



Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency

ADOPTED IN JULY 1974

1. The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand and the Spartacist League of the United States declare themselves to be the nucleus for the early crystallization of an international Trotskyist tendency based upon the 1966 Declaration of Principles and dedicated to the rebirth of the Fourth International.

2. In a half dozen other countries parties, groups and committees have expressed their general or specific sympathy or support for the international Spartacist tendency, as have scattered supporters or sympathizers from a number of additional countries. Among these groups and individuals are comrades, in both Europe and Asia, possessing many years or even decades of experience as cadres of the Trotskyist movement.

3. The Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency, a small Marxist wing of the "United Secretariat," centered on the United States and with supporters in Australia and elsewhere, has seen its spokesmen expelled from their national sections and parties for seeking to express their views within the United Secretariat, that deeply factionally divided and unprincipled conglomeration of reformists

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Trotsky near Naples, 1932.

**Spartacusbund Expels Left
Opposition**

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and revisionists, latter-day Kautskys, Bukharins and Pablos. If the main contenders in the "United Secretariat" are united in their common and not-so-veiled class collaborationist appetites, they are deeply divided between the electoralism and placid neo-populism of, e.g., the American Socialist Workers Party and the guerrilla-terrorist enthusing of, e.g., the French ex-Ligue Communiste. These differences reflect far more the differing national milieus and resulting opportunist appetites than they do any questions of principle. The recently concluded "Tenth World Congress" of the United Secretariat refused to hear or even acknowledge the appeal of RIT comrades against their expulsion. The RIT forces are now making common cause with the Spartacist tendency. They are but a vanguard of those who will struggle out of the revisionist swamp and toward revolutionary Marxism. Already in France an oppositional Central Committee member of the former Ligue Communiste has broken from the Front Communiste Révolutionnaire (recently formed by *Rouge*) in solidarity with the views of the RIT.

4. In Germany senior elements from the centrist and now fragmented left split from the United Secretariat in 1969 are being won to the Spartacist tendency. They are regrouping around the publication *Kommunistische Korrespondenz*. In Germany three inextricable tasks are posed for Leninists: to programmatically win over subjectively revolutionary elements from among the thousands of young left social democrats, centrists, revisionists and Maoists; to fuse together intellectual and proletarian elements, above all through the development and struggle of communist industrial fractions; to inwardly assimilate some thirty years of Marxist experience and analysis from which the long break in continuity has left the

new generation of German revolutionary Marxists still partially isolated.

5. In Austria, Israel, Canada and elsewhere similar splits, followed by revolutionary regroupment and growth, are occurring. In Austria the initial nucleus came from youth of the United Secretariat section. The "Vanguard" group of Israel is the last still united section of the old "International Committee" which split in 1971 between the British Socialist Labour League's wing led by Gerry Healy (with which the American Workers League of Wohlforth is still united despite friction) and the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste led by Pierre Lambert which subsequently lost most of its international support—i.e., with the Bolivian Partido Obrero Revolucionario of G. Lora and the European groupings around the Hungarian, Varga, both breaking away. If the "Vanguard" group amid this welter of disintegration is still unable to choose between the counterposed claims of Healy and Lambert, it did produce and promptly expel a principled and valiant counter-tendency to both. In Canada youth from the Revolutionary Marxist Group's Red Circles are being drawn to Trotskyism. Everywhere unprincipled formations are subjected to the hammer blows of sharpened capitalist crisis and upsurge in the class struggle.

6. In Ceylon where the historical consequences of Pabloist revisionism have been most fully revealed, only the Revolutionary Workers Party, led by the veteran Trotskyist, Edmund Samarakkody, has emerged with integrity from the welter of betrayals perpetrated by the old LSSP and which were aided and abetted by the United Secretariat, its unspeakable agent on the island, Bala Tampoe, and the craven Healyite "International Committee." The RWP has been compelled to seek to generalize the revolutionary Marxist program anew from Marxist class-struggle principles.

7. The Spartacist tendency is now actively working for the immediate convening of an international conference to politically and geographically extend the tendency and to further formalize and consolidate it. The tendency organizing nucleus will seek to work in the closest collaboration with sympathizing groups, particularly in continuing and assuring a broadly-based and full written and verbal discussion process leading to this international conference.

In the pre-conference interim the tendency organizing nucleus assumes political and organizational responsibility for the prior international resolutions, declarations, open letters and agreements for common work of its present constituent groups. These documents notably include: "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," 14 June 1963; Statement to the 3rd Conference of the International Committee, 6 April 1966; Letter to the OCRFI and French OCI, 15 January 1973; Letter to Samarakkody, 27 October 1973; the historical analyses: "Genesis of Pabloism," "Development of the Spartacist League [of New Zealand]," and "The Struggle for Trotskyism in Ceylon"; and the agreements endorsed at the interim international conference held in Germany in January 1974, printed in *Workers Vanguard* No. 39, 1 March 1974.

8. Both the present "United Secretariat" and the former "International Committee" despite their respective pretensions "to be" the Fourth International, as a necessary

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condition for their fake “unities,” have chronically mocked the principles of internationalism and of Bolshevik democratic centralism as their different national groups or nationally-based factions have gone their own way—ultimately in response to the pressures of their own ruling classes. Thus until the English and French components of the ex-“International Committee” blew apart, the International Committee operated explicitly on the proposition that “the only method of arriving at decisions that remains possible at present is the principle of unanimity” (decision at the 1966 London International Committee Conference). Since then the Healyites have substituted the naked Gauleiter/Führer principle as their mockery of democratic centralism. The other, OCI-led wing of the ex-IC retained the contradiction of launching the Organizing Committee for Reconstruction of the Fourth International which was supposed to initiate political discussion on the basis of the 1938 Transitional Program, while simultaneously seeking to build new national sections. Both such hypothetical sections and the Organizing Committee itself therefore labored under a basic ambiguity from the outset, but the Organizing Committee’s disintegration into sharply counterposed elements all of whom swear by the 1938 Program, has left its practice stillborn. Today, following the just concluded “Tenth Congress” of the United Secretariat, its American supporters, being themselves in the Minority internationally, threaten their own national minority, the Internationalist Tendency (which belongs to the international Majority), by declaring:

“The Socialist Workers Party proclaims its fraternal solidarity with the Fourth International but is prevented by reactionary legislation from affiliating to it. All political activities of members of the SWP are decided upon by the democratically elected national leadership bodies of the SWP and by the local and branch units of the party. Unconditional acceptance of the authority of these SWP bodies is a prerequisite of membership. *There are no other bodies whose decisions are binding on the SWP or its members.*” [our emphasis]

—SWP *Internal Informational Bulletin* No. 4, April 1974, from Introductory Note, 17 April 1974

9. This apparently naked assertion of national independence by or toward organizations in the United States is not unique and has a specific history. Thus the American Healyite publicist, Wohlforth, declares in his pamphlet, “Revisionism in Crisis”:

“With the passing of the Voorhis Act in 1940 the SWP was barred from membership in the Fourth International by law. Ever since that time the SWP has not been able to be an affiliate of the Fourth International. So today its relationship to the United Secretariat is one of political solidarity just as the Workers’ League stands in political solidarity with the International Committee.”

