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SPLITTERS FROM CANADIAN SECTION ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY THEIR WALKOUT

Walter Davis' Response to LSA/LSO Political Bureau

November 15, 1973

The process which recently culminated in a public split of the two factions of the Canadian section began some years ago sparked by the latent forces produced by the objective conditions which were noted in the turn of the Ninth World Congress. In no way, do we (the Revolutionary Marxist Group) believe that the events of the past few months were inevitable. The course of disintegration of the Canadian section over the past two years is well-documented in the papers of the LSA and YS convention periods and we will not repeat the analysis put forward in those documents. The reason that we say events were not inevitable is a simple one--a revolutionary leadership acts self-consciously. The leadership of the Canadian section of the Fourth International (referring here to the pre-April 1973 majority including both factions that supported the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency) failed one critical test after another in external interventions and internal analysis. It became more and more obvious as the crisis in the organization deepened and splits even materialized within the majority leadership of the section that this leadership was centrist and unprincipled. Its sole basis of unity was opposition to the Revolutionary Communist Tendency inside and the forces that became the Revolutionary Marxist Group outside. Despite Art Young's moral self-righteousness, he would be hard put to show where the present majority of the section political committee put forward a course for the section. The line of the organization is an eclectic and sectarian hodge-podge of reformist fronts and abstract platitudes. Within the section, only the right (the Dowson faction) and the left (the Revolutionary Communist Tendency) were able to put forward a clear and consistent line for the organization.

This first section deals with the situation at the time of the expulsions of a number of RCT comrades in the Winnipeg branch. It was written during the first week in September as events moved very rapidly towards the ultimate solutions sought by the so-called Political Committee which had been reduced solely to the leadership of a faction:

The expulsion of the leading Winnipeg comrades represents a development that the RCT cannot ignore. For the past period since the LSA convention, we have witnessed unprecedented activity by the supporters of the Political Committee majority in Winnipeg of a highly factional and consistently provocative character. We had hoped that the PC majority would reverse the activities of its supporters and join with the RCT in building the branch (one of the largest in the country). Winnipeg was also coming along very well as a center of the YS with the largest local in the country in a situation where the objective circumstances for a youth group were almost nil. This was the situation before the Winnipeg comrades before the PC majority tendency (soon to become a faction) launched war on the comrades in the city of the RCT. I could go into detail here about the many activities followed by the branch minority including not building any branch activities and the public criticism of the branch leadership (without having even bothered with laying charges internal to the League). The Winnipeg

comrades have detailed these matters and the tapes of the Winnipeg hearings contain much about the acts of the PC majority supporters.

Since the formation of the Leninist-Trotskyist faction, the hysterical activities of the now-LTFers in Winnipeg have increased. Besides the usual policing of every word said by comrades in debates in the branch and the production of voluminous reports and photographs of allegedly "disloyal" acts (under which no charges were ever laid), the Winnipeg "Leninist-Trotskyist" comrades began to constitute a counter-branch. This appeared at first to be only the initiative of the comrades in the Winnipeg minority albeit including members of the Central Committee.. As events over the past six weeks have shown, the Winnipeg activities were integrally coordinated with the "war" plans developed in the PC majority faction.

At the time that the majority of the Political Committee announced that it was a faction (something that I had known for months since there were already leaks about their pre-PC strategy meetings), the PC majority announced very clearly that it was committing "all the resources of the Canadian section to the Leninist-Trotskyist faction". If the internal records have been doctored (the interpretation of the act committed has evolved and therefore the history will have been "clarified"), I am prepared to present the statements of non-RCT LSA comrades substantiating that this took place in the branches of the section. All the material strength, including the cadre, of the section was committed to an international faction, without the authority of convention or Central Committee plenum, and with no opportunity (through an international pre-congress debate) for the supporters of the IEC majority tendency to oppose such an action. The initial statements to this effect are on tape in the Toronto branch including the remarks of Art Young announcing the formation of the faction. Such tapes, if not destroyed, may be Young's Watergate. At the same Political Committee meeting where the majority announced its formation of a faction, it also laid charges against comrade Michael Tregebov of the Winnipeg branch. His crime was "disloyalty" by carrying a line contrary to the line of the section. Despite later gyrations, it is clearly part of the PC records and hearing tapes, Tregebov was charged with carrying the majority line of the Fourth International in a minority dominated section. At that time, John Riddell stated that the carrying of a position publically which contradicts the line of the Canadian section, "in this case, the majority line of the Third Congress Since Reunification", "represents grossest disloyalty". I commented that the Political Committee majority had no right to constitute the leadership body of the section as an organ of an international faction. No convention decision authorized the section leadership to "turn over the resources and cadre of the section" to a faction in the international.

The Political Committee majority then decided that the Tregebov case was so special that no normal procedures could be observed. Not only did the faction which had usurped the PC choose to lay charges against Tregebov but also to constituted a trial body solely to its faction members. The PC majority faction refused to turn the investigation over to the Control Commission or to provide for RCT representation on the investigative body. The accused were not provided with adequate defence nor personal access to the evidence against them. The PC investigators refused to hear all representations but rather chose to pick and choose testimony.

If matters were so serious and urgent, why did the PC majority faction proceed at a snail's pace in reviewing the information while spreading slanders against Tregebov throughout the section? The reason was a very simple one. The Political Committee majority faction had already decided to build a new branch without the presence of leading members of the RCT. The faction had already reached its verdict in its internal meetings and needed time to prepare the justification for its coming actions. Meanwhile, the PC majority supporters in Winnipeg attempted to wreck the branch-doing such a bad job of it that they played havoc with the PC majority's tactics. For example, Reed stole the literature of the branch during the period of investigations alleging that he was "defending the movement". He carried off this theft at the peak period of branch sales at the beginning of the school year. In order to justify his actions, Reed contended that he was then protecting the movement by placing the literature in the hands of the Control Commission. The section majority is not so naive as to have us believe that they condone individuals taking the norms of democratic centralism into their individualist hands. In any case, no proof was ever submitted that the books were under the auspices of the Control Commission and, in fact, Williams of the Commission admitted that he knew nothing of the matter..A petty theft had delayed the PC majority faction in pursuance of its plans.

In the escalation of attacks on the Winnipeg branch and the violation of all disciplinary norms, I asked the Control Commission to investigate certain matters that I placed before it. (see records of the LSA Control Commission) Comrade Ernie Tate of the Control Commission indicated that the commission members would not intervene and, indeed, they did not.

The Winnipeg RCT comrades responded to the attacks upon them with confidence. The branch had never lost a single RCT comrade during a year of intense factionalism by majority supporters. In fact, the RCT itself had lost only a handful of comrades since the LSA convention in April. In the meantime, a large number of majority supporters had left the section. We have already noted the resignation of former Central Committee member Bannon. The PC majority faction has waxed so eloquently about 6 RCT resignations does not even report the recurrent attrition of its own supporters not to mention the double-loyalty of the Dowson faction. This is the consistency of a faction which is based solely on a single-issue of postponing the Tenth World Congress and trying to isolate the international majority positions in Canada. The faction formed in the majority of the Political Committee promised a democratically-run faction but instead was a bureaucratically-run clique with the tacit compliance of Comrade Dowson. The internal faction in the faction run by Dowson has no programmatic agreement with the rest of the PC majority on the tasks of revolutionaries in Canada. Dowson's public statements that this present majority (not including him) of the political committee of the Canadian section is bankrupt make the gaggle at the top of the Leninist-Trotskyist faction in Canada sound more and more like the hopelessly corrupt elements that they are.

