

Intercontinental Press

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Bureau of the Steering Committee
of the International Majority Tendency

Dear Ernest,

Since receiving the copy of the article by Comrade Ricardo Hernández "Los Hechos Sobre la Escisión de la Liga Socialista," which you edited, I have given considerable thought to the possible consequences of publishing it. In the history of the Fourth International I do not recall anything remotely resembling this article.

Except for one item (placing the entire membership on trial for a month preliminary to carrying out a purge on the basis of their level of activity), Comrade Hernández evades discussing the series of measures that converted the Liga Socialista into probably the most undemocratic organization in the Fourth International. He does not discuss the role played by the leadership of the PST in initiating these measures and putting them into effect, important as that role was. Although he criticizes me for not taking up the political issues underlying the split and the related split in the LTF, which he avers involved differences over the Portuguese revolution, Comrade Hernández himself leaves all of this aside. Thus we remain in the dark on the political views he presumably shares with the leaders of the PST which were considered to be so vital as to necessitate engineering an international split.

It is true that on electoral policy in Mexico, Comrade Hernández defends the common platform that the Liga Socialista (TM) signed together with the Mexican Stalinists. A polemic on this question could prove instructive. However, for Comrade Hernández this is a minor point and he confines himself largely to pressing for publication of the joint electoral program in Intercontinental Press. (It appeared in the March 1 issue in both Spanish and English.)

Instead of an article along lines such as those indicated above that could help explain the split, thereby serving to speed the process of unifying the Trotskyist groups in Mexico, and that I for one would certainly welcome despite any differences I might still hold with his interpretations, Comrade Hernández has submitted a polemic based in the main on reviving the "police agent" question and expanding on it. In doing so he offers unverified material and gratuitous assertions that open up a series of new questions.

An article of this type does not conform to the agreement that was reached at the IEC plenum, according to which Comrade Hernández, in replying to me on the reasons for the split, was to raise no new issues necessitating a public rebuttal. The article he submitted, however, would incite further disputation of a kind decidedly injurious to the interests of the Fourth International, as he himself indicates. It would not be possible, in my opinion, to deny others the right to defend themselves against the truly venomous charges that are advanced.

Aside from this, part of the material--consisting of things that were said in confidential sessions, with no thought of publication--is libelous on the face of it and cannot be published by Intercontinental Press.

To me the worst aspect of the article is what it reveals about the attitude of Comrade Hernández toward the proposed unification of the three groups in Mexico. The agreement reached at the February plenum of the International Executive Committee on suggested procedure in seeking a principled unification included a clause stating that the comrades who did not recognize the legitimacy of the second congress of the Liga Socialista pledge: "That they have not placed any charges against Comrade Ricardo and that they consider him to be loyal to the Fourth International." And the following statement was added to the foregoing sentence: "The Steering Committee of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction states that it has no reason to doubt Comrade Ricardo's loyalty to the Fourth International."

These statements clearly closed the "police agent" question and the erroneous way in which it was handled by both sides. (The statements in fact confirmed what I had already indicated in my article on the split published in Intercontinental Press.)

Yet Comrade Hernández disregards these public affirmations as if they meant zero to him. (He does the same with the "robbery" question, which was likewise closed by the agreement reached at the plenum of the IEC.) He writes as if nothing had happened requiring him to rise above the abysmal level of the closed session of the plenum of the Central Committee of the Liga Socialista held last September.

As a tactical thrust taken by his faction, Comrade Hernández's article must be judged as an attempt to reopen closed organizational issues, the aim being to once again poison relations with the Bolshevik Leninist Faction and place fresh obstacles in the way of a principled unification of the three groups in Mexico.

The real attitude of Comrade Hernández, as revealed by his article, casts the most serious doubt on the possibilities of a viable unification in Mexico no matter what docu-

ments are advanced as the basis for unification.

The first test has already been made. The proposals that the IEC voted for as requisites in seeking to reach a principled unification in Mexico, and that the leaders of both the BLF and the LTF accepted at face value, were not to the liking of Comrade Hernández. He brushed the agreement aside even while he was under the direct restraining influence of the leaders of the International Majority Tendency. He acted as if the agreement were a mere formality to which little attention need be paid in practice. His article serves notice that no matter what formal documents may be proclaimed, he intends to continue along the same lines that brought about the split in the Liga Socialista. Publication of his article would facilitate the disruptive course of which it is a part.

In light of the above, I consider Comrade Hernández's article to be unacceptable for publication in Intercontinental Press.

Comradely yours,

Joseph Hansen
Editor

cc:PF
LM

P.S. I assume, since you edited the article, that you verified the taped quotations cited by Comrade Hernández. However, we would greatly appreciate receiving a copy of the tapes so that we can check them ourselves.