

May 9, 1974

TO POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Attached are four items:

1. A letter from Ernest (for the United Secretariat bureau) to the leadership of the PST, asking for information regarding the PST's reported participation in a meeting between Peron and eight "opposition" parties.

2. A letter from the Fracción Roja to the United Secretariat concerning this same question.

3. A translation of the joint declaration supposedly signed by all eight parties. The translation is from the March 22 issue of La Opinión, a major bourgeois daily in Buenos Aires.

4. A photocopy of the same declaration, as it appeared in the March 28-April 5, 1974, issue of Avanzada Socialista (#97).

5. A letter from Ed Shaw to Joe, after talking with the comrades in Buenos Aires.

At the April 20 meeting of the United Secretariat it was agreed to postpone any discussion until the comrades of the PST leadership had time to reply to Ernest's letter.

Comradely,

Mary-Alice
Mary-Alice

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April 12, 1974

Political Bureau of the PST

Dear Comrades,

The Bureau of the United Secretariat has decided to propose to the next United Secretariat meeting to discuss the political evolution in Argentina. In addition, we received a letter from the PRT/Fraccion Roja which wants the United Secretariat to deal with your attendance to a meeting called by general Peron of representatives of all political parties, in order to strengthen the "institutionalization process" in your country.

We have sent you yesterday a copy of the letter received from the Fraccion Roja.

In order to enable us to discuss these matters on the basis of a full and contradictory information, we should like you to inform us in the way which you feel adequate about this question. In particular we should like to know:

- (a) for what reasons comrades Coral and Arturo were present at that meeting;
- (b) whether, as the bourgeois press alleges (see photocopy of "La Opinion" March 22, 1974) you signed a common declaration of 8 political parties;
- (c) whether you published any communique or public declaration in relation with that meeting;
- (d) whether, in ^{case} ~~any~~ you did not sign said common declaration, you published a denial of this allegation.

Questions (c) and (d) cannot be answered by us on the basis of material in our possession, as we have received no issue of "Avanzada Socialista" nor any other communication from you since six weeks.

Please take into consideration that the next Un. Secr. meeting takes place on April 20-21, and that your answer should therefore come immediately here.

Fraternally yours,

For the Un. Secr. Bureau,

Walter.

Copy to JH

To the United Secretariat of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

The Tenth World Congress adopted a resolution on the "Political Crisis and Revolutionary Perspectives in Argentina," which, in one section where it drew a critical balance sheet of the orientation and activity of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, included a specific negative evaluation of the PST leadership's habit of going to the Government Palace to explain to a bourgeois government its views on the evolution of the capitalist economy, the university reform bill, etc. No reference to Leninist realpolitik can justify this kind of "respectful and constructive dialogue," or this kind of "platform" with a government which, along with its Peronist demagogy, has adopted a clearly repressive policy contrary to the interests of the Argentine working class.

It turns out that while the World Congress was meeting, the PST leadership was repeating this kind of operation, which is worthy of Social Democrats but contrary to the principles and the tradition of our International, to explain to the present government that the Fourth International had nothing to do with the attack on the Azul barracks, an action that was carried out by the ERP. We think that this kind of defender is not helping the Fourth International.

But our indignation overflowed when we saw a report in the press about the PST leaders Juan Carlos Coral and Arturo Gómez participating in a delegation of bourgeois and reformist "politicians" headed by an enemy of the working class like Ricardo Balbin that visited Peron. Ironically, Gómez was the reporter for the LTF on Argentina in the Tenth World Congress. The character of the meeting and its objectives are made absolutely clear by the statement that was issued unanimously by this group of "politicians." The objective was the defense of bourgeois democracy, of the existing democracy, of this bourgeois state and the so-called process of institutionalism (the restoration of constitutional government) by which the bourgeoisie is trying to overcome its political crisis by exacting greater sacrifice from, and imposing repression on, the workers. We think that this is incompatible with our objectives of destroying the bourgeois state and replacing it with a workers government. We think this is incompatible with the program of the Fourth International. We think that it is grotesque to go on talking in this way to a government that is directing the terror of parapolice gangs, trampling on the very democratic freedoms that it claimed in the electoral campaign to defend. We think that the place for Trotskyist militants is not with the gang of reactionaries, exploiters, and traitors, but on the other side of the line--in the struggles that our working class and our people are waging against the plans of the bourgeoisie, its Social Fact, its repressive laws, its terrorist escalation.

