

April 14, 1979

TO POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Attached is a letter from Pablo to Inprecor
and a reply by Jean-Pierre. Ernest and Livio
initially proposed printing the Pablo letter in
IP/I. After discussion, they instead submitted
the "Special Note" by Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan,
and Ernest Mandel printed in April 16 IP/I.

Jack

TRANSLATION

Paris
February 24, 1979

Dear Comrades at Inprecor,

I was in the midst of reading George Novack's article published in Inprecor, No. 45, on the life of Joseph Hansen, when I came upon the following paragraph: "Joe was a tower of strength throughout those difficult years, especially in the bitter faction fight that culminated in the breakaway of the Cochran group from the SWP in 1953 and the split in the Fourth International inspired by Michel Pablo." (my emphasis)

I, of course, greatly mourn the death of Joseph Hansen, whose tenacity in political work and attachment to his ideas I appreciated, regardless of the opinion I have of the role played by the SWP leadership in the history and ideological development of the Fourth International from 1953 on.

Nevertheless, I find it very annoying that Comrade G. Novack felt it necessary, in an obituary that ought to adhere to historical objectivity, to speak of the "1953 split" "inspired by Michel Pablo." Everyone--especially the "European" leaders of the Fourth Interna-

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tional at the time--knows that the split was perpetrated by the leadership of the SWP, which suddenly, unexpectedly, and without the slightest prior discussion, left the international, soon to join with the organization led by Gerry Healy and with the present-day OCI.

In this way, the "orthodox" front was created, whose turbulent evolution demonstrated perfectly what kind of "hard and pure" alloy was involved.

To attribute the intention of "inspiring" the 1953 split to me is to grossly falsify history. I am greatly amazed that the "European" comrades of the time, who are still in the leadership of the Fourth International, do not also take offense, and that they allow even one such revolting distortion of reality to go by without a word, and agree to be considered as mere obedient pawns, manipulated, poor things, by Michel Pablo, the shadowy "inspirer" of the split.

Why do they not specifically remind George Novack that he was the SWP's representative in Europe at the time, and one of the first to be in complete agreement with what was then our common line, and to deplore and fear the sectarian, factional, and undemocratic re-

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actions of his own organization toward us? George Novack maintained this attitude until his return to the United States, where, upon arriving, he of course capitulated. I remember--and I am sure he remembers--that he said goodbye to me with tears in his eyes, knowing beforehand that he would not have the courage to combat what was already being plotted against the unity of the international in the United States.

Let the SWP comrades finally open their own archives, and publish in detail all the documents they certainly possess concerning my specific personal attitude toward them in the 1953 crisis, both in the political and in the organizational realm. In particular, why don't they publish all the correspondence with their successive delegates in Europe at the time, Stein, Clark, Novack, as well as my own letters to all of them and to the SWP leadership.

Owing to the ups and downs of my life as a militant, I have lost all my personal archives, but I know that at least a large share of the records of that period have fortunately been preserved in the possession of different organizations and institutions.

For quite a long time now, I have avoided answering the attacks

and crude slanders of the ragtag gang of "anti-Pabloites," for two reasons: because I felt that time and experience would reestablish the truth and settle the political differences; and because I also felt that it was more profitable to freely develop certain ideas that could de-ossify a certain kind of outmoded archeo-Trotskyism, and to devote myself to bringing revolutionary Marxism up to date, within the limits of my abilities, than to become involved in interminable, sterile, and talmudic polemics with certain opponents whose honesty and objectivity I question.

But with whatever strength I have left, and if the circumstances are favorable, I will also help clarify the real history of the ideas, actions, and facts that marked the development of the Fourth International from Trotsky's death until 1965.

That last date, may we remind younger comrades, was when the "Pabloite faction," for having publicly defended political positions of great theoretical and practical import which were contrary to those of the "United Secretariat" of the time, according to the latter's ingenious formula, "put itself outside the international." That is to say, it was unceremoniously expelled. Who "inspired"

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and carried out this real split of that time with the revolutionary-Marxist wing in the Fourth International?

Didn't Comrade George Novack and his organization also contribute something to this fine outcome?

I conclude with a final remark. If the present leadership of the Fourth International sincerely wants to unite all the healthy forces of revolutionary Marxism in a single organizational framework, it must take care to reestablish the historic truth about the principal stages of development of the Fourth International, and disassociate itself from narrow factional conceptions.

Hoping that you will publish this letter in its entirety in the next issue of your publication, I send you revolutionary greetings.

s/Michel Pablo

TRANSLATION

Inprecor

March 12, 1979

M. Pablo

Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme

Dear Comrade,

We received your letter, and we transmitted a copy of it to Comrade Novack, the author of the article you question.

We do not think that a fruitful discussion on the conditions and the responsibilities in the 1953 split in the international can be undertaken through an exchange of letters in Inprecor.

Nor do we think that this discussion is the most urgent or most useful one for the consolidation of revolutionary Marxist forces and the building of the Fourth International.

Furthermore, your letter contains a number of opinions about members of the international and about its political and organizational evolution which are a continuation of those expressed in Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme. In the event this should mean that the IRMT and yourself wish to undertake a discussion on the Fourth International, we would like you to know our position on this matter.

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We think that, in order to be effective, such a discussion must concern itself with the principled basis, program, present tasks, and organizational conception of building and strengthening the Fourth International as the world party of revolution.

If you now wish to begin such a discussion, we are at your disposal in order to decide on the practical basis for it.

Revolutionary greetings,

s/Jean-Pierre Beauvais
For Inprecor