The PC majority faction decided to complete the wrecking of the Winnipeg branch at the end of the last month (August). It did so with no respect to its own norms and legalities and without going through the Political Committee itself. Instead, a part of the majority faction met and directed the Winnipeg comrades not to give a forum entitled "Chile: Prelude to Continental War?". The PC majority faction did this

under the guise of a political bureau whose authority is administrative and not political. The bureau front was simply a ruse to carry out an unjustified and unprecedented attack on the Winnipeg comrades. Before the executive of the branch could meet to consider the directive or before any meeting of the Political Committee was called, the bureau directed the Winnipeg minority to build another forum by Comrade Al Cappe of the PC under the name of the YS Forum with an address other than that of the Winnipeg operation. The minority was so zealous to carry out this directive that they not only issued their own publicity but proceeded to destroy the propaganda of the comrades of the branch majority. The destroyed propaganda was material including posters paid for and sponsored by the University of Manitoba Student Association. The branch executive was not presented with the resolution of the problem of one forum but two under different names of the local branch and on two lines. If the PC majority faction was not concerned that the international majority line was going to be presented in Winnipeg, why did the majority faction send Cappe 1300 miles to give a forum on the international minority line on Latin America? It was not as alleged, a national tour, a check of the airlines indicated that Cappe flew back to Toronto almost immediately. It is clearly shown by the desperate flight of Cappe to Winnipeg, that the PC majority faction was attempting to diffuse the effect of the international majority line on Latin America being presented publically. At the Cappe forum, Katie Curtin, the chairwoman and a PC majority faction supporter publically denounced the forum to be held two days later which had been called by the branch as "not under the auspices of the Canadian section" and Bev Bernardo even went further to say that the Friday forum was organized by "a disloyal faction out to split the Canadian section". Cappe's line in the forum was then an implicit rejection of the line of the Ninth World Congress with his own additions like "the Chilean left must now not prepare for armed struggle but prepare the workers for mass mobilizations to end the repression".

The Friday forum given by comrade Bret Smiley was openly disrupted by members of the branch minority. By the weekend, the branch had been publically split and the staging of that split was carried off by Al Cappe in his own reliably incompetent manner and with the agreement of his faction in the PC. All of this was carried out before any disciplinary action was taken against any members of the branch. The initiatives were solely those of the political bureau which is not only a body with undefined roles but is limited as an administrative body until broader definitions are outlined.

The Political Committee subsequently overturned the expulsion of Reed by the branch. Such an action would have been understandable if the PC had had an appeal before the national leadership or sufficient proof that the charges were invalid; it had neither. Not one shred of the branch's evidence against Reed was introduced despite the PC investigative team's access to such evidence.

All these actions by the faction in the central leadership of the Canadian section must be seen in the general political situation in Canada. Never have the opportunities for Trotskyism and the Fourth International been greater. While the level of activity and mobilization is not as great, the radicalization in both the periphery and the working class is rapidly increasing. Workers' struggles are becoming

more militant and confrontationist. State repression against workers is becoming more open and common at the same time as the social-democracy keeps the Liberal Party in Federal power. The social-democratic provincial governments have failed to bring any noticeable improvements in living conditions and layers of people are moving beyond social democratic illusions.

Such conditions linked with a serious realignment of the left has produced a broad layer of radicals open to Trotskyism. The Old Mole and the Red Circle groups which were refused admission into the Canadian section fused to form the Revolutionary Marxist Group. The RMG attempted on frequent occasions to bring about even the opening of fusion discussions with the LSA. The RMG was met with virulent sectarian attacks in the press of the section while the RMG itself avoided responding to such unprincipled provocations.

Latest of the RMG's activities was to initiate actions against the coup in Chile. In the face of Stalinist exclusionary activities, the RMG was nonetheless able to form militant groups of Latin Americans and Canadians into a solidarity campaign which carried important public actions. The solidarity movement did not in all cities accept the "armed struggle" slogans of the RMG but the group continued to build the actions and do propaganda work for its positions. At first, the LSA abstained from activities including demonstrations. Now it has flooded committees in Vancouver and Toronto pretending to be interested individuals involved in activity in defence of political prisoners. By this sort of stacking, the LSA took organizational control of the Chile solidarity movement in Toronto and attempted to drive the RMG out. In the process, independents drawn into the solidarity work were demoralized. This is the visible product of the sectarianism that runs rampant in the LSA.

On the other hand, the RMG has continued to carry its activity and it now rivals the LSA as a political force in several areas of the country. It was able to break through in Vancouver where it has few comrades and mobilized 500 comrades to the less than one hundred assembled by the Communist Party around Chile. The militants of the RMG could have been members of the LSA carrying out these important political actions except for a blind insecurity and sectarianism on the part of the majority of the so-called leadership of the section. Now, we see a group with the politics of the majority of the Fourth International expanding and challenging the section in activity and influence at the same time as the section has sharply declined. Despite the PC majority's lies to the contrary, the RMG has not been built solely out of recruitment from the Canadian section.

In terms of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency, and later the faction, we stayed in the section and fought for our orientation despite slanders and individual victimizations. We did so without blocking the implementation of the line adopted at the convention. We cannot be held responsible for the fact that the section had no clear line coming out of the convention nor can we be held accountable for the attrition in the ranks as a result of the confusion of the majority faction in the leadership and their preoccupation with factional organizing in the Fourth International.

Until the expulsions in Winnipeg, only six RCTers had left the section. In the meantime, we had continued to win support in the ranks of the organization. These facts led to the LSA PC majority faction attempting to obscure disciplinary questions behind

facades. The PC faction withdrew the charge of Tregobov carrying the line of the majority of the Ninth World Congress at the moment of the verdict. That charge was at the very center of the PC faction's case against Michael. In its place was substituted administrative and unproven complaints. The leadership of the Winnipeg branch was expelled in a "kangaroo" court which respected none of the norms of the section nor even the previous decisions of the PC itself. I have from the beginning of this judicial farce challenged the validity of the procedures followed. I refused to recognize the legitimacy of the charges. RCT comrades in Winnipeg were expelled by supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist faction in the majority of the Political Committee because the RCTers carried the line adopted by the majority of the Ninth World Congress. This implies that it is but a matter of time before those of us who remain in the LTF dominated part of the Canadian section will be similarly dealt with because our ideas are the same and we will also carry the majority of the Ninth World Congress, while in no way challenging the line publically on women's liberation, Quebec, the NDP, students, etc.

We are now faced with the situation where half of the leadership of the RCT has been bureaucratically expelled, where the RMG (a group in active political solidarity with the Fourth International) is continuously attacked and excluded by the Canadian section, where the resources and cadre of the section are used in a factional manner not valid under the statutes of the section, where the leading bodies of the section are reduced to factional tools, where the section drifts unsure of its political perspectives and taking on more and more of the characteristics of a sect, etc. We have no choice to fight these things within the Fourth International.

We in no way accept that the expulsions of our Winnipeg comrades was valid. The Winnipeg expulsions were a clear violation of the August accords reached in the United Secretariat and represent a breach of the sentiment if not the letter of the accords. We hold that all active supporters of the Fourth International must be part of the same section wherever possible. The division between the Revolutionary Marxist Group and the League for Socialist Action is no deeper than the division within the Fourth International yet the LSA has refused to even discuss the terms of opening fusion talks. Organizational blocks against non-LSA members and disciplinary reprisals against the pro-majority supporters in the LSA are no way to resolve disputes within the FI. We would hope that other sections of the FI are able to deal with the international debate in a more cautious manner. We support the unification of all FI supporters in all countries (Australia, Mexico, Spain, etc.) including Canada. This is a dire necessity in our attempts to build a strong world party.