The “Voorhis Act” passed by the American Congress in 1940 has been used as a convenient excuse for revisionists to more openly display their concrete anti-internationalism than is convenient for their co-thinkers elsewhere.

This act, while ostensibly aimed centrally at domestic military conspiracies directed by foreign powers, was actually intended, as was the overlapping “Smith Act,” to harass the American Communist Party, then supporting the Hitler-Stalin Pact. A key provision states: “An organization is subject to foreign control if . . . its policies or any of them are determined by or at the suggestion of . . . an international political organization” (political activity

being defined as that aimed at the forcible control or overthrow of the government). Such organizations were to be subject to such massive and repetitive “registration” requirements as to paralyze them, quite aside from the impermissible nature of many of the disclosures demanded. Thus it was similar to the later “Communist Control Act” which was successfully fought by the American CP. But the “Voorhis Act” with its patently unconstitutional and contradictory provisions has never been used by the government—only the revisionists.

10. Today the United Secretariat Majority makes loud cries in favor of *international* unity and discipline i.e., against the SWP’s views and conduct, but it was not always so. When the forerunner of the Spartacist League tried to appeal its expulsion from the SWP to the United Secretariat, Pierre Frank wrote for the United Secretariat on 28 May 1965 that:

“In reply to your letter of May 18 we call your attention first of all to the fact that the Fourth International has no organizational connection with the Socialist Workers party and consequently has no jurisdiction in a problem such as you raise; namely, the application of democratic centralism as it affects the organization either as a whole or in individual instances.”

After Frank gave the Spartacists his answer, Healy publicly expressed sympathy for the Spartacists’ plight, charging in his *Newsletter* of 16 June 1965 that Frank “ducks behind a legal formula for cover.” But when Healy’s own ox was gored by the SWP’s publication of the embarrassing pamphlet “Healy ‘Reconstructs’ the Fourth International,” Healy’s SLL threatened violence and/or legal action (“Political Committee Statement,” 20 August 1966 *Newsletter*) against any who circulated the pamphlet in his England. Shortly he used both—the Tate affair! Healy claimed as the basis for his threats the self-same fear of the Voorhis Act on behalf of Wohlforth and the Spartacists. But the *Spartacist* then replied:

“We for our part reject the SLL’s solicitousness on our behalf. The Voorhis Act is a *paper tiger*—never used against anyone and patently unconstitutional. For the Justice Department to start proceedings against a small group like ours or the smaller and less threatening [Wohlforthite] ACFI would make the government a laughing stock, and Healy knows this. He is aware that for years the SWP has hidden behind this very act to defend its own federalist idea of an International.”

—*Spartacist* No. 7, September-October 1966

11. More currently, however, as in the United Secretariat Majority’s “Again and Always, the Question of the International” (by Alain Krivine and the self-same Pierre Frank, 10 June 1971, *SWP International Information Bulletin* No. 5, July 1971) they attack the public formulation by Jack Barnes, SWP National Secretary, that “the principal condition for international organization” is “collaboration between leaderships . . . in every country.” To this idea Krivine and Frank counterpose “the International, a world party based on democratic centralism.” And later the Majority Tendency (in *IIDB* Volume X, No. 20, October 1973) notes that the Minority, in flagrant contradiction to Barnes’ and Hansen’s previously expressed views, declares, “we will do our utmost to construct a strong [international] center,” and the Majority concludes that “actual practice leaves no doubt: the [Minority]

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faction would be for a 'strong center' if it were able to have a majority in it." And most recently the same United Secretariat Majority asserts that behind the acts of the SWP-based Minority "lies a federalist conception of the International which contradicts the statutes and the line adopted by the [Tenth] World Congress" (17 March 1974, *IIDB* Volume XI, No. 5, April 1974). The United Secretariat Majority ought to know. They made this accusation in commenting on a Tenth Congress joint Minority-Majority agreement so flagrant in mutually amnestying every sort of indiscipline, public attack and disavowal, organizational chicanery, walkout and expulsion that the Majority also had to offer the feeble disclaimer that these "compromises adopted at this World Congress should in no way be taken as precedents" and that "the exceptional character of these measures is demonstrated, moreover, by the unanimous adoption of our new statutes" (which formally contradict the real practice!). Yes indeed, for opportunists and revisionists basic organizational principles are not of centralized, comradely, even-handed and consistent practice but just boil down to the simple matter of whose ox is gored. This is *the* organizational aspect of Pabloism.

If today the United Secretariat promises to back up its own friends in the SWP should action be taken against them, the point to be made is not the United Secretariat's dishonesty and hypocrisy per se, but rather the shattering of the United Secretariat's pretensions (like those of the International Committee) to be the Fourth International. They both trim their avowed organizational principles through expediency for petty advantage just as *and because* they do the same with their political principles and program.

12. The international Spartacist tendency is just that, a tendency in the process of consolidation. But from its international outset it declares its continuing fidelity already tested for a decade in national confines to Marxist-Leninist principle and Trotskyist program—

Revolutionary, Internationalist and Proletarian.

The struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International promises to be difficult, long, and, above all, uneven. But it is an indispensable and central task facing those who would win proletarian power and thus open the road to the achievement of socialism for humanity. The struggle begun by L.D. Trotsky in 1929 to constitute an International Left Opposition must be studied. Both despite and because of the differing objective and subjective particulars and with ultimately common basis then and now there is much to be learned especially as to the testing and selection of cadres in the course of the vicissitudes of social and internal struggles.

The giant figure of Trotsky attracted around itself all sorts of personally and programmatically unstable elements repelled by the degenerating Comintern. This led, together with demoralization from the succession of working-class defeats culminating in the second World War, to a prolonged and not always successful sorting out process. It is a small compensation for the lack of a Trotsky that the Spartacist tendency has little extraneous, symbolic drawing power at the outset. But a decade of largely localized experience shows no lack of weak or accidental elements drawn temporarily to the tendency. The only real test is in hard-driving, all-sided involvement in living class struggle.

As L. D. Trotsky noted in "At the Fresh Grave of Kote Tsintsadze," 7 January 1931:

"It took altogether extraordinary conditions like czarism, illegality, prison, and deportation, many years of struggle against the Mensheviks, and especially the experience of three revolutions to produce fighters like Kote Tsintsadze. . . . The Communist parties in the West have not yet brought up fighters of Tsintsadze's type. This is their besetting weakness, determined by historical reasons but nonetheless a weakness. The Left Opposition in the Western countries is not an exception in this respect and it must well take note of it."

Central Committee, SL/ANZ

Central Committee, SL/U.S.

[This draft agreed to by the Political Bureau of the SL/U.S. and a representative of the Central Committee of the SL/ANZ, 22 May 1974; accepted by the Central Committee, SL/ANZ, 7 June 1974; declared to be in force, following concurrence with it at the European summer camp of the international Spartacist tendency, 6 July 1974.]



SPARTACIST

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Letter to the Spanish Liga Comunista

In June 1975 the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) sent the following letter to the Liga Comunista de España (LCE), a Spanish sympathizing section of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec). The letter had been prompted by an invitation from a member of the LCE's political bureau, at a meeting in February, to initiate organization-to-organization written discussion. No reply was ever received, and in the interim the LCE's politics have considerably changed. Nevertheless, the document retains its value as a polemic directed at left-leaning elements within the USec.