Concerned about strict defense of the 10th World Congress line and the rules of democratic centralism, we think that the United Secretariat must take a public stand against this kind of an attitude on the part of an organization that enjoys the status

of a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, and as a result casts on the entire International the opprobrium of its opportunistic practices, which are unworthy of revolutionary Marxism. The latest episode we have described is of extreme gravity and cannot be left without a public answer in which the Secretariat disassociates itself from the attitude of the PST, which has sunk into legalistic considerations to the point of breaking with the principles and traditions of revolutionary Marxism.

We attach the press clippings on the episode we mentioned.

Fraternally,

A. for the Political Bureau
of the Fraccion Roja

(The following is translated from the March 22, 1974 issue of La Opinión.)

The eight parties of the center-left that met yesterday with the president issued the following communique after the conference.

"Those who attended the conference with the president reiterated their fundamental aim of sparing no effort to maintain and consolidate the process of institutionalization in the country (that is, return to legal, constitutional forms of rule), under the rule of democracy and by applying the principles of pluralism and constructive dialogue.

"They voiced these views because they had noted with increasing disquiet the development of disruptive factors affecting various expressions of the country's institutional life, despite the broad mandate with which the government took office.

"In the name of their parties, which retain their distinct points of view and independence, they declared their desire to see the struggle for national liberation and social justice develop in the democratic framework described above, and expressed their view that the essential precondition for such a struggle going forward was that all Argentines be able to freely defend their programs and their own evaluations of economic and social facts, as well as their own judgments about the actions of the government.

"The difficult moments that lie ahead for the republic, as a consequence of confronting the powers that have long held it in subjection, will be overcome by the united action of the sectors that respect the will of the majority of the people that was expressed in the elections to seek liberation, and which jointly guarantee their right to continue speaking out in the future in order to make this will effective, to end the burdens of dependency and turn over to the workers the benefits of the wealth created by their efforts.

"As a part of this process, we have not opposed carrying out these objectives. The development of a genuine federal system in the country, the integration of Latin America, solidarity with the oppressed peoples of the world, and the struggle against imperialism and the oligarchy can only be achieved by the creative agreements that emerge from the full exercise of democracy in all fields, in order to define clearly the political line in economic, social, trade-union, and cultural affairs.

"Because of the representativeness of the participants and the development of its substance, the meeting must be considered a concrete step designed to bring about a pooling of forces to assure the course of institutionalization in the channels voted for by the people. All the participants recognized the risks involved in the undertaking the country demanded, while agreeing--over and above their respective points of view on the deepening and the rate of the process of change--on the vital necessity for carrying it out.

La Opinión/2

"It could be regarded as an especially positive outcome of the meeting that it in itself represented an explicit statement by the country supporting the process of institutionalization at all levels and at the same time condemning all those who are trying to interfere with this process in one way or another. (This apparently refers to the purge of provincial governors, in particular the Cordoba coup.)

"Pursuant to these common positions, the participants stressed--agreeing with previous public statements of the president--how counterproductive and dangerous any attempt would be to blur the distinction between the state and the party apparatus or to use the state apparatus to intervene in internal party struggles that should be resolved in their natural course. They stressed how negative it was for officials to use their power to influence these internal struggles, injecting elements that have disturbed and dismayed public opinion.

"Finally, the participants agreed on the need for constant and easy communication and for assuring precise information on the moves and objectives of the government and of the political forces in every case in order to block rumors and false versions which in themselves are a disruptive element that plays into the hands of reaction.

"Those who are trying to wreck the constitutional system or hope for the appearance of circumstances that would permit a new reactionary adventure; those who are trying to manipulate sections of the government in order to gain an influence over future alternatives; those who are promoting totalitarian or corporatist practices, who agree ideologically with the fascistoid demands and the interests of the multinational corporations that are being pressed on our country from every side; all these elements must realize that the nation has met here and, reaching fundamental agreement, has given its answer."

Entrevista con Perón

Texto del documento presentado al presidente de la nación

“Los aquí presentes, en la entrevista con el Presidente de la Nación, han reiterado el propósito fundamental de no ahorrar actitudes y esfuerzos para mantener y consolidar el proceso de institucionalización del país, en el régimen de la democracia y en la práctica de la convivencia y el diálogo constructivos”. Comienza la declaración partidaria conjunta.

“Así lo han expresado en razón de observar, con creciente inquietud —añade— el desarrollo de factores de perturbación que afectan a distintas expresiones de la vida institucional de la República, a pesar de la amplia base de representatividad con que se instaló el gobierno.

En nombre de sus partidos, cuyas individualidades e independencia resguardan, han manifestado que en aquel ambiente quieren desarrollar la lucha en favor de la liberación nacional y la justicia social y consideran condición esencial para esa lucha que todos los argentinos puedan sostener libremente tanto sus programas y propias valoraciones de los hechos económico-sociales como sus juicios sobre la acción del gobierno.