As an elected member of the political committee of the Canadian section, I urgently call upon the United Secretariat to establish a Canadian commission to sit at the Tenth World Congress.

I have been systematically excluded from all decision making of the leadership of the Canadian section. I was elected by convention as a member of the Central Committee and again unanimously by the Central Committee to serve on the Political Committee yet I have been read out of the political life of the section just as the RCT is now being read out of the organizational life of the section.

Walter Davis
September, 1973

From the outset of the formation of the opposition in the Canadian section (which began as the United Minority), we called attention to the dangers ahead for the LSA if it failed to change course and integrate itself into the Fourth International. We openly analyzed and criticized the dangerously advanced degree of reformism present in the political orientation of the section most clearly manifested by the deep rot of the Ligue Socialist Ourvriere and the Young Socialists. We were not prepared to accept that the section may be past the point of redirecting itself. The rapid and significant growth of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency offered us some hope and validated the correctness of a political struggle against reformism in the Canadian section. The RCT, in fact, was a product of the same conditions which have sparked the general crisis in the section.

As the 1972-73 convention discussion unfolded, many new factors came into play raising critical questions about the course of the section, its political line and its leadership. The development of a grouping of ten comrades called the Red Circle in the left wing of the social-democracy presented the LSA with the only real possibility for a gain out of the NDP in over a generation of "limited entry work". As Jennings, a supporter of the Dowson wing of the LTF recently commented, "We have been waiting for thirty years for the type of opportunities now before us and we are not there to pick them up." The Red Circle was evolving from centrism towards the Fourth International because of the influence of former LSAers in the grouping. Red Circlers were not academic dilettantes, like the Waffle leadership, but mass leaders. These ten comrades led the formation of the Left Caucus in defiance of the sellouts of the Waffle leadership with the LSA leadership tailing behind the Red Circle at the last moment after getting off the Waffle coattails. The Red Circle opened unity (not fusion) talks with the LSA last fall. The LSA leadership apparently was unprepared to deal with integrating a powerful but tiny group into the section at the same moment as the PC majority was confronted with tendencies to its left and right. The LSA leadership engaged in one delaying tactic after another until many months later, the LSA broke off unity talks with the Red Circle because the RC built a bigger contingent in January Vietnam actions than the LSA and built its contingent under a solidarity slogan. The events in the internal decay of the LSA during the past year are filled with delays of conventions, new tendencies coming into being, splits in the leadership, intervention by Jack Barnes in an attempts to save the new majority of the PC from being defeated by its own stupidity, etc. but that history would be a very confusing one to view in a brief document. What I can say and have said at meetings of the United Secretariat is that the PC majority line and its leadership were stillborn, incapable of giving direction to the ranks of the section in dealing with the new objective potential for the growth of Canadian Trotskyism. The drift that has marked the LSA over the last year has produced total eclectic confusion, serious attrition in the ranks of the PC majority, one faction excluded from the section and another faction planning its own departure. This stillborn leadership is the offspring of Ross Dowson from whence it draws its empiricism. Its specific ingredient that differentiates its line from Ross' is opportunism. The majority of the Political Committee adapts to every milieu that it comes in contact with and that means it adapts to petty bourgeois politics. The line of the LSA goes from right feminism to a new abstract sectarianism towards the social democracy. The practice, where the LSA majority has

practice, is hard core reformism. This pornographic distortion of Trotskyism cannot be covered by the left rhetoric now being addressed to the NDP in the press of the section. Where the LSA works in the NDP, it liquidates the banner of the Fourth International and tails behind the NDP leadership (witness the "Corporate Welfare Bums" articles in Labor Challenge). For all this, the LSA has been increasingly more preoccupied with attacking the Revolutionary Marxist Group than with raising its own banner. In Vancouver, the extremely successful occupation of the Canadian passport office was attacked publically as untraleft despite the wide support it received among those familiar with the Chilean events. In Toronto, comrades of the RMG have been called workerist for engaging in strike support work that the LSA refused to be involved with.

To view the primary question in terms of Canada to be an organizational one, is incorrect but the RMG must nonetheless answer charges and smears against it which have a tendency to become part of the good-and-evil political history developed by the LSA. It will probably become necessary for us to respond to some of these points within the Canadian left--given the LSA's increasing preoccupation with tailing our activities and criticizing them in the most absurd sectarian fashion.

To begin with, the Revolutionary Communist Faction did not at any time split or resign from the Canadian section. It is also somewhat amusing to hear cries about the brevity of our faction when the Political Committee of the LSA declared, in its overwhelming majority, that the Revolutionary Communist Tendency was a faction in April of this year. That interpretation was given at the United Secretariat and it was the basis of subsequent demands for loyalty oaths. The RCF unified with the Revolutionary Marxist Group after we had been physically and politically excluded from the organization of the majority of the section. The expulsions of the RCFers that have taken place to this date were in the Winnipeg LSA. The Winnipeg events are well covered in other documents.

Until after the RCF had been excluded from the section, the PC majority had refused to open a pre-World Congress discussion and schedule a delegated congress to choose representatives to the Tenth World Congress.

The LSA majority faction has spoken of various so-called unity maneuvers, myths of double recruitment, etc. for over a year now. Yet it must deal with such flimsy evidence to even attempt to justify such demon hunting. For example, why would the ten Red Circle comrades apply to the Canadian section? Were they a central committee looking for a base? Why were 14 Old Mole's excluded from the section of 200 members? Was the Old Mole trying to take over the LSA? If the section was so concerned to protect its image, why did it systematically exclude supporters of the international majority in the youth organization? Why was the Political Committee elected at the last convention with a proportion given to the Dowson tendency (half the size of the RCT) twice that of the RCT? Why was a faction organized by the majority leadership when they were under no threat to lose their majority if they were not going to structure that tendency democratically except for the selection of delegates?

If maneuvers were engaged in, it appears obvious that it was the majority of the LSA that carried them. The latest example is the so-called resignation of the RCF from the Canadian section. My letter of October 4 was defined by the Political Committee majority as a split and we were subsequently read out of the organization. This took the onus off the leadership of the LTF in Canada to

politically motivate the exclusion of pro-majority supporters in the Canadian section. We contend the act of locking us out of buildings is not a political step. We remain members of the Fourth International now calling upon delegates to the Tenth World Congress to support our being a group that represents the continuity of the Canadian section and Trotskyism.