The Liga had aligned itself with the misnamed Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF) of the USec on the basis of the pseudo-orthodox phraseology which LTF leaders—the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST)—found useful in polemicizing against Ernest Mandel's International Majority Tendency (IMT). The *reformist* SWP and PST were deeply mired in class collaborationism on their own national terrains while abstractly criticizing the popular-frontism of the IMT abroad. However, at this time the LCE not only vigorously criticized the French Mandelites for refusing to characterize the Union of the Left as a popular front, but also attacked the other Spanish USec sympathizing section—the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR)—for practicing popular-frontism at home where pressures for capitulation were strongest.

The LCE was not the only group in the USec orbit which was taken in by the LTF's false appeal to orthodoxy. In the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, the heterogeneous Tendency 4 included both committed supporters of the LTF—whose politics placed them to the right of the centrist IMT—and would-be left opponents of the Krivine leadership. In Portugal, the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT)—at that time not formally affiliated to the USec, but politically close to the Spanish LCE—opposed giving political support to the bonapartist Armed Forces Movement (MFA), while the IMT-linked Liga Comunista Internacionalista was appealing to the "progressive officers" of the MFA.

Since this letter was written the LTF has split down the middle, with the PST setting up a third faction in the USec, the Bolshevik Tendency. This led to a three-way split in the Spanish LCE, with some elements joining the LCR, a group of PST supporters splitting to set up the Liga Socialista Revolucionaria, and the remainder coming firmly under the thumb of the SWP.

Events in Portugal during the summer of 1975, and the debate they touched off inside the USec, represented a key turning point for the LCE. Its articles on Portugal in 1974 and early 1975 heavily emphasized opposition to popular-frontism. In *Combate* No. 23 (July 1974), the LCE wrote:

"...this confrontation between the popular-frontist policies of the Stalinist leaderships and the line of workers united front which the Trotskyists have always upheld transcends the French presidential elections and the formation of the

provisional government in Portugal. *This is the central strategic question which is put in quite concrete terms before the European workers movement.*" [our emphasis]

No more. Today the LCE says the central issue in Portugal is "the struggle for democracy"!

In the summer of 1975 the Portuguese Socialist Party of Mário Soares spearheaded an anti-communist mobilization in the name of (bourgeois) "democracy," dragging in its wake the ostensible Trotskyists of the American SWP and the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste. First, on the *República* affair (see "Fight MFA Suppression of Left Media in Portugal!" *Workers Vanguard* No. 83, 31 October 1975) the SWP went beyond defense of freedom of the press to politically support Soares against the printers who had carried out a takeover of the pro-Socialist Party newspaper. Then, when Soares launched a drive against the Gonçalves government—attacking it for tolerating "anarcho-populism," demanding that workers militias be disarmed and embryonic organs of dual power crushed, justifying the actions of reactionary mobs who burned down Communist Party headquarters—the SWP declared that, "The Socialist Party has more and more become the rallying ground for forces in the workers movement that refuse to bow to the Stalinists."

In August of that year, while flames were leaping from Communist Party offices across northern Portugal, the steering committee of the "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction" met to discuss a draft document drawn up by the SWP leadership on "The Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution." The theoretical guru of the PST, Nahuel Moreno, had written to SWP leader Joseph Hansen expressing a number of disagreements with the latter's analysis of Portugal. Hansen replied (letter of 9 August 1975) that, "It appears to me that the main axis of the Trotskyist political course [in Portugal] must be defense of the democratic conquests" ([SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, January 1976).

In the discussions at the LTF steering committee it was not the PST delegates who most sharply criticized the SWP's draft, but the Spanish LCE. A statement by the political bureau of the LCE ("Concerning the Draft Resolution on Portugal") criticized the draft for not characterizing the government as a popular front and pointed to its "one-sided" characterization of the Socialist Party: "...there is no clear analysis and confirmation of the counterrevolutionary nature of its political line." The LCE critique concludes:

"We cannot limit ourselves to centering the program exclusively on defense of democratic rights, though at a given concrete moment this could be the axis.

"On the other hand, we should emphasize the need for a concrete program to develop, transform and consolidate the [workers] committees and commissions which is one of the central tasks for advancing the class independence of the mass movements.

"Finally, it is necessary to indicate clearly the central role

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Liga Comunista...

played by a governmental slogan as the expression of class independence and the need to break with the bourgeoisie...."

Rather than fighting out these differences, however, both PST and LCE representatives voted *for* the SWP draft with the understanding that the final version would be edited in light of their criticisms. Nothing of the sort happened. The SWP-edited version was published with the "democratic rights" axis intact and the apologetics for Soares unchanged.

Moreno broke with the SWP over this document, although he was hard-put to explain his support for earlier LTF positions in the same tenor. (He didn't even try to harmonize his new-found leftist verbiage with the PST's own shameful declarations of support for the "institutional process" in Argentina against left-wing guerrillas!) But the LCE leadership capitulated miserably. The declaration of the PST's Bolshevik Tendency documents this:

"The SWP's positions on Portugal were resisted from the beginning by 90 percent of the faction, which in criticizing the draft *Key Issues* demanded that the issue of the organs of power be posed. The clearest and most brilliant opposition came from the leadership of the Spanish LTF.... For obscure reasons that escape us, the Spanish leadership of the LTF capitulated completely to the SWP and accepted the second version of *Key Issues*...which says practically the same as the former. This provoked a crisis in the faction in Spain...."

[SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, January 1977

This pitiful right turn by the LCE leadership on Portugal was soon manifested in its political positions on domestic issues as well, where it took over the SWP's reformist recipes lock, stock and barrel. Tailing Soares in Portugal, it was only logical that the LCE should crawl after Spanish social-democratic leader Felipe González at home.

In the past the LCE had insisted on unconditional submission to the discipline of the Stalinist-dominated workers commissions (CC.OO.), sharply criticizing the LCR for seeking to go around the CC.OO. at the height of the 1973 Pamplona strike movement, for instance. But in late 1976 the LCE switched horses, abruptly exiting from the CC.OO., charging suppression of democratic rights by the Communist Party (which had always been the case) and joining up with the social-democratic UGT union federation. However, in doing so it remained true to its tailist conceptions of "strategic unity" with the reformist misleaders, as indicated in the following statement by LCE-supported trade unionists on joining the UGT:

"We accept the statutes and decisions of the UGT congress and we are not going to struggle to destroy it. Rather we will strengthen the UGT and be a sector of its left wing which fights for unity and for the socialist society."

Cambio 16, 18 October 1976

We are unable, with the limited material at our disposal, to make a comprehensive critique of the LCE's policy in Spain today. But with its pitiful capitulation before Soares and adoption of the SWP's social-democratic policies *in toto*, any remaining subjectively revolutionary impulses of its membership can only end in frustration. The road to a revolutionary policy in Spain today requires openly rejecting and combatting the LCE's undisguised anti-Trotskyist revisionism.

