questioned why the IS did not give the sections the information about the persecutions of the Chinese comrades. In the midst of this tense atmosphere, Pablo, evidently embarrassed, stood up to defend himself, saying that the massacre of Trotskyists by Mao's regime was not a deliberate action but a mistake, that is, the Trotskyists had been mistaken as Kuomintang agents; and that even if Mao's persecution of Trotskyists were a fact, this could only be considered as an exception. Then Germain posed another question: under what conditions were the Trotskyists massacred? I cited all the facts and "conditions" to demonstrate that the persecution of Trotskyists by Mao's regime originated from a deep-rooted tradition of Stalinist hostility towards Trotskyists, and was a systematic and deliberate attempt to exterminate the Trotskyists. I also pointed out that this persecution was not at all an "exception." Not long ago, Ho Chi Minh slaughtered the entire Trotskyist leadership in Vietnam, and in the Spanish Civil War the GPU of the Stalinist party brutally persecuted innumerable Trotskyists -- all these are iron proofs. But Pablo turned to inquire of me, "So you have annulled the tactic of entrism into the Stalinist party and the mass organizations under its control, which you approved?" I replied, "This tactic of entrism into the Stalinist party was started by us four years ago, that is, since 1949. But precisely because of the severe persecutions Mao inflicts on the Trotskyists, we have to be particularly cautious and serious in carrying out this tactic, and should not have the slightest illusion about the Stalinists." I urged the French and Italian sections to examine the lessons of the Chinese section and to organize very seriously in applying this tactic. Otherwise, the danger of ruin would be incurred, and in this case the IEC would be responsible. In short, from this illustration of Pablo's defense for Stalinist persecution of Chinese Trotskyists, you can see the extent of his idealization and illusions toward Mao's regime.

Things did not stop there, however. In the session of the enlarged IS in February this year, when I made a report of a wholesale arrest of Trotskyists all over the country on December 22, 1952 and January 8, 1953, and requested the meeting to have a discussion on this, Pablo was opposed to such a discussion, and said, "The Stalinist persecution of Trotskyists is ABC to our movement, and everybody knows it, so it is not necessary to discuss too much about it." I was very much angered by this attitude and denounced him, "It's precisely you who do not understand this ABC, otherwise you would not have defended Mao's persecution of Trotskyists in the last IEC meeting." But he still insisted: "Compared with the achievement of the revolution of Mao Tse-tung, the arrest of a few hundred Trotskyists is insignificant." These words are of the same type as the statement that "Trotskyist criticism of Stalinism is more harmful to the revolution than Stalinist persecution of Trotskyists," pronounced

by the four minorityites in Seattle who have now left the movement. This only shows that under the dazzling light of "Mao's revolutionary achievements," Pablo has completely abandoned the traditional position of Trotsky on Stalinist persecution of Trotskyists, and become a voluntary defender of Stalinism.

In the meantime, I received the English version of the special issue of the International Bulletin containing the report and discussion on the Third Chinese Revolution, and I discovered that my document criticizing the draft resolution on the Third Chinese Revolution did not appear in it. I therefore pointed this out at the meeting of the enlarged IS and questioned Pablo about the reason for not publishing my document. The reply was that the document was published in another issue of the International Bulletin. But I later looked through all the International Bulletins and could not find my critique of the draft resolution. It was obvious that Pablo had deliberately suppressed this document, as my critique pointed out with irrefutable facts several most fundamental errors in the draft resolution: the revision of the theory of the Permanent Revolution, distortion of the "Workers and Peasants Government," the fiction of the alleged "violation of the intentions of the Kremlin by Mao's party," and the illusion of the "transformation of the entire party of Mao Tse-tung into a centrist party." None of these criticisms was refuted or rejected either by the reporter or the participants of the discussion with theoretical argumentation or facts. Precisely for that reason, Pablo was resolved to conceal my criticism of the draft resolution from the comrades by keeping it in the dark. This is a typical manifestation of the bureaucratic methods of Stalinism, and was precisely what we resolutely combatted within the Comintern in the initial stage of its degeneration 25 years ago, and one of the main causes for constituting the Left Opposition. But Pablo did not stop there. When I asked him why he had not published my document, he openly lied that it was published in another issue of the International Bulletin. This added lying and cheating, on top of arbitrary bureaucratic methods.