Other Facts to Make it Easy:

- 1) No consideration was given to evidence or testimony in the Winnipeg hearings and, in fact, certain comrades who were excluded from the hearings were disciplined with suspension
- 2) The RMG convention story is an example of speculation raised to the level of fact. Members of the LSA majority called to houses of the RCT comrades, the RMG comrades, and even independent New Leftists to attempt to prove that the RCT was at the RMG convention. If the LSA could prove such a thing it would do so. The statement of the "unified political Committee" came from the first meeting of the central leaderships of the RMG and the RCF.
- 3) If the tapes of all sessions of the Political Committee and the Winnipeg hearings are made available to the USFI and the Tenth World Congress, it will be unquestionable that the Winnipeg comrades were expelled and the RCF excluded because it supported and carried the line of the majority of the FI. Because the tapes are so damaging to the PC majority faction, I moved that they be made available in September to the USFI. The majority refused. I offered to personally transcribe all the tapes so that copies be sent off. The majority refused. Those tapes represent the LSA majority's Watergate and I would suspect that they will be missing in the near future.
- 4) The original written charges and the speech by Art Young to the Toronto LSA made it crystal clear that the charge against Michael Tregobov and those who supported him was "carrying the line of the Ninth World Congress in opposition to the line of the section".
- 5) The member of the Political Committee who spoke in the Winnipeg branch on Chile was not on a cross-country tour but a very expensive mission involving Winnipeg only. Al Cappe in his speech stated the line of the FI to be that "the task of revolutionaries in Chile today is not preparation for armed struggle but the building of a mass movement in defence of democratic rights organizing protests in the streets".
- 6) The PC trial body in Winnipeg stated that the charge of carrying the line of the Fourth International in public would be considered but was not "relevant" to other charges. John Riddell withdrew from his earlier position of saying such an action was the basis, the center of the case against Tregobov. The matter was ruled not "relevant" when comrades defended the action. Therefore, the comrades were not allowed to address themselves to the major piece of evidence against them. A number of cases of discipline in the Canadian section (see trial records against Davis and Offley, for example) have operated in this way, trial and verdict with virtually no opportunity

for the individual comrade to respond or appeal.

- 7) The Political Bureau acted against the Winnipeg comrades beyond its authority, with no attempt to consult with the Political Committee and offering no chance for the Winnipeg executive or branch to respond.
- 8) It was claimed that the Winnipeg comrades attacked the majority faction supporters in public for having the Cappe forum. The fact is that Katie Curtin opened the Cappe forum with a denunciation of the Smiley (branch majority) forum and a claim that the Cappe forum was the Trotskyist line on Chile. This was two days before the Smiley forum and before any differentiation had taken place in public on the validity of the forum, either one.
- 9) The Political Bureau had no authority to ban the holding of a forum in Winnipeg by the majority of the branch. It has neither the constitutional authority or the informal moral authority of a legitimate Bolshevik leadership. It made no attempt during a ten day period to have its actions supported by the Political Committee.
- 10) The Winnipeg Cappe forum was not held under the authority of the Political Committee until after the fact.
- 11) The use of suspension in the League before trial or hearing has been a norm in the Canadian section. Its use against the five disloyal members of the Winnipeg branch by the branch majority was legitimate. I was suspended along with Will Offley for two months in 1971 before there was any attempt to have a trial.
- 12) The Winnipeg hearings were held not with the legitimacy of the elected Political Committee but under the total and complete aegis of a faction, a declared faction, which had usurped the apparatus for politically and organizationally sectarian reasons. I was never a party, and the record will confirm this, to the actions adopted by that faction.
- 13) Far from the alleged attempts to head off the crisis which reached a head in Winnipeg, the PC faction did everything it could to deepen the crisis. One week before the trial hearings in Winnipeg, the PC faction supporters in Winnipeg rented a new headquarters and Reed of the branch minority stole the branch's supply of literature. A number of other actions which could only be called discipline without charges were carried out. The branch was, in fact, being placed under the receivership of a factional minority.
- 14) The claim that certain Winnipeg comrades refused to appear before the kangaroo trial is bullshit. The trial tapes, if not destroyed, will show that the PC faction representatives decided who would be allowed to speak.
- 15) The majority of the Winnipeg branch presented the line of the Fourth International in the Smiley forum. The minority presented the line of the LSA which is counter-posed to it. It

cannot be realistically argued that the LSA majority faction was simply updating a position of the majority of the FI when it has publically attacked that position wherever possible.

- 16) The disclaimers of the trial committee sitting in Winnipeg that the "line of the Fourth International" was not relevant flies in the face of reality. Even today, leading members of the LSA majority faction will state quite boldly that no comrade has the right to carry the line of the international if it conflicts with the line of the section. Michael Tregobov was expelled for carrying the line of the Ninth World Congress. The political Committee trial heard evidence to that fact and made its decision on that basis.
- 17) The Political Committee fell over its own feet in defining charges against Michael. They have been unable to agree to this day what was the reason for expelling Tregobov. At one moment it will be said that he read from an internal document of the FI. A charge that remains unproven. At other points, it is said that he consciously broke the line of the section. This is admitted. Michael carried the line of the majority of the Fourth International as adopted at the Ninth World Congress. Yet, if this is the center of charges against Tregobov, he was expelled for material that the trial committee ruled to be "not relevant".
- 18) When a series of charges against 14 Winnipeg comrades of the RCT were dropped, only one remained against Michael. He remained accused of reading from an internal document of the Fourth International. The breath of potential of the charge and the danger of being expelled for the undefined limits it involves can be seen by the answer to a question that I raised on the Political Committee. Would I be tried in a similar manner if I read from "Building Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe". I was told that I would be disciplined if I read from that document, even if it were published publically in Europe.
- 19) In any case, even if the charge against Tregobov had been proven, was expulsion the way to bring about the political solution to the growing problems that the PC majority had longed for? No, the PC majority faction led by Young and Riddell had been creating a witchhunt atmosphere in the LSA branches and needed human sacrifice to throw before the membership. On that basis, it was determined to expel Tregobov. The decision to expel Tregobov was taken in an internal meeting of the PC majority faction and I was told about it before the official trial hearing on the Political Committee. I was told the decision by a supporter of Ross Dowson.
- 20) The financial commitment and its severing by the RCT has a certain history. On numerous occasions, I was told by the Political Committee that a report on finances was forthcoming. At the LSA convention in April, we moved a motion of censure against the out-going Political Committee for its factional use of funds. An agreement was reached at the convention that the item be withdrawn from the floor on the basis that a full accounting of section funds would be made. No such accounting was ever made on the Political Committee and I was consistently

refused access to the financial records of the section on the grounds of "security". In discussion with members of the Control Commission, my suspicions that the former Political Committee had factionally appropriated funds for the use of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency was validated. I was told by Williams that the PC had used section funds for the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency's founding conference in Santiago, Chile but that this was not viewed as unusual and would not be pursued further. Following the declaration of a faction in the Political Committee, I demanded a full accounting of the use of section funds for factional purposes since the motion dealing with the LTF called for turning over all resources of the section to that faction. That report and no financial report was forthcoming during my period on the PC and up to my exclusion from the headquarters of the section. There is no question in my mind that the resources of the Canadian section have been used factionally for a prolonged and continuing period while at the same time the Canadian section has given virtually nothing to the Fourth International.

- 21) The Political Committee of the Canadian section no longer exists. It was dissolved by the decisions of the majority Leninist-Trotskyist Faction.
- 22) Comrade Vergeat was not consulted about details of the letter announcing the formation of the Revolutionary Communist Faction. He was informed by me on the developments in Canada.
- 23) The Revolutionary Communist Tendency and the later Faction never opposed the formation of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction. In fact, we greeted it as one of the more honest acts ever committed by what we viewed and view to be a disloyal component of the Fourth International. We did protest rightfully the incredibly gross breach of norms by that faction as outlined in its call and in the speeches of Art Young and Phil Cornoyeur to branches.
- 24) I have heard that the RCF was declared by the LSA leadership to have been a "faction for a day". While this view might be quaint, it represents crystal ball gazing and little else. If I had formed a faction which had joined another organization the next day, it would be logical for the LSA majority faction to assume that I was then to be elected to the central leadership of that organization given the political influence that I would bear. Rather than deal with astrologisms of the PC majority faction, I will await charges based on substantiated evidence. Incidentally, the question of the lost weekend of Walter Davis is a complete red herring. It was the Political Committee itself that postponed a meeting on the weekend of October 5-8 because the LSA finds it impossible to function on holidays.
- 25) The RMG has been charged with carrying out a unity maneuver for the past year. It is becoming quite a piece of mythology to assume that a group that has existed for less than four months could have been engaging in a unity maneuver since the middle of 1972.