6 June 1975

Dear Comrades,

We gladly accept the invitation by Comrade M. to initiate correspondence between the international Spartacist tendency and the LCE. We must make clear, however, that we are not familiar with your political views on a whole range of important subjects. Thus a main purpose of this letter is to determine whether a basis for organization-to-organization discussions exists.

It should be explained at the outset why we take this opportunity seriously. The LCE appears to us to be one of the subjectively most serious and leftist groups in the swamp that goes by the name of the "United Secretariat." And unlike the petty-bourgeois radicals of the International Majority Tendency (IMT), your organization seems to be attracted by the (fraudulent) appeal to Marxist orthodoxy of the misnamed "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction" (LTF).

But no communist can feel anything but utter contempt for your international bloc partners, the consummate reformists of the American Socialist Workers Party and the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores! The SWP and PST are sworn enemies of proletarian revolution: behind the quotations from Lenin and Trotsky they use to refute IMT guerrillaism lies a cringing fear of angering their own bourgeoisies.

We detect an important difference between the LCE and the SWP/PST, however. The latter are simply cynical impostors who roundly condemn the popular-frontist policies of the IMT, then turn around and practice even more shameless class collaboration in their national habitats. In contrast, the Liga Comunista has vigorously denounced popular frontism at home as well as when perpetrated by factional opponents abroad.

While in no sense underrating this significant distinction, we must also take seriously the fact that the LCE is a sympathizing organization of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" [USeC], which is neither united nor the Fourth International; and is a member of the "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction," which is neither Leninist nor Trotskyist nor, for that matter, a faction. *The Liga Comunista thereby appears before the Spanish proletariat as a supporter of a fake "International" whose other local affiliate, the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR), is incapable of drawing a class line against popular frontism and could even enter at any moment into the popular front Assembly of Catalonia. You must likewise take responsibility for disgusting betrayals of socialist principle by the SWP and PST.*

To take two of the most recent notorious examples, you are certainly well aware of the declarations by the PST which in effect give "critical support" to the murderous Peronist regime in Argentina, and of the SWP's call for federal troops to Boston. We do not know of any statement by the LCE against these treacherous expressions of confidence in the capitalist state by leaders of the LTF. It would be foolish to hope for serious organization-to-organization discussions without a condemnation by the Liga Comunista of the SWP's call for federal troops and the PST's support for the "continuity" of the Argentine

government. And it is obvious that for any serious revolutionary such a condemnation would require a break with the politics of the LTF.

Such a break cannot be accomplished with a few strokes of the pen. What is needed is a serious investigation of the real politics of the SWP and PST, and a frank evaluation of the causes of the LCE's errors. We know that in the past leaders of the Liga Comunista have sought to seriously re-examine some of their past positions. When a representative of the IMT sought to drop the LCR's previous ultra-left policy toward the workers commissions, the Encrucijada tendency insisted on a political discussion of the origins of this policy. Will you show the same determination now? With hundreds of leftist militants arrested by and assassinated with the connivance of the government whose "continuity" is supported by Coral & Co., half-hearted "criticisms" of certain "formulations" by the PST are not enough!

Why is the Liga Comunista aligned with the LTF in the first place? At present we lack the information to answer this question. In the event, however, that you have taken seriously the occasionally orthodox-sounding verbiage of Joe Hansen's factional documents, and that you are not fully familiar with the actual practice of the SWP and PST, one aim of this letter is to demonstrate the total fraudulence of any pretense to Trotskyism by these charlatans and expose the origins of their opportunist policies: Pabloism. (The LCE's concept of a united front "strategy" is also taken up.)

A Social Democrat and a Chameleon

Statements by the PST during the last 15 months have been so openly class-collaborationist that one would have to be blind not to see the gulf that separates these reformist social democrats from revolutionary Trotskyism. In a joint declaration with the CP and six bourgeois parties presented to General Perón on 21 March, 1974, the PST promised to adhere to "the institutional process" and condemned all those (e.g., communists) who seek to change it. This statement unambiguously supports capitalist "law and order," at least implicitly siding with the government and liberal bourgeois parties against leftist guerrillas such as the ERP/PRT [Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo/Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores].

The implication was made explicit in a statement by PST leader Juan Carlos Coral to the "multi-sectorial" meeting with President Isabel Perón on October 8, where that phony socialist declared the guerrillas to be a "mirror-image" of the rightist death squads (AAA). Coral's speech included a statement which can only be interpreted as a declaration of political support for the Peronist regime: "we will fight for the continuity of this government," said the representative of the "Trotskyist" PST (*Avanzada Socialista*, 15 October 1974)!

These statements conciliating the Peronist government are nothing new. The PST's "theoretician" Nahuel Moreno has been playing this game for decades, for a dozen years with the toleration of the United Secretariat. The facts are no secret, and we have dealt with them at length in an article ("Argentina: The Struggle Against Peronism," *Workers Vanguard* No. 24, 6 July 1973) which is attached. Suffice it to say that during the late 1950's and early 1960's Moreno put out the magazine *Palabra Obrera*, which

called itself the "organ of revolutionary workers Peronism" and claimed to be issued "under the discipline of General Perón and the Peronist Supreme Council"! More recently, Coral/Moreno offered to vote for the Peronist slate if 80 percent of Justicialista candidates were workers (*AS*, 22 November 1972) and told Peronist President Hector Cámpora he could "count on our proletarian solidarity" (*AS*, 30 May-6 June 1973).

So if today the PST capitulates to the Perón government, you can not blame this on misformulations or an alleged recent turn. Nor are these betrayals solely the responsibility of Coral (who is merely the social democrat he always has been) and Moreno (a political chameleon who is just doing what comes naturally). To fight for the Marxist principle of working-class independence it is necessary to break with Hansen and Mandel who for years gave a "left" cover to Moreno's machinations.

For example: Moreno and Hansen now bitterly attack the IMT's Guevarism, but in the early and mid-1960's they wholeheartedly supported peasant guerrilla war, at least on paper. Moreno was at this time the most guerrillaist of them all. "History ... has rejected the theory that the proletariat, in the backward countries, is the revolutionary leadership," he wrote in 1961, thereby throwing the Transitional Program and the theory of permanent revolution out the window. It is necessary to "synthesize the correct general theory and program (Trotskyist) with the correct particular theory and program (Mao Tse-tungist or Castroist)," he added (N. Moreno, *La revolución latinoamericana*).

If a wing of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), a section of the United Secretariat founded and "educated" by Moreno, was subsequently to undertake urban and rural guerrilla warfare, hailing "our main Comandante, Che Guevara" and welcoming "the contributions that Trotsky, Kim Il Sung, Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi Minh and General Giap have made for the revolution" (Roberto Santucho, quoted in *Intercontinental Press*, 27 November 1972), the cause is not to be sought in the Latin American resolution of the "Ninth World Congress." Hansen and Moreno are just as responsible as Mandel, just a bit more "cautious" when putting their words into practice.

Do you wish to go to the origins of petty-bourgeois guerrillaism in the United Secretariat? If so, you must reject the very founding document of the USec, "For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement" (written by the SWP majority in March 1963), which stated that "guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasants and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power." The Revolutionary Tendency of the SWP, forerunner of the Spartacist League/U.S., replied: "peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime.... Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such [Marxist] leadership of the revolutionary proletariat" ("Toward the Rebirth of the

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Fourth International," June 1963). Hansen's opposition to guerrillaism is a phony!