Los momentos difíciles que esperan a la República, como consecuencia de su enfrentamiento a los poderes que desde antiguo la han sometido, se superarán victoriosamente con una acción solidaria de los sectores que respeten la voluntad mayoritaria y popular expresada en los comicios por la liberación y garanticen conjuntamente su derecho a seguir expresándose en el futuro para hacerla efectiva, terminar con las cargas de la dependencia y entregar a los trabajadores los beneficios de la riqueza creada con su esfuerzo.

Como parte que somos de ese proceso no asumimos actitudes opositoras a la concreción de esos propósitos. La realización auténticamente federal de la comunidad nacional, la integración latinoamericana, la solidaridad con los pueblos sojuzgados del mundo y la lucha

contra el imperialismo y la oligarquía, sólo podrán materializarse con las coincidencias creadoras que surgen del ejercicio pleno de la democracia en todos los campos, para definir claramente las líneas políticas en lo económico, social, gremial y cultural.

La entrevista, por la representatividad de sus participantes y el desarrollo de su contenido, debe ser considerada como un paso concreto destinado a materializar la conjunción de esfuerzos que asegure el curso de la institucionalización en los carriles votados por el pueblo. Todos apreciaron los riesgos de la empresa reclamada por el país, coincidiendo —más allá de sus respectivos puntos de vista sobre la profundidad y ritmo del proceso de cambio— en la inexorable necesidad de su relación.

Puede estimarse como especial saldo positivo de la reunión que ella por sí misma, importa la declaración expresa del país de apoyar en todas sus instancias el proceso institucional y, a la vez, la condena a todos aquellos que por una u otra vía procuran afectarla.

En atención a estas posiciones comunes, los asistentes subrayaron —en coincidencias con manifestaciones públicas anteriores del Presidente de la Nación— lo contraproducente y peligroso de cualquier intento por confundir el aparato del Estado con el partidario o hacerlo intervenir en luchas internas que deben resolverse en su círculo natural; y lo negativo de la acción de funcionarios que utilicen el poder para gravitar en ellas, introduciendo elementos que desconciertan y confunden a la opinión pública.

Finalmente, se convino en la necesidad de que la comunicación se materialice fluida y permanentemente y se asegure la información precisa sobre los pasos y objetivos del Gobierno y de las fuerzas políticas en cada caso, con lo que se aventaran los rumores y las falsas versiones que constituyen de por sí un elemento disociador al servicio de la reacción.



Los que buscan el fracaso del régimen constitucional o esperan la aparición de circunstancias que hagan posible una nueva aventura reaccionaria; quienes aspiran al manejo de sectores de poder para influir en alternativas futuras; quienes inducen a prácticas totalitarias o corporativistas, en subterránea confluencia ideológica con las reivindicaciones fascistas y los intereses de las corporaciones multinacionales que se proyectan y presionan sin solu-

ción de continuidad a lo largo de nuestras fronteras; todos deben saber que aquí ha estado reunido el país y en coincidencia fundamental, les ha dado su respuesta.

Unión Cívica Radical, Partido Revolucionario Cristiano, Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, Partido Socialista Popular, Partido Intransigente, UDELPA, Partido Comunista, Democracia Progresista.

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Buenos Aires
April 23, 1974

Dear Joe,

Enclosed are copies of "Avanzada" that bring us up to date.

No. 97 carried the story about the meeting with Peron. It also indicates that the PST subscribed to the "joint statement" issued by the eight parties.

No. 99 contains a report of a subsequent interview with Peron and cabinet ministers. This is an entirely different kind of report as you can see.

There was another interview last week which will be reported in the paper that comes out this week.

Hugo insists that the PST did not sign the joint statement of March 21, that the editor made a big mistake by printing the statement and the signatures. He agrees that this should have been clarified in the following issue, but it wasn't. He now proposes that they get a letter from Balbin saying that the PST did not agree with the statement and print that, together with an article analyzing the series of meetings and the results.

Coral told me that the whole thing goes like this: 1) a general meeting of the eight parties with Peron; 2) two or three meetings of the eight with different ministers, labor, economy, etc., 3) finally, a last meeting with Peron to "report" and "discuss" the results of meeting the ministers.

Livio has seen Hugo and gotten the material available. I did not see Livio.

The Red Faction has split. I spoke with a "minority" of the R.F. that is seeking unity with the Espartaco group in Cordoba. He told me that they had also met with Livio. So far it has not been possible to meet anyone from the "majority."

Best,

Ed