- 26) Far from attacking the LSA in public, the RMG has perhaps bent the stick too far in the other direction and not responded to a shrill hysteria by members of the LSA and its press. Not one attack has been launched in the pages of the Old Mole against the Canadian section but more column space has been given in that monthly to reporting the work of other sections in the international than the biweekly Labor Challenge. The Labour Challenge has spent more column space attacking the RMG than analyzing the crisis of Canadian social democracy.
- 27) Nowhere until the time of my exclusion from the LSA has the PC majority faction dared make its correspondence from and to the RMG available to the international leadership.
- 28) The June 1973 wave of resignations from the Young Socialists was not a "split" of RCT comrades. The members of the Internationalist Communist Tendency in the Young Socialists were forced to leave the RCT by the decision of the April LSA Convention in its Organizational Resolution. We were instructed to disband a joint YS-LSA tendency. We did so.
- 29) The members of the Internationalist Communist Tendency were all youth comrades who had been refused recruitment to the Canadian section on the basis that their political ideas would lead them to join the Revolutionary Communist Tendency and thereby give us additional weight in section and international discussions.
- 30) If as contended it was necessary for the majority of the Political Committee of the Canadian section to form a faction, I would ask it several questions. What was your programmatic basis of unity? In what way did the formation of your faction contribute to in the way of political clarification? How could two warring factions coexist in your faction will little or no agreement on Canadian politics? Why did your faction feel it necessary to caucus before full PC meetings on the most minute items? Were you perhaps attempting to force discipline upon recalcitrant faction members?
- 31) It is an outright lie for the PC majority faction to say that not one cent or comrade of the section was used factionally. Funds were used and I was refused permission to see the books under security guises and excuses like the treasurer is bringing it up-to-date.
- 32) The LSA PC majority faction should publish the charges laid at the convention in April by the RCT. In any case, Comrade Lars of Sweden can recall that the report was referred off the floor with a directive for a report back.
- 33) The Control Commission should publish the letter laying charges against the majority of the Political Committee for various violations of its authority and its bureaucratic indiscretions.
- 33) I at no point called for the PC majority faction to resign from the Leninist-Trotskyist faction.

- 34) The RCT received 18% of the pre-convention vote and nearly 20% of the delegate vote. We received 7% of the Political Committee.
- 35) Those comrades who resigned (they were five members of the section) in June of this year did look forward to rejoining the Canadian section on a principled basis. They adhered to the same basis of unity as did the Revolutionary Marxist Group-- the primary point being the programmatic agreement with the historic acquisitions of the Fourth International and the decisions of its international congresses.
- 36) There were actually 30 adherents to the October 4 letter signed by me. The 29th comrade in the LSA to support that letter was Marv Gandall who was not in the city when the statement was submitted. One remaining supporter of the Internationalist Communist Tendency also joined the Revolutionary Communist Faction.
- 37) The Revolutionary Communist Faction did not split or resign from the Canadian section but formed a faction which had not decided on what further actions to take. We were physically excluded from the headquarters of the LSA.
- 38) The majority of the Political Committee of the LSA did not even bother to go through the formalities of expelling us. All expelled comrades have asked for the right to appeal. Since we who were not expelled have been read out of the section, we have no avenues of appeal open to us.
- 39) Despite the wishful thinking of the PC majority faction and the Labor Challenge, the RMG and its structured periphery is not made up in its majority by ex-members of the Canadian section nor its youth group.
- 40) No international conference before the Tenth World Congress had been scheduled by the LSA PC at the time of our exclusion.
- 41) My October 4 letter was a declaration of faction.
- 42) My October 15 letter was a statement from the former coordinating committee of the Revolutionary Communist Faction and the political committee of the Revolutionary Marxist Group renamed the "Unified Political Committee".

I have found the task of writing this statement to be laborious and not particularly productive. I am making the record on a matter that should have not reached this point. The history of refusing the Red Circle (10 comrades) and the Old Mole (14 comrades) and the Young Socialist pro-majority comrades (26) is one of stupidity and waste of resources. Those organizational mistakes can only be explained in the context of political disintegration which is and was rampant in the section. The centrist cadaver that is now the Canadian section of the Fourth International has no right to that name. The Revolutionary Marxist Group is the legitimate heir to the banner of the Fourth International. When the Revolutionary Communist Faction was excluded from the headquarters of the League for Socialist Action, an irreversible step was taken. The majority of the political Committee of the Canadian section split the section

publically and split the Central Committee into two warring camps. As a member of the minority of the Central Committee elected unanimously at convention, I view the fusion of the RCF with the RMG to have been a principled one and an act that should have been led by the majority of the section. We contend that that fusion brought the RMG into the Fourth International and there are two public factions of the Canadian section of the FI--one the LSA and one the RMG. We view all the actions of the LSA majority to have been in clear violation with the August USFI agreement.

November 18, 1973
Walter Davis

LSA/LSO LEADERSHIP CALLS ON SPLITTERS TO REJOIN THE CANADIAN SECTION

Response of the Political Committee to the Davis Submission

On October 4 1973, the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT) wrote a letter, signed by Walter Davis, to the Political Committee of the Canadian section, the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere (LSA/LSO). The letter stated: "We will no longer respect the authority or actions of the Political Committee of the League for Socialist Action. We also wish to inform you that we are terminating all financial commitments to the LSA..."

In this way, the RCT announced that it repudiated the obligations of membership as defined by the LSA/LSO constitution: assumption of regular financial commitments and acceptance of convention decisions, including recognition of the authority of the leadership elected by it. The announcement by the RCT that it no longer accepted the conditions of membership in the section, clearly constituted a notice of resignation.

Far from welcoming this walkout, the Political Committee sought to dissuade the RCT from splitting. Representatives of the Political Committee met twice with RCT leaders, to see what could be done to overcome the ill-considered action. But the RCT leaders said they could not recognize the authority of the Political Committee, the Central Committee, or the convention of the section, unless the PC majority first "dissolved its faction:-- i.e., the individual comrades resigned from the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction.

The convention of the Revolutionary Marxist Group began the next day. The RMG is a Canadian organization that claims to support the Fourth International but which has been built through a persistent struggle against the Canadian section. Leaders of the RCT took part in the RMG convention and accepted posts on the RMG Central Committee.

What happened in Canada can be judged on the basis of these facts alone. And none of the above facts are contested by Walter Davis in his submission to the United Secretariat on the reasons for the split.

Davis fails to deal seriously with the presentation of events compiled by the LSA/LSO Political Bureau in its October 19 statement "Splitters From Canadian Section Join Revolutionary Marxist Group." On the contrary, his lengthy document is an obvious attempt to obscure the issues. He lists 43 "other facts to make it easy" (Davis incorrectly lists two points as "33") but he has numerous other complaints and unsupported allegations which he does not number. We have counted 116 different charges.

Within this barrage of charges, Davis weaves his political justification for the split: the Canadian section of the Fourth International has become a "centrist cadaver." The RCT abandoned this decaying corpse to fuse with what was, in its opinion, a healthy, robust organism, the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG).