Not an International But a Non-Aggression Pact

Thus the very founding of the United Secretariat was based on rejection of the theory of permanent revolution and the indispensable leading role of the working class under its Trotskyist vanguard party. For the patriarchs of the former International Secretariat (Ernest Mandel, Livio Maitan, Pierre Frank) this was simply a continuation of the Pabloist liquidationism they had been expounding since the early 1950's. From Pablo's "deep entry" into the Stalinist parties to the USec's cheerleading for Castro, these professional capitulators have apologized for one non-proletarian misleader after another.

The SWP resisted Pablo's program of liquidating into the reformist parties in the 1950's, albeit after considerable hesitation. But following the ravages of McCarthyism against the U.S. left the party increasingly succumbed to the pressures of isolation. When the Cuban Revolution came along, Hansen declared the new regime to be a healthy workers state ("although lacking the forms of workers democracy"!)) thereby hoping to bask in its popularity. Only the Revolutionary Tendency took the position that Cuba was a qualitatively deformed workers state, that an independent Trotskyist party was necessary to lead a political revolution ousting the Stalinist bureaucracy and instituting democratic soviet rule. The six-year-old crisis in the "United" Secretariat is a direct result of its Pabloist policies. Not only was there no "turn" at the Ninth Congress (except to play at putting into practice the hitherto exclusively verbal guerrillaism), but if "unconscious Marxists" (Castro) can replace the Trotskyists and "blunted instruments" (peasant guerrilla bands) can accomplish the tasks of the Leninist party, then why shouldn't all manner of social-democratic, semi-Maoist and Guevarist elements be included in "the International"?

Such a federated rotten bloc of widely disparate forces is organically *incapable* of achieving Marxist clarity or coherent revolutionary action, as the USec has amply demonstrated. What is the "United" Secretariat's position on Chile, for instance? The SWP says Allende's Popular Unity coalition was a popular front, but the IMT and PST deny this. Indochina? The IMT considers the Vietnamese Stalinists to be revolutionaries who have just accomplished "the first victorious 'permanent revolution'" since Cuba, while the SWP refused to take sides in the class war in Indochina and currently holds that South Vietnam is still capitalist!

What of the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement, the French Union of the Left, the Chinese "Cultural Revolution," guerrilla warfare, individual terrorism? On none of these vital issues is there a common USec position, and in line with its Menshevik conception of democratic centralism the opposing policies are duly published in the press of the respective sections. No wonder, then, that everywhere there are substantial numbers of LTF and IMT supporters in the same country there have been splits or separate organizations (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Peru, Portugal and the U.S.).

Already at the founding of the USec in 1963 its character as an unprincipled non-aggression pact was demonstrated by sweeping under the rug important differences on the 1953 split, China and other topics. Another element of the bogus "reunification" was a tacit agreement not to denounce each other's betrayals, in order to maintain "unity." In a recent public factional polemic against the USec majority, the PST captured this point nicely. Why, it asked, does Mandel attack the PST for making joint declarations with bourgeois politicians yet remain silent about the SWP's "antiwar" coalitions with prominent liberal Democrats?

"We should like to remind them [the IMT leadership] that at the height of the antiwar movement in the United States, quite a few petty bourgeois and even bourgeois figures sought to share the platform in the giant rallies that were staged at the time. The Trotskyists in the United States did not oppose this. In fact they favored it.

"But how the ultralefts screamed! They considered this to be proof positive that the Socialist Workers party had formed an 'interclass political bloc' with the liberal wing of the Democratic party, thereby falling into the Social Democratic 'policy' of class collaborationism. It is one of the main 'proofs' still thrown at the SWP by the ultralefts in the United States (and elsewhere) to bolster the charge that the SWP has 'degenerated,' turned 'reformist,' and 'betrayed' the working class."

— *Intercontinental Press*, 20 January 1975

The "ultra-lefts" who denounced the SWP's class-collaborationist antiwar coalitions were, of course, the Spartacist League, and the PST leaders make an important point in demonstrating the IMT's inconsistency. But Mandel well understands that to accuse the SWP of class collaborationism in its main area of work for half a decade means irrevocably splitting the USec down the middle and destroying its claim to be the Fourth International.

Class Collaboration and the Antiwar Movement

The Socialist Workers Party policy in the antiwar movement of the late 1960's is, in fact, a classic example of its reformist policies. "Single-issue" coalition-building against the Vietnam war dominated the activities of the SWP from 1965 to 1971 and won most of the party's present membership. It was in this school of class collaboration that they were educated, and we can assure you that even among reformist Maoists and pro-Moscow Stalinists the SWP was notorious as the most right-wing "socialist" element in the antiwar movement. The Maoists called for victory of the NLF (at least until the 1973 "peace" accords), but the SWP consistently refused to take sides in the class war raging in Indochina (claiming the issue was solely self-determination). Even the CPUSA was able to posture to the left of the SWP, by seeking to build multi-issue coalitions (most notably the "People's Coalition for Peace and Justice"). The SWP attacked them as "sectarian" since they would scare off potential opponents of the war who disagreed on other points.

The essence of the SWP's antiwar "strategy" was expressed in a 22 November 1965 *Militant* article which called for "put[ting] aside sectarian differences to unite and help build a national organization which can encompass anyone willing to oppose U.S. involvement in Vietnam, regardless of their commitment, or lack of it, on other questions." What Hansen & Co. sought was a common

organization with bourgeois antiwar groups and liberal capitalist politicians who, understandably, "lack commitment" to wage a working-class struggle against the war.

This did not simply remain on paper as unrealized opportunist appetites. As early as the autumn of 1965 the SWP acted as a broker to cement the "Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee," formed around a single slogan, "Stop the War Now!" and a call for the removal of "all foreign troops" from South Vietnam. This not only endorsed the U.S. government position condemning "North Vietnamese aggression," but avoided the fundamental obligation of proletarian solidarity, namely to call for victory to the Vietnamese revolution.

A similar class-collaborationist formation was the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) set up by the SWP in the late 1960's. Far from being an ad hoc bloc for the purpose of holding a demonstration, the SWP-dominated NPAC was an ongoing organization with a distinct political line and a board including Democratic Senator Vance Hartke. Even before Hartke's participation, however, NPAC's popular-front character was demonstrated by its refusal to raise any demand beyond "Out Now!" and its policy of building rallies which focused on bourgeois politicians (Hartke, Mayor John Lindsay, Senators George McGovern and Eugene McCarthy, etc.). It was no accident that every election year (1966, 1968, 1970, 1972), when Democratic Party "peace" candidates would mount their campaigns, the "independent" mass antiwar movement would simply disappear. And the SWP's refusal to call for solidarity with the Indochinese revolution guaranteed that NPAC would disintegrate as soon as large-scale withdrawal of U.S. troops began.

In contrast, the Spartacist League fought against the U.S.'s imperialist war on a *class* basis. Our demands included "no liberal bourgeois speakers at antiwar rallies," "labor political strikes against the war," "break with the Democrats and Republicans—form a workers party," "smash imperialism—all U.S. troops out of Asia now," and "victory to the Indochinese revolution—no confidence in sellout 'leaders' at home or abroad." One demand which invariably aroused the ire of the SWP "marshals" at all the demonstrations was "All Indochina Must Go Communist."