Here I must mention that particularly since the beginning of 1952 when I opposed Pablo's arbitrary measure on the French question, Pablo, for the period of a whole year, not only employed various bureaucratic methods to attack me, but he also informally deprived me of the right to participate in all meetings of the IS; that is, during this whole year, Pablo never called on me to attend any meeting of the IS itself. The members of the IS were officially elected by the IEC. But without going through a formal discussion and decision in an IEC meeting, he privately deprived me the right to participate in the IS meetings. This is clearly another manifestation of the most arbitrary and insolent bureaucratism!

Around the same period, I found out that Manuel was excluded from the IS meetings by another method: he was sent to another country in the name of helping the work there, thus being in effect informally deprived of his right to attend and work in the IS. But everyone knew that Manuel came with the sole purpose of participating in the activities of the IS. This fully proves that in order to monopolize the IS, Pablo did not halt at any bureaucratic methods and intrigues to gradually exclude representatives of the Western Hemisphere and Asia from the IS.

On the other hand, I became generally acquainted with the fact that Clarke had started a factional struggle in the SWP and launched attacks on the party leadership in an attempt to seize the leadership of the party. This was evidently instigated by Pablo behind the scenes. I heard very often from the entourage of Pablo that "Clarke is the best leader in the U.S." which was tantamount to saying that the SWP should be led by him. At the same time, a Chinese comrade, H., who was studying here told me personally that since last spring (1952) Pablo had acted particularly friendly and confidential toward him, and had offered several times to send him back to China to "reorganize the party." This comrade replied, "I do not have authority and prestige in the Chinese organization." Then Pablo encouraged him by saying, "Don't be afraid, our International will support you. You have just to proceed boldly." From these words uttered by Pablo, H. clearly understood that not only Pablo did not trust me at all but was hostile toward me, and therefore wanted to give him this special mission to start factional work in the Chinese organization. Naturally, he was not at all willing to engage in such an affair, and consequently frankly told us.

From the facts enumerated above, I deeply felt that Pablo had manifested a revisionist tendency, and especially that he was employing terrible bureaucratic methods to exercise control over the IS and had started to build up his own factions in different sections in an attempt to dominate the whole international movement. For this reason, when Manuel was leaving here and came to bid farewell to us, I enumerated a few of these facts and told him frankly that a serious danger was hidden in the leading apparatus of the International, and was developing at an accelerating speed. I expressed the hope that he would find a way to make this opinion known to the leadership of the SWP and especially to you, so that you would be alerted in time and try to mend the situation. Though Manuel did not express any reaction toward my words, he promised to forward my opinions to you and some other leaders of the party.

On the Plenum of the IEC in May 1953, there are two things worth mentioning:

1. In the discussion of the resolution on the problem of the USSR after Stalin's death, a considerable dispute was aroused. In this dispute, Burns first pointed out the spirit of the resolution was too optimistic; he warned that from the failure to fully grasp the significance of the Yugoslav events, which resulted from a too-optimistic appreciation, we should have learned certain lessons. He also stated that the Stalinist parties remained Stalinist parties, and we should not have too many illusions about them. But Pablo made a threatening attack against his remarks. The sum of his words was that as a responsible leader, Burns should refrain from expressing views in violation of the line of the International. According to him, all the resolutions drafted by the IS conform to the "line of the International" and no doubt or objection is allowed. Hence the members of the IEC have simply to raise their hands in adopting any resolution concerning any newly occurred events or any important problems. Any doubts or views opposing the draft resolution of the IS are considered to "violate the line of the International." Is this different from the bureaucratic attitude in the CP's regarding Stalin's "general line" which it was forbidden to criticize?

2. At this Plenum, Pablo proposed the election of a new IS. The reason was that there were not enough efficient members to participate in the activities of the IS, so two members from the British and Italian sections were added as permanent members of the IS. In this manner, representatives from the Western Hemisphere and Asia were formally eliminated, and the IS has virtually become an ES (European Secretariat). Since then, Pablo has "legally" modified the composition of the IS to enable himself to freely control and manipulate it, and to proceed "legally" with his design of excluding and eliminating his opponents and his plot of usurping the International.

At the May Plenum of the IEC, I submitted two documents -- "An Appeal for Aid from the Chinese Trotskyists" and my "Open Letter to the Leadership of the Chinese CP" protesting the persecutions of Trotskyists, in the hope that the Plenum would discuss and comment on them and decide to publish them in the public organs of different sections, in order to carry on a broad campaign to aid the persecuted Trotskyists in China. But Pablo told me through Germain that these documents should be discussed and decided only in the IS. At the IS meeting (this time only Pablo and Frank were present), I stated that I hoped that both of these documents would be transmitted to the sections for publication, and would be made the occasion for a campaign to rescue the persecuted comrades. Both Pablo and Frank agreed to publish the "Appeal from the Chinese Trotskyists," but said that they could not agree on several points contained in my letter of protest, and would consult with me in order to make a final decision.