Davis's method of argument can confuse only those with a limited access to the facts. The purpose of this method is to counterbalance the flimsiness of his case by the sheer volume and venom of his complaints against the section. It is the old debater's trick -- when you have nothing else, throw in every stick of furniture, including the kitchen sink.

With a small number of exceptions, Davis's allegations consist of lies and slanders against the Canadian section. The accurate statements have little or nothing to do with the causes of the split. There is no need to take up the 116 charges seriatum; it will be sufficient to consider the substance of the matter.

Did the Canadian leadership have a policy of driving the minority out of the section? Or did the RCT decide to split in face of the leadership's efforts to keep them in?

What Davis Confirms in the Political Bureau Statement

1. The Oct. 19 statement of the Political Bureau of the LSA/LSO makes it clear that the sole reason for disciplinary action against the six Winnipeg comrades was their defiance of the constitutional authority of the leadership of the section. They rejected instructions to the branch to build a meeting for a central leader of the LSA/LSO on tour against the coup in Chile. At their trial, they continued to reject the authority of the leadership. "For this reason, and for this reason alone, five of the accused were expelled from the LSA/LSO, and a sixth, a Central Committee member, was suspended," the Bureau stated.

Davis does not challenge these facts. He talks about 116 other points; but evades this key question. In a shame-faced way he thus confirms one of the central items required to reach an objective judgment on what happened in Winnipeg.

2. The Political Bureau statement says that the RCT letter of Oct. 4 constituted an announcement of resignation from the section. But, says Davis, the "Oct. 4 letter was a declaration of faction." The RCT "did not split or resign from the Canadian section but formed a faction which had not decided on what further steps to take."

The full text of the letter from the RCT is appended to this reply. It was also attached to the previous Political Bureau statement, so that it is now available to the entire membership of the Fourth International. The letter makes clear that the RCT had decided to repudiate its membership obligations.

Davis says nothing about this letter. He does not explain in what way the RCT decision, announced Oct. 4, could be taken in any other way than as a repudiation of membership obligations required by the section's constitution, and therefore as a resignation.

3. The Political Bureau statement brings out the fact that it was the Winnipeg RCT that began disciplinary actions. It initiated such actions against its ideological opponents in the branch, in particular against those who accepted the Bureau's instructions to the branch to build the Cappe forum.

Davis makes no attempt to explain this fact or to seek to justify the disciplinary action undertaken by his faction. Instead he points to another instance, the Reed case. The branch RCT majority expelled comrade Reed, its coordinator of Pathfinder book distribution, on trumped-up charges of "stealing" branch literature.

Davis attacks the PC for not accepting the expulsion of Reed. He repeats the pattern of the splitters' open letter, which attacked the PC for not accepting the suspension without trial of Winnipeg comrades who recognized the authority of the PC. In these two cases, as in the entire crisis in the Winnipeg branch arising out of the Chile forums, the PC opposed any attempt at resolving organizational frictions through expulsions. The PC sought a political resolution of the problem.

4. The Political Bureau went into detail on its attempts to find a way for the RCT to remain in the section: consultations with a central leader of the IEC Majority Tendency in Europe; dropping of charges against many RCT comrades for infractions of discipline; attempts to help the Winnipeg comrades avoid a confrontation involving disciplinary action simply by making statements recognizing the authority of the elected leadership bodies; two meetings with RCT leaders after the faction submitted its letter of resignation.

Davis does not challenge the fact that the leadership made this series of attempts. He singles out one instance in the series and avers that the dropping of charges was a trick.

Davis's Attempts to Confuse the Issue

1. The line of the Fourth International was never at issue.

What happened in Winnipeg? An individual comrade speaking in the name of the LSA/LSC at a public forum, read from an internal document, "Bolivia--results and perspectives". This comrade and 13 other Winnipeg RCT members informed the movement that they had decided "consciously not to present the line of the Canadian section on Latin America." at the forum. Yet the charges originally laid against all fourteen on this count were dropped.

Only one charge remained, the charge against Tregobov of publicly reading from an internal document. What Tregobov said at the forum was never in question--he gave the PC a copy of his speech. A calculated breach of discipline had been committed by Tregobov. Yet he could have avoided expulsion by simply admitting that an individual comrade does not have the right to issue internal material to the public, thus reassuring the central leadership that such a

breach of discipline would not recur. His failure to do this left the leadership no choice but to take disciplinary action.

The question of presenting "the line of the Fourth International in public" does not figure at all in the Tregobov case.

Another incident a short time later gave rise to all the other disciplinary cases in Winnipeg. Here comrades were disciplined for one reason and one reason only -- they refused to acknowledge that the elected central leadership bodies had authority to sponsor a meeting on Chile in "their" city. Over this issue, they split the branch and publicly attacked the meeting organized under the auspices of the Political Committee. At the trial, they were specifically asked whether they acknowledged the authority of the central leadership on such a question. A simple affirmative answer would have avoided the necessity of disciplinary action. But each of the accused answered that they did not accept the central leadership's authority. The Winnipeg LSA had become a breakaway branch; the comrades leading it rejected the authority of the leading bodies. Five comrades were expelled for this reason, and this reason alone. One, a central committee member, was suspended.

The four other comrades who were charged failed on two occasions to appear before the trial body without giving any reason; consequently, they were suspended, pending another effort to have them contact the trial body.

Where does the question of presenting "the line of the Fourth International in public" figure in this case either? It does not.

Davis affirms repeatedly in his 116 points that Tregobov and other Winnipeg comrades were "charged with carrying the line of the Fourth International." He cites no evidence. He refers to comments allegedly made in the PC or the branches, by individual leaders. But he does not cite the records, the charges against Tregobov and other Winnipeg comrades. Nor does he make any attempt to contest the accuracy of the summary of the Winnipeg events presented in the Political Bureau statement. He ignores totally the written reports of the trial bodies in the Tregobov and other Winnipeg cases.

The reason is very simple. On the basis of the record, Davis is incapable of contesting the accuracy of the Political Bureau's account of what happened. He is reduced to fabricating charges that were never laid, recounting what was allegedly said, and placing quotation marks around phrases cooked up to suit his argument.

The only charges involving political line at all, those of violating the line of the Canadian section, were dropped by the Canadian leadership in an attempt to eliminate possible sources of confusion in the dispute, and to help resolve the organizational problem in a way that would best facilitate the preparatory discussion for the next world congress.

2. Davis's Opinion of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction

Davis terms the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction "a disloyal component of the Fourth International." We leave for another occasion a discussion of the merits of that opinion. What is germane in considering the course of action followed by Davis and the RCT is that this opinion figured in their decision to reject the authority of the Political Committee and to split from the Canadian Section.

Davis maintains that the fact that a majority of the members of the PC declared their agreement with the platform of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction and met in caucus from time to time to discuss matters relating to their faction, was sufficient to nullify the Political Committee as the leadership elected by the convention.

In support of this bizarre contention, he alleges that "the PC majority announced very clearly that it was committing 'all the resources of the Canadian section to the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction.'" And it did so in practice, he says.

Davis does not say where or when such a decision was allegedly made. In fact, he is referring to the Aug. 26 meeting of the Political Committee which adopted a report on the Fourth International containing six recommendations. But the motion quoted by Davis is not among them. It simply does not exist! None of the six recommendations listed in the minutes of the meeting authorizes the use of movement resources for either the IEC Majority Tendency or the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction.