Our policy was entirely consonant with the Leninist program that imperialist war can only be fought by revolutionary class struggle. Commenting on the Zimmerwald conference Lenin referred to "the fundamental idea of our resolution that a struggle for peace *without* a revolutionary struggle is but an empty and false phrase, that the only way to put an end to the horrors of war is by a revolutionary struggle for socialism" ("The First Step," October 1915). But you will look in vain in the SWP's extensive articles on the Vietnam war and in numerous NPAC demonstrations and meetings for even a breath of revolutionary class struggle.

There is an important parallel here to the antiwar coalitions of the CPUSA in the 1930's. In an SWP pamphlet entitled, "The People's Front: The New Betrayal," James Burnham wrote in 1937:

"Most significant of all is the application of the People's Front policy to 'anti-war work.' Through a multitude of pacifist organizations, and especially through the directly controlled American League against War and Fascism, the

Stalinists aim at the creation of a 'broad, classless, Peoples' Front of all those opposed to war.' The class collaborationist character of the Peoples' Front policy is strikingly revealed through the Stalinist attitude in these organizations. They rule out in advance the Marxist analysis of war as necessarily resulting from the inner conflicts of capitalism and therefore genuinely opposed only by revolutionary class struggle against the capitalist order; and, in contrast, maintain that all persons, from whatever social class or group, whether or not opposed to capitalism can 'unite' to stop war."

This is a letter-perfect description of the SWP's action in NPAC.

The most dramatic expression of the popular-front character of NPAC came at its July 1971 conference in New York City. The meeting was attended by Senator Hartke and by Victor Reuther, a vice president of the United Auto Workers who was involved in channeling CIA funds to anti-communist unionists in Europe after World War II. A Spartacist League motion called for the exclusion of bourgeois politicians like Hartke from the conference; the SWP chairman refused to vote the motion. Later, when Hartke and Reuther spoke they were heckled by supporters of the Spartacist League and Progressive Labor. The SWP then mobilized its marshals and charged the protesters, injuring several of them with vicious beatings. The next day SL and PL supporters were excluded from the conference (see "SWP Seals Alliance with Bourgeoisie," *Workers' Action* No. 10, September 1971). Unity with the bosses, exclude the communists—this was the SWP's "independent" antiwar policy!

These fake Trotskyists call for and built organizations encompassing "anyone willing to oppose U.S. involvement in Vietnam, regardless of their commitment ... on other questions." We ask you: what would the LCE term an organization composed of all those, regardless of class, who oppose the Franco dictatorship? And what would you say of those who created such a coalition? Your answer in Spain is clear: you call the Assembly of Catalonia a popular front (or the embryo of a popular front) and condemn the class collaborationism of the Stalinists who build it. What do you say about the U.S.?

Federal Troops or Labor/Black Defense?

We could go on at length concerning the SWP's anti-Marxist practice in every arena: sectoralism (separate parties for blacks, Chicanos; "self-determination" for everyone including Indians, homosexuals, women, etc.); support for the labor bureaucracy against "disruptive" rank-and-file militants; blocs with bourgeois feminists in the women's liberation movement (and consequent refusal to raise the demand for *free* abortion); open support for strikebreaking (in the 1968 New York City teachers strikes); calls for "community control" (even of the police); boundless electoral cretinism, etc.

During recent months the SWP has ever more openly stated its social-democratic aspirations. In December 1974, in order to convince a liberal judge that there was no need for FBI surveillance of its youth group, an official SWP brief to the court declared that the party categorically renounced "violence or any other illegal activity." Shortly afterwards the SWP launched its "'76 Presidential Drive" with a "Bill of Rights for working people," a reformist

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gimmick which essentially calls for reforming capitalism out of existence by constitutional amendment!

Then, in an interview with the *New York Times* (21 April 1975), SWP presidential candidate Peter Camejo called for "cutting the war budget" (i.e., not eliminating it), "ending illegal activity of C.I.A. and F.B.I. harassment" (i.e., not touching the legal activities of these anti-communist special police), and "opposition to the present foreign policy, which we characterize as imperialist" (thus spreading the reformist illusion that imperialism could be eliminated by voting in peace-loving statesmen)! Not one of the five demands mentioned by Camejo included anything that has not already been raised by left-liberal Democratic congressmen.

But in the last year the struggle between the Marxist program of working-class independence and reformist class collaborationism has come to a head over a very specific issue: the SWP's call for "Federal Troops to Boston." During the course of a reactionary mobilization against school desegregation through court-ordered busing, there have been a number of racist lynch-mob attacks on black school children in Boston. So, good reformists that they are, the SWP appeals to the armed forces of the capitalist state—the butchers of Indochina—to protect black people!

Revolutionaries warn the working masses to place no confidence in the bourgeois state, pointing out that it defends the interests of the capitalist ruling class and not those of the exploited and oppressed. While it is perfectly correct to call for the enforcement of a law supporting democratic rights (in fact the Spartacist League was among the first to call for implementing the court-ordered busing plan), to call for the intervention of federal troops expresses confidence that they will defend the interests of the oppressed black minority. Marxists call instead for the working masses to rely on their own forces, and warn that if federal troops intervene in Boston it will be to smash any attempt at self-defense by the black population.

In Boston the Spartacist League called for the formation

of integrated working-class defense guards ("labor/black defense") for the schools, children and black communities endangered by racist marauders. This Leninist policy received worldwide press coverage in photos showing our banners in Boston demonstrations. It has also attracted support from a number of black militants. The SWP's response was to denounce our call for an integrated labor defense force as "ultra-left." "The call for trade-union defense guards isn't realistic right now," said Camejo in the *Militant* (1 November 1974), "...you pull this slogan of trade-union guards totally out of the blue. It's not a serious proposal."

Hansen has prettied up SWP policies on the Boston busing crisis for international consumption in a lengthy article in *Intercontinental Press* (25 November 1974) in which he even labeled the SL call for labor/black defense "a commendable stand." This is simply eyewash for the uninformed. Not *once* did the SWP *ever* raise such a demand in Boston (or anywhere else) during the past year. On the contrary, at the December 14 demonstration in Boston, when the SL contingent chanted "No Federal Troops—Labor/Black Defense!" a nearby SWP contingent began to chant "Federal Troops to Boston!" in an effort to drown us out.

A sharp line has been drawn over the issue of federal troops to Boston: the reformist SWP and CP, together with black Democrats and the liberal Democratic mayor of Boston, call for the intervention of military forces of the capitalist state; the Spartacist League calls for independent working-class action, for labor/black defense. It is the internationalist obligation of ostensibly revolutionary forces to take sides on this issue. To date, however, not one section of the United Secretariat has publicly opposed the open revisionism of the SWP on the central issue of the class character of the state and the attitude of revolutionaries toward it. Where does the LCE stand?