From May to September, four months had elapsed, but I still did not see the appearance of the "Appeal from Chinese Trotskyists." Then I began to suspect that Pablo had again suppressed a document. At the beginning of September I sent a copy of this document to the United States, asking that it be sent to the Militant, and inquiring if it had already reached there from the IS. The reply I received was, "Not received at all." Once again I discovered that Pablo was playing tricks to deceive me. On his motive for resorting to such tricks to suppress this document: Firstly, he always idealizes Mao's regime. The publication of this appeal would have exposed the reality contradicting his illusions and idealization. Secondly, he had for a long time been propagating in different sections the notion that the Chinese Trotskyists were sectarians, fugitives from the revolution, etc. The publication of this document would have categorically unmasked his lies and calumnies. Thirdly, Pablo was afraid that the publication of this document would interfere with his most strongly advocated ideal of "entrism," that is, he feared that on seeing the cruel persecution of Chinese comrades by Mao's party, as revealed in this appeal, the French, Italian, and Vietnamese comrades would start to doubt about the idealized "entrism tactic," and would demand a new discussion.

By suppressing this document, Pablo not only deliberately deceived me and the Chinese comrades, but also committed two inexcusable crimes: (1) Objectively he helped the Chinese CP to conceal before the masses the most concrete and horrible facts of its persecution of the Chinese Trotskyists. (2) He has made it impossible for the comrades of different countries, applying or about to apply

the "entrism tactic," to learn lessons from the brutal persecutions afflicted on the Chinese comrades. This is like putting them to work in a danger zone without letting them know about the danger. A veritable ostrich policy! Let me cite another incident to illustrate this attitude. When the Vietnamese comrades were ready to return to their country to apply the "entrism policy," and called a meeting in which I was invited to make a speech, the chairman of this meeting made a request of me not to mention before the comrades the recent persecutions experienced by the Chinese comrades. I knew quite well that it was an instruction or suggestion from Pablo. Although I observed the request of the chairman, I still warned him personally that the "ostrich policy" was the most dangerous.

My Open Letter was written as the result of a proposal by Manuel at the November Plenum of the IEC, 1952, which was then approved unanimously and decided by all the members. Its aim was to make public internationally the facts about the persecutions afflicted on the Chinese Trotskyists in order to arouse the sympathy of the world working class and progressive groups and to exercise pressure on Mao's party to restrain it from continuing to persecute the Chinese Trotskyists and other revolutionary elements. Because of a desire to collect the most reliable data, this letter was finished only in April. It was already somewhat late. But under the pretext of sending somebody to consult me about the content of this letter, Pablo again succeeded in holding it up for two months more (during these two months, Frank discussed with me twice, pointing out a few not very important places to argue about with me, and of course, there was no conclusion whatever). Finally, at the beginning of July, Germain came to talk with me about it. He started by criticizing the form of the letter as completely wrong, and asked that it be written over again. According to their ideas, I should have opened the letter by first expressing a total support for the movement under the leadership of Mao's party, praising its revolutionary achievements, and then at last come to the point of enumerating the facts of their persecutions and made the protest. Secondly, Germain remarked that the views expressed in this letter diverged considerably from the line of the resolution of the International, and for this reason he denounced me as a "hopeless sectarian." At last he said that the IS could not undertake the responsibility of sending this document to the different sections for publication. If I insisted on having it published, I myself was to be responsible for any step taken concerning it.

It was quite a surprise for me to see how greatly Germain's attitude had changed from his previous "moderate" and conciliatory one toward me. This time it was Pabloite through and through. I already understood that Pablo was absolutely unwilling to have this letter published; the reasons were generally the same as those in regard to the "Appeal of the Chinese Trotskyists." As to whether or not this letter was written "completely in the wrong way" in its "form" and is "hopeless sectarianism" in its content, since it is now published in the Militant, those who have read it can make an open judgment. It is least of all my intention to defend myself. Nevertheless, from the above views expressed by Germain as representative of the IS, one can see clearly that they expected me to submit a panegyric to Mao's party in order to seek conciliation with it. The conciliationist tendency toward Stalinism is again indirectly reflected here.

At this point, I would like to make a brief comment on the modification of Germain's attitude during these two years, which might be of some help to you in understanding his role in the IS and in the present struggle.

I can say that ever since my first contact with Germain after coming here, I have always had the warmest sympathy toward him. This feeling derived from my observation of his seriousness and devotion in his work, his sincerity and warmth toward comrades, his considerable political maturity and respect for our tradition in organizational matters, and I once deemed him to be one of the most promising new leaders of our movement. Although I had also noticed his lack of penetrating analysis in observing various problems, his impressionist temperament, wavering and conciliationist spirit manifested very often on important problems, and his facility in modifying his own positions, I still trusted that he would be able to overcome these weaknesses through the experiences in the movement as it develops. So when I heard among the entourage of Pablo all kinds of unfavorable propaganda about him over a long period, picturing him as lacking any independent views, or even as simply "a secretary with the function of collecting materials for Pablo" (in the words of A.), I felt quite indignant for the injustice done on his worth. When the crisis of the French party exploded anew, Germain openly opposed the arbitrary measure taken by Pablo. I saw myself how he was violently attacked by Pablo and the French minority, and often felt very bad for him. I had sent him sympathetic regards through my daughter, and he said that without the support of the German and Italian sections, he would have been beaten down long before. Precisely because he had this support, Pablo made special compromises toward him and promoted him as the representative of the IS to participate in the "coalition leadership" of the French majority and minority, and made him the "arbitrator." Henceforth, Germain was placed in the forefront of direct conflict with the French majority, and executed for Pablo the preconceived design which he had once been violently against. Around the same time, Pablo assigned him the task of drafting the resolution on the Chinese question, to put him in opposition to me. Ever since then, under Pablo's "compromises" and "promotions" (almost raised to the height only next to Pablo himself), Germain gradually abandoned his conciliatory position, and more and more involved himself in the trap of Pablo's bureaucratism.

Today his taking a position completely on the side of Pabloism in opposition to the struggle led by the SWP against revisionism and bureaucratism indicates how unconsciously he has fallen into Pablo's trap. I am still very sorrowful over his degeneration. If Pablo did not have Germain's support this time, that is, the support through him of the German and Italian leaderships, he would not be able to continue along his path all by himself, and a split might be avoided. From this point of view, the criminal role Germain played in this struggle is of decisive nature. In sum, I have to make the following conclusion from my observations and experiences with Germain during these two years: In many respects, especially in his temperament, he resembles Bukharin. He often wavers between revolutionary conscience and the momentary consideration of power. When the latter is satisfied for a time, the former is cast aside. For him to return to orthodox Trotskyism will be possible only when his revolutionary

conscience is awakened by discovering Pablo's entire conspiracy, and when he realizes that he is already involved in a terrible trap.

I have learned that the conflict in your party between the majority and the minority had proceeded for more than a year and a half, was accentuated after the May Plenum and then came closer and closer to the brink of a split. If the secretary of the IS had really been concerned with the interest of our movement, he would have called in time an extraordinary session of the IEC, to discuss and examine the divergences of both sides, and to adopt a correct position in order to help the victory of the correct side. Even if this could not have been the case, at least the IS should have sent to the members of the IEC and to the leaderships of the different sections the documents of dispute in your party to enable them to study, discuss and express their opinions and criticisms, to indirectly help the conflict in your party to proceed objectively. Yet the IS under Pablo's control concealed completely the news of your struggle and all documents of discussion from the members of the IEC and the leaderships of different sections. For instance, in my case, it was only in the beginning of September that I learned vaguely about the principal arguments of both sides through a friend. Without this source I would have remained completely in the dark until the time when you published the Open Letter. The fact is simply that the responsible members of the IS had never informed me about the situation of the internal struggle in your party. Pablo & Co. adopted bureaucratic methods to keep the information from us because they had a design they wanted kept hidden. And now it is all quite clear: The minority in your party is not only the advocator, defender and elaborator of Pablo's revisionism, but they were inspired and directed behind the scenes by Pablo in the struggle, as is fully revealed by the methods they adopted and their conduct of sabotage. In other words, the degree and the consequence of split attained by the conflict in your party is caused directly by Pablo's conduct in the interest of his own faction.