To try to strengthen his case, Davis has once again not only invented the words but also the quotation marks he put around them.

Davis and another Central Committee member of the RCT attended the Aug. 26 PC meeting. Neither they nor the other RCT members on the Central Committee who each received copies of the PC minutes, ever challenged the accuracy of these minutes. In fact, at the Sept. 1 meeting of the Political Committee, Davis voted to adopt the minutes of the Aug. 26 meeting.

Davis refers to comments made by individual leaders and to a report presented to the Toronto membership on the August 26 PC meeting, alleging that comrades indicated that there would be "factional use of movement resources." We do not need to explore what was said or not said on this or other occasions. What is relevant is what the policy of the LSA/LSO is and has been. These policies are decided by the convention of the section and the leading bodies they elect; they are recorded in their minutes.

The Oct. 19 Political Bureau statement clearly restated the movement's policy: section resources have not been used to support any international tendency or faction. The minutes of the Aug. 26 PC meeting accurately reflect this policy.

Davis is unable to point to more than one specific instance where he believes that the resources of the movement have been used in a factional manner. He alleges that the PC used "section funds for the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency's founding conference in Santiago, Chile." The groundlessness of this charge can easily be demonstrated.

In April, 1973, the LSA/LSO sent its executive secretary on a tour of Latin America. He visited Trotskyist organizations in Argentina, Chile, Peru and Mexico, in addition to covering the Argentine and Chilean elections. He held discussions with leading comrades of both international tendencies; and he attended the LTT conference in Santiago. On his return to Canada, he presented a report on his trip, including a full report on the LTT conference at a PC meeting attended by RCT members, including Walter Davis.

The LSA/LSO regards such trips to other countries and consultations with leaders of other sections as part of the obligation of every section in participating in the life and construction of our world movement.

This tour stands as Davis's sole example of "factional use of funds." Nevertheless, Davis affirms that "there is no question in my mind that the resources of the Canadian section have been used for a prolonged and continuing period." On the basis of this unsubstantiated suspicion, Davis led the RCT in a financial boycott and a split from the section!

3. The Facts on the RMG Convention

The Political Bureau statement notes that the RCT letter of Oct. 4 constituted a resignation from the LSA/LSO. The RCT members left the Canadian section in order to join the Revolutionary Marxist Group, and they participated in the RMG convention that began the very next day - Oct. 5. At this convention, RCT leaders accepted posts on the RMG Central Committee.

As the Political Committee was doing its utmost on Oct. 9-10 to hold back the RCT from consummating a split, the split had already taken place, the RCT had fused with a rival organization.

Davis does not challenge a word of this recording of the facts. Instead he tries to divert attention through statements that appear to contradict the Political Bureau, without explicitly denying any of the facts the Bureau reports.

The "RCF did not at any time split or resign from the Canadian section," Davis claims. Davis does not deny that the RCT resigned from the LSA/LSO. He views the "Canadian section" as a state of mind, not an organization; he believes he can resign from the organization recognized by the Fourth International as the section, and still remain part of the "section." His position contradicts the statutes of the world movement, contradicts the facts, and contradicts common sense.

"The RCF unified with the Revolutionary Marxist Group after we had been physically and politically excluded from the organi-

zation of the majority of the section," Davis writes. In fact, former RCT members were informed that they could not attend branch meetings on Oct. 14, after they had handed in a letter announcing their "negotiations" for fusion with the RMG.

Did Davis and other members of his tendency or faction attend the RMG convention? "Rather than deal with the astrologisms of the PC majority faction, I will await charges based on substantial evidence," Davis replies. His evasion amounts to an admission of the accuracy of the Political Bureau's charge.

In fact the RCTers had pressing reasons to complete their split on schedule, and participate in the RMG convention.

A sharp tendency struggle had raged inside the RMG and RCT for months. The forces were almost evenly divided between two tendencies, and it was not clear who would win a majority at the convention. (In the end, the minority won over 40% of the delegates' votes.) And the RCT itself was divided on the issues--for example, Walter Davis and Brett Smiley stood with the RMG convention majority, while Murry Smith and Marv Gandall were with the minority.

We can well imagine the nervousness of the RCT over the possibility that their timing on the split might be upset. The efforts of the Political Committee to avert the breach in Winnipeg delayed their walkout in that city until only four days before the RMG convention.

Davis's evasion of the charges of the Political Bureau on these points offers additional confirmation of the Bureau's account of the split.

The Splitters Explain Their Action

One of the positive aspects of the Davis statement is its brief, clear summary of the factors that the splitters believe left them no choice but to leave the LSA/LSO. Davis claims that a situation existed in which "...half of the leadership of the RCT has been bureaucratically expelled, where the RMG (a group in active political solidarity with the Fourth International) is continuously attacked and excluded by the Canadian section, where the resources and cadre of the section are used in a factional manner not valid under the statutes of the section, where the leading bodies of the section are reduced to factional tools, where the section drifts unsure of its political perspectives and taking on more and more of the characteristics of a sect, etc."

Davis's reference to the "exclusion" of the RMG is in reality a reference to a political disagreement at the LSA/LSO's April 1973 convention over what would constitute a principled basis for unity with this group. Davis still disagrees with the position taken by the majority of the convention, and is of the opinion that experience has proved this decision to have been wrong.

He should then have confidence that the same experience will lead a majority to agree with his view on the question. Such disagreements often cause frustration and impatience, but they are not grounds for a split.

The rest of Davis's summary only confirms the causes of the split as presented by the Political Bureau statement of Oct. 19:

(a) Davis cites the expulsion of five of the RCT's Winnipeg members. As the Oct. 19 Bureau statement reported, the RCT could have averted the need for disciplinary action, or opened the door to rescinding it, by helping to persuade the five comrades to recognize the authority of the Political Committee to lead the work of the LSA/LSO branches. The RCT chose instead to join the five in rejecting the authority of LSA/LSO leadership bodies and walked out of the section.

(b) Davis avers there was "factional" use of resources and factional manipulation of the PC. This boils down to the view that it is abuse of power for individual PC members to declare support for the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction, and that therefore the Political Committee dissolved itself. The argument is so absurd as to fall of its own weight.

(c) Davis says that the RCT strongly disagreed with the political line adopted by the convention, and applied since then by the leadership. On that basis he declares his lack of confidence in the leadership. But this is not new. It was the position of the RCT a year ago. What is new is advancing this view as justification for a split.

Do the breadth of the present political differences and the existence of international factions actually justify a split in the Canadian section? Even if the organizational crisis in the Winnipeg branch is thrown onto the scales, does this justify a split? If so, the prospects for maintaining unity in our world movement are very dim.

What was the Political Committee's Policy?

The Davis statement makes 116 charges to prove that the LSA/LSO Political Committee was hell-bent to throw out the RCT. This exercise, which Davis himself finds "laborious and not particularly productive," obscures the truth rather than revealing it. Any internal struggle generates frictions. The question that Davis does not pose and does not answer is this: given the organizational frictions, what was the policy of the Political Committee with regard to maintaining the unity of the Canadian section?

This policy was clear, and was illustrated on a number of key issues.

(1) The Political Committee worked for the fullest democratic discussion of disputed questions. It twice postponed the

section's convention, providing for an 11-month preconvention discussion period, to give all points the maximum opportunity for a full hearing. As a result, the April 1973 convention arrived at decisions whose democratic and authoritative character was recognized by all, including the RCT.