Trotsky, in any case, put forward a revolutionary policy. He wrote in "War and the Fourth International" (1934):

"To turn to the state, that is, to capital, with the demand to disarm the fascists means to sow the worst democratic illusions, to lull the vigilance of the proletariat, to demoralize its will.... The Social Democrats, even the most left ones, that is, those who are ready to repeat general phrases of

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revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, carefully avoid the question of arming the workers, or openly declare this task 'chimerical,' 'adventurous,' 'romantic,' etc."

Commenting on this quotation, the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction (whose leading member was recently expelled from the central committee of the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire [LCR]) wrote: "'Romantic' said the left social democrats in 1933, 'unrealistic' Camejo tells us; the years pass, but the vocabulary of the social democrats hardly changes!" (*Spartacist* [édition française] No. 9, 16 May 1975).

We are enclosing articles from our press which deal with this controversy over federal troops to Boston. Some of the most recent ones deal with the "realism" of calling for labor/black defense in a concrete manner: by reporting the formation of a union defense committee to protect the home of a black member from racist attacks. This action, by United Auto Workers Local 6 in Chicago, came as the result of a motion by the Labor Struggle Caucus of that union, one of whose members heads the defense squad. The Caucus is a class-struggle opposition grouping politically supported by the Spartacist League.

United Front: Tactic or Strategy?

We have attempted to study carefully the press of the Liga Comunista in order to form a considered opinion of your political positions and practice. We note in the first place that it is very heavily centered on the Iberian peninsula, and consequently we are not aware of your views on a number of important issues (including Cuba, Ireland, Near East wars, petty-bourgeois nationalism in various countries). Also, since we only have the first volume of the resolutions of your second congress, we would appreciate receiving any additional documents available.

A large part of *Combate* and the provincial organs of the LCE is taken up (correctly) by discussion of workers struggles and the student arena. Concerning the 1973 general strike in Pamplona, the strike wave in the Bajo Llobregat in 1974 and other important strikes we have sought to compare accounts published by the LCE, LCR, ORT [Organización Revolucionaria de los Trabajadores] and Maoist groups to the extent that they are available to us. While we have gained impressions, some important questions are still not clarified for us, and in any case it is risky to judge particular trade-union struggles from afar. We would, however, like to comment on your concept of a strategic united front and, at a general level, its relationship to the tasks of revolutionaries concerning the workers commissions.

In your letter to the central committee of the French Ligue Communiste ("Regarding the Positions Taken by the Ligue Communiste in the Legislative Elections of March 1973," June 1973, [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* No. 5, January 1974), the LCE states: "To the sell-out leaderships' strategic line of united front with the bourgeoisie, concretized at this time in a Union of the Left that is *unable to even fight Pompidou*, it required counterposing the *revolutionary strategy of the class united front*, able to polarize the oppressed masses of the city and countryside around the proletariat" (emphasis in original). The same idea is repeated elsewhere in the documents of the

Liga Comunista in different forms, usually referring to a "Class Pact" as the alternative "counterposed on all levels" to the popular front.

As you are well aware, the concept of a "united front strategy" has been used by the French OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste] to justify its policy of tailing after the present reformist leadership of the class. The most disgusting application of this capitulationist line was the OCI's call for a vote for Mitterrand, the single candidate of the popular-front Union of the Left, in last year's French presidential elections. We do not wish to make an amalgam, equating the LCE with the policy of Lambert, and we are aware that you have criticized the latter as constituting "an elevation of the tactical methods of the united front ... to a strategic principle" ("The Crisis of the LCR and the En Marcha Split," in [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 24, December 1973).

However, the line of a "strategy of the class united front" leads ultimately to just the conclusion the OCI has reached. The global alternative to the class collaborationist policies of the reformists is not an all-embracing united front of the organizations claiming to represent the working class nor a mythical "class pact," but rather *the Marxist program of the Leninist vanguard party*. To demand that the Stalinists and social democrats break an electoral coalition with bourgeois parties, to call on the reformists to fight for particular demands in the interests of the class is both principled and necessary; it enables us to demonstrate graphically before the masses the fact that these treacherous misleaders are enemies of proletarian revolution. But to imply that the agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers movement are capable of taking up the full revolutionary program of the Trotskyist party is to confuse the masses, hiding from them the counterrevolutionary program of the reformists and the absolute necessity of an independent Trotskyist party.

We are aware that the LCE warns of the treachery of the Stalinists and emphasizes the need for a Trotskyist party. (So does the OCI, on occasion.) But if, as you state, the united front encompasses the program of working-class independence from the bourgeoisie (as opposed to being one expression of it, in particular circumstances); and if the Stalinists are capable of taking up the united front—then surely they cease to be reformists, committed at all costs to the maintenance of capitalist rule. This is definitely implied in your "strategic resolution" of the second congress of the LCE ("Hacia la república socialista—Por el partido de la IV Internacional") where the following is said in a reply to imaginary accusations by the "apparatuses" that the united front is simply a maneuver:

"If you declare yourselves for the united front and fight consistently in this direction the working class will be greatly aided, will close ranks around its organizations and multiply the impetus of its sallies against the capitalists and their regime. Then we will stop judging you according to facts from your terrible past and present treacheries. We will pay attention to the new facts."

Comrades, when Trotsky said that under special circumstances the reformists may be forced to go farther than they intended, he did *not* mean that they could take up the full revolutionary program! It was *Pablo* who said

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this—and he was consistent with his “analyses,” by no longer fighting to create Trotskyist parties but instead pressuring for the reform of the Stalinist parties. We do not believe that this is the policy of the Liga Comunista, but it is the logical end result of your concept of a “strategy of the class united front.”

(We draw your attention to the section on the united front in our letter to the OCI and OCRFI [*Spartacist* No. 22, Winter 1973-74] for further observations on the notion of a “united front strategy.”)

This is more than a terminological question. The OCI's position of voting for the workers parties of a popular front is derived from the conception of a strategic united front. The Spartacist tendency, in contrast, refuses to give electoral support to any of the parties of a popular front; we call instead for conditional opposition to the workers parties of a popular front, demanding that they break with their bourgeois allies as a condition for electoral support. The logic of our position is quite clear: the fundamental principle of Marxist politics is political independence of the proletariat from the class enemy; if a workers party, even a rotten reformist party such as the British Labour Party, campaigns on its own for office, we can call on the workers to vote for this party as an elementary attempt to draw the class line. But if the workers party is part of a popular front, then to call on the workers to vote for that party is to call on them to put a bourgeois political formation in office!

The LCE also called for votes to the workers parties of the popular front in the second round of the 1973 French parliamentary elections. You argued that abstentionism is a passive policy. If it is a question of abstention on principle, this is correct. The Spartacist tendency, however, has no such policy, and called for a vote to the candidates of the OCI and LO [Lutte Ouvrière] which, because they refused to vote for the Left Radicals, presented at least in a distorted and very partial manner a class opposition to the popular front. We also called on the CP and SP to break from the Left Radicals, making any electoral support to their candidates conditional on such a break with the bourgeois party.