From all these facts stated above, which I witnessed and personally experienced, a general conclusion can be drawn as follows: Politically Pablo's revisionist tendency in conciliation with Stalinism is totally unveiled by his idealization of Mao's party and its present regime and the illusions cherished toward it, and especially by his excusing and defending Mao's party for its persecution of Trotskyists. This conciliationism has already involved the Chinese section in extreme confusion, and even brought it to the edge of disintegration through liquidationism and pessimism derived from Pablo's theses. Organizationally, the astonishing and dangerous point reached by Pablo's bureaucratism has been demonstrated by these facts -- that he freely abused the name of the IS in privately suspending the majority members of the EC of the French party and in excluding his opponents at his will; that he monopolized the IS and controlled the IEC through the IS; that he attempted to and did create a personal clique, conspiring to seize the leadership of the sections, that he suppressed the documents which should have been published, and even those he promised to publish; and that he isolated and disrupted the normal relations among leading comrades, and he slanders, calumniates, lies about and deceives them. All these crimes that I personally saw and encountered 25 years ago in the degenerated Comintern under Stalin's control I now saw performed once again in the leading organ

of the International under Pablo's control! The splitting of parties conducted by the minorities in America and Britain in the recent time, and Pablo's accelerated conspiratory activities to split the whole International right now were the logical developments of his personal ambition to usurp the whole International and of his bureaucratism.

The facts enumerated above and their conclusions have sufficiently justified the exceptional action adopted by the SWP as necessary and correct.

Recently a responsible comrade of the Chinese section (who politically agrees with your position) wrote to me and asked, "Why didn't the SWP proceed according to democratic centralism, trying through the international discussion to win the support of the majority, instead of issuing first of all an open letter (referring to the Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World) appealing to all sections to throw Pablo out?" Comrades like him, who do not understand the true state of affairs and still cherish innocent legalistic conceptions, are not of very small number. It is precisely in an attempt to exploit this situation that Pablo and his supporters are making a great hue and cry, "The open letter published by Cannon is completely in violation of Trotskyist organizational tradition, and in violation of the discipline of democratic centralism" -- hoping thereby to confuse and deceive comrades, and to cover up Pablo's own conspiracy to usurp the authority of the International by bureaucratic methods, of his own trampling on organizational tradition and of his own violations of the discipline of democratic centralism. Therefore, I made the following reply on the 8th of this month to the Chinese section on the question posed above:

"Although there are such serious divergences between the political views of both sides (referring to yours and those represented by Pablo) yet, if the IS could have maintained its normal and reasonable procedure, there might be, and ought to be the possibility for a full internal discussion, and to arrive at a solution through democratic centralism. But the extremely unfortunate thing is that the IS has been entirely controlled and usurped by Pablo who utilizes this "legal apparatus" to arrogantly proceed with the organizing of his conspiracy by arbitrarily excluding his opponents from the IS and secretly setting up his own clique or faction with the aim of seizing the leadership of a section or splitting the organization. This has rendered impossible any normal discussion according to the principle of democratic centralism, and thus obliged the SWP, led by Cannon, to adopt this exceptional action of today, to publish the Open Letter demanding the expulsion of Pablo and his agents from the International's leading organ. This is really unprecedented in the history of our international movement, and is an action of revolutionary nature. This action has become necessary not only to crush Pablo's attempt at usurpation, but also to gain time in which to rescue the movement, and to reorganize and co-ordinate it in time to confront the approaching new world war and revolution. If the mobilization of this struggle should be prolonged until the explosion of the Third World War, it would be too late."

I also have to point out that Pablo's conspiracy of usurping the leading organ of the International during these recent years, and all kinds of bureaucratic methods of extremely arbitrary and absurd



nature, have more or less been revealed on many sides. The fact is that our International as a whole and the responsible leaders of the different sections have not been vigilant enough, and did not exercise early enough severe surveillance, criticism, intervention and restraint. The result -- this extremely dangerous and uncontrolled situation -- deserves our special examination and review. Every responsible member and every orthodox Trotskyist should derive a serious lesson from this Pablo affair. (About this, if you wish, I can offer some materials and views for discussion with you.)

As a last point, I want to tell you in passing that since the Chinese organization received the open letter of the SWP, its leading organ, the National Committee, immediately held a series of meetings devoted to a most serious discussion. As a result, almost all unanimously (with only one abstention) approved the views and positions contained in your Open Letter, and expressed a resolute will to participate in this struggle led by you against revisionism and bureaucratism. Having gone through this discussion, they have recovered their original confidence, and are beginning to disentangle themselves from the confusions, conflicts and bewilderment of recent years. They are now initiating a general discussion in the rank and file in the attempt to re-examine all fundamental political questions according to the orthodox Trotskyist tradition, and to obtain unanimity and unity to march forward on a revolutionary path. I consider this as the first most optimistic sign in the process of the struggle against revisionism.

Fraternally yours,

S. T. Peng