(2) The same policy was followed by the leadership of the Canadian section with regard to the international discussion. Distribution of written documents and their organized discussion in the branches have proceeded without interruption for more than four years, since before the 1969 world congress. The call for a special pre-world-congress convention, which the Political Committee delayed until the date of the world congress had been clearly determined, was issued 60 days before the convention, as laid down in the Canadian section's constitution.

(3) Members of the RCT were included in leadership bodies on a local and branch level, wherever the RCT had strength. The April 1973 convention elected five RCT members to the Central Committee. Walter Davis was put on the Political Committee. Branch executives sought to work out with RCT members their full participation in the active work of the movement.

(4) During the entire period from the formation of the predecessor of the RCT in the Spring of 1972, until the Winnipeg walk-out of Oct. 1, 1973, no disciplinary action was taken against RCT members. The policy of the PC was to resolve individual breaches of discipline without recourse to disciplinary action.

(5) Disagreements persisted around motions of censure passed in October 1971 against two members of the section who later joined the RCT. The 1973 convention demonstratively rescinded these censures and lifted the charges against these members in an attempt to cement the unity of the movement. The Political Committee criticized the emergency suspension of these comrades without trial preceding the censures. This peculiar practice, repudiated by the PC, was revived by the RCT when it suspended without trial, on Oct. 24, 1973, all Winnipeg members who had accepted the decisions of the Political Committee on Chile defense work.

(6) The Political Committee's policy was to respect the majority of the RCT in the Winnipeg branch, and to accord the leadership of this branch the same powers and the same latitude enjoyed by any branch leadership. The PC recognized that in taking leadership of the branch in August, 1972, the Winnipeg RCT accepted a difficult responsibility. The Winnipeg RCT leadership stated at the time that it would apply in Winnipeg the line of the majority of the section, as determined by convention decisions and by the central leadership. When organizational frictions subsequently arose, they were resolved in this framework -- without a rupture. The crisis in Winnipeg began when the Winnipeg RCT repudiated this undertaking, and used its majority in the branch to force a split.

(7) The LSA/LSO's recruitment policy is that when a pro-

spective recruit has sympathies for this or that tendency within the League, this will not be a factor for or against his or her recruitment. This policy has rigorously applied. Not one specific case was ever placed before the Political Committee for discussion in which any member claimed that this policy had been violated.

These policies of the majority leadership aimed to preserve the unity of the movement in the face of serious provocations by the RCT. They proved effective in presenting a split up until September 1973, when the RCT clearly broke with its previous commitment to abide by convention decisions and accept the authority of central leadership bodies. This change of policy by the RCT set them on their walk-out course.

Rejoin the section!

Davis does not claim that any member of the Canadian section was disciplined for public presentation of the positions of the last world congress. He claims however that the fact that RCT members were disciplined for refusing to recognize the authority of the Political Committee was just a ruse -- the Political Committee's real reason was that the comrades involved publicly presented "the line adopted by the majority of the Ninth World Congress." "It is but a matter of time before those of us who remain...will be similarly dealt with," Davis writes.

Was the RCT justified in splitting because of what it thought the Political Committee would probably do in the future? Could it not have waited to see what the Political Committee would really do? Could it not have reaffirmed its acceptance of the PC's authority, thus testing the PC's claim that this was the real grounds for disciplinary action? Why did the RCT split despite the lack of the slightest shred of organizational justification for its action?

Davis's real position is that the Canadian section of the Fourth International is a "cadaver". A cadaver cannot be revived. As Davis presents the political differences, they are so profound that they require a split.

The Political Committee disagrees with this assessment. It is true that differences developed on many questions. At the April convention, the RCT presented documents on overall tasks and perspectives, on party organization, on our work in the New Democratic (labor) party, on Quebec nationalism, on student work and the youth movement, on women's liberation, on Canadian nationalism, and of course on the disputed issues in the world movement -- each of them counterposed to the positions of the majority of the convention. The ISA/LSO majority leadership did not believe that these differences justified a split. It did everything it could to maintain the unity of the movement. Even after the split in the Winnipeg branch and the resignation letter of the RCT, the Political Committee asked for discussions with the RCT leadership, in order to maintain unity.

In these discussions, the Political Committee representatives proposed a simple formula to overcome the crisis: the RCT should

recognize the authority of the leadership unanimously elected by the convention. Its members should reassume their duties as outlined by the constitution. In this framework, a solution to the organizational disputes, including those that had led to disciplinary measures, could be worked out.

The RCT's refusal to respond and take this course clearly reveals the real nature of their walkout: it was the act of an unprincipled faction, splitting the section without justification. This action struck a hard blow at the unity of the world movement; it was a disloyal action against the Fourth International.

The Political Committee of the LSA/LSO hopes that the RCT's split can be reversed. It does not write off the chances for unity with the Revolutionary Marxist Group. It only insists that the RMG and the Canadian section show in practice their ability to work together toward common goals, before fusing into one democratic-centralist organization.

Unlike Walter Davis, the Political Committee sees the task today not as one of disputing over who should be blamed for the split, but in taking positive steps to reverse it.

We call on the former members of the RCT to change their course, and rejoin the LSA/LSO. They need only agree to accept the authority of the convention of the Canadian section, and of the leadership bodies it elected.

This is the way to overcome the damaging impact on the world movement of the RCT's unprincipled and unjustified split from the Canadian section.

- adopted by the Political Bureau,
December 9, 1973 -

APPENDIX I

The RCT's Letter of Resignation

October 4 1973

Dear Comrades of the LSA Political Committee:

Events in Winnipeg have confirmed our suspicions that previous actions of the Political Committee were leading in a direction of serious consequences.

Those events have led us to decide that we have no choice but to dissolve the Revolutionary Communist Tendency and reconstitute ourselves as the Revolutionary Communist Faction.

We will no longer respect the authority or actions of the Political Committee of the League for Socialist Action.

We also wish to inform you that we are terminating all financial commitments to the LSA and will submit future financial commitments directly to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The Political Committee of the LSA has, by the decisions of its former majority, dissolved itself as a cross-section leadership and now functions as a leadership of a faction.

We will submit further documentation on this and related matters to the LSA and to the United Secretariat.

Communist greetings,

s/Walter Davis
Coordinator of the RCF

c.c: USFI

APPENDIX II

THE NON-EXISTENT PC MOTION ON "FACTIONAL USE OF LSA/LSO RESOURCES"

The Aug. 26, 1973 Political Committee meeting adopted a Report on the World Movement containing six concrete recommendations. The minutes of the meeting list these recommendations as follows:

- "1. That the Political Committee draw to the Revolutionary Communist Tendency's attention the organizational report adopted by the April convention. No further warning re violation of the norms of the LSA/LSO will be given. Collaboration outside the control of official units of the LSA/LSO with the Mill group in Montreal or with the RMG constitutes disloyalty to the LSA/LSO.
- "2. That the Political Committee fully supports the transformation of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency into an international faction.
- "3. The Political Committee will take all necessary measures to fight against the threat of a split within the International including fighting for a delay in the holding of the World Congress, for a full, democratic discussion of the issues in all sections and sympathizing groups. The Political Committee supports the aims of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction.
- "4. Leninist-Trotskyist Faction supporters on the Political Committee will meet together when they deem necessary.
- "5. The Political Committee authorizes Leninist-Trotskyist Faction supporters in the branches to meet separately should they feel it necessary."
- "6. To present this report to the branches of the LSA/LSO as soon as possible."