We would be interested to know what your policy was in the 1974 French elections when Mitterrand was the single candidate of the popular front. In such a case you could make no pretense of refusing to vote for part of the front; your concrete advice to the workers would be identical to that of the Union of the Left's leaders. Also we would be interested to know your position on the April 25 Portuguese elections. The Portuguese Partido Revolu-

nário dos Trabalhadores (PRT), which appears to follow LCE views generally, refused to give support to any of the parties which signed the pact with the Armed Forces Movement. We disagree with the PRT's policy of electoral support to the [Portuguese] LCI [Liga Comunista Internacional] (support which was by no means critical, at least publicly), since in our view the LCI's line toward the MFA amounted to “critical support” of its “progressive wing” rather than intransigent class opposition. But the PRT's refusal to vote for the CP because it was formally committed to class collaboration in the form of participation in the bonapartist bourgeois MFA-dominated regime is correct. Do you disagree with that position?

Workers Commissions and the “Revolutionary General Strike”

Your statements concerning the workers commissions also appear to us to reflect the erroneous concept of a “united front strategy.” You write that: “It is in the Workers Commissions that we Trotskyists think the fundamental organic base of the united front of the militant proletariat is to be found” (“The Crisis of the LCR and the En Marche Split”). In the “strategic resolution” of the second congress of the LCE you add: “The force of the generalized action of the masses, and the centralization of the will to struggle of extremely broad sectors, increasingly require the workers commissions to break with the obstacles which oppose the development of their vocation as *democratic forms of united front of the broad vanguard of the proletariat.*”

What do you mean by the phrases “fundamental organic base of the united front” and “vocation as democratic forms of united front of the broad vanguard”? If you wish to say that the workers commissions have grouped together many of the most combative worker militants, that it is necessary to struggle within them to defeat the Stalinists and other reformists who currently lead them on the path of class collaboration, that it would be stupid and dangerous sectarianism to treat the CC.OO. [workers commissions] as competitors, tacitly identifying the base with the leadership—then we can agree. But you apparently wish to go further.

To talk of the “vocation” of a particular institution in the class struggle is metaphysical. What is the “vocation” of the trade unions, to defend the interests of the workers against the bosses (which is impossible in this epoch except under revolutionary leadership) or to serve the interests of the bosses (as is almost universally the case)? You can say that the present class-collaborationist policies of the unions are a deformation of their basic purpose. But then Lenin was wrong to insist that an independent vanguard party was necessary in order to bring the working class to socialist consciousness, and that trade-union consciousness is bourgeois consciousness.

And what of the Russian soviets from February until September 1917—was their “vocation” that of serving as the organizational structure for the creation of a workers state? Then surely Lenin must have been wrong in withdrawing the slogan of “all power to the soviets” during the ferocious counterrevolutionary repression unleashed by Kerensky following the July days. Shouldn't the Bolsheviks instead have limited themselves to struggling

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for a majority in the soviets, unconditionally submitting themselves to the discipline of the soviet majority? They did not do so, and they were right.

The function of a particular institution in the class struggle is decided by the constellation of political class forces which determines its policy. The German workers councils of 1918 were dominated by the majority social democrats and ratified the establishment of a bourgeois parliamentary republic, for example. One can speak of the actual role played by this or that institution, and one can also speak of the capacity of a particular framework to fulfill other functions.

In our view, the actual role played by the Spanish workers commissions has been that of illegal trade unions. True, on occasion they have led mass mobilizations extending far beyond the limits of a particular occupational category. But so has the Bolivian miners federation, which for many years maintained armed workers militias. Moreover, you too make a distinction between the workers commissions and the "committees elected and subject to recall in assemblies." This is not mere formalism, since at present (as we understand it) most workers commissions are not elected, are dominated by reformist misleaders and many have even expelled militants who wished to pursue a combative class-struggle policy.

What is the capacity of the workers commission? Andrés Nin was wrong to believe that the anarchist-led CNT trade-union federation could take the place of soviets; he ignored the fact that even these combative unions were dominated by a bureaucracy and were structured in a manner such as to delay or repress the expression of the direct will of the masses. The workers commissions, in contrast, are much more fluid, incompletely coordinated and lacking the heavy weight of a massive bureaucracy such as develops in the unions under conditions of bourgeois legality. Thus the workers commissions may be *transformed* into democratic workers councils in the heat of a mass upsurge. In a similar manner shop stewards councils could have been transformed into factory committees in the course of the 1926 general strike in Great Britain.

In the United States we have fought syndicalist tendencies which see the unions as enemies of the workers because of the treacherous policy of the misleaders. In Britain during the 1973 miners strike we called for a general strike organized by the shop stewards councils, and criticized the utopianism of the International Marxist Group which sought to create "councils of action" out of thin air. A party cannot lightly break the discipline in action of the unions every time it disagrees with the policy adopted: until the outbreak of massive working-class upsurges it will necessarily focus its efforts on winning leadership of these institutions. But we do not submit ourselves *unconditionally* to the discipline of any institution beyond the party on the grounds that its "vocation" is to serve as the organic base of the united front. We must be prepared under certain circumstances to *break* the united front in order to take the struggle forward when the reformists begin to betray.

The "Revolutionary General Strike"

The Liga Comunista frequently speaks of the "Revolutionary General Strike to overthrow the Franco

dictatorship." Evidently this is intended to contrast with the CP's call for a "national strike" as some kind of act of national reconciliation; in a similar manner, the "class pact" proposed by the LCE is evidently intended to contrast with the CP's "pact for liberty." We are, of course, entirely in favor of the most effective slogans counterposing the program of class independence to the reformists' policy of class collaboration. But one must be careful in such matters not to oversimplify.

On the one hand, the slogan of a revolutionary general strike appears to be unduly specific as to the form of a revolutionary upheaval against the Franco regime. The 1934 uprising in Asturias immediately took on the form of an insurrection, for instance. In this respect, the slogan has sort of the character of a "social myth" à la Sorel. A similar example was the syndicalist slogan during World War I of a general strike against war. Of course a general strike may well be the means by which the bonapartist dictatorship is toppled.

Much more fundamentally, we are unclear as to the sense in which you use the slogan of the workers government and its relation to the general strike. On the one hand, your "strategic resolution" refers to "the formula of a government of the workers based on the organs of the general strike." This we consider a correct slogan in the event of a general strike; clearly, the task of the revolutionaries must be not only to form a central strike committee but also to give it a soviet character, transforming it into an organ of dual power and struggling to impose the rule of a government based on the democratic expression of this unitary representative organ of the independent workers movement. Such a formulation is sharply contrasted to the recent call by the Portuguese Liga Comunista Internacional (LCI) for "the imposition of a workers government within the framework of a capitalist state."

On the other hand, you write of the LCR that "It becomes ever more difficult to see, in their writings, *if they really make a distinction between the overthrow of the dictatorship and the overthrow of capitalism.* The rejection of the slogan of a real constituent assembly, as well as the ideological use of workers control, educate the militants in the illusion that the extension of democratic committees, and even more the rise of soviets, signify that the revolutionary positions have already defeated the influence of the reformist alternatives. The transitional slogan of the workers government is ever more confused, then, with the dictatorship of the proletariat" ("The Crisis in the LCR...").

We do not have extensive documentation of the writings of the LCR which you refer to. In any case, we would oppose dropping the slogan of a constituent assembly in the Spanish context (and we repeatedly called for a democratically elected constituent assembly in Portugal in the year following the overthrow of Caetano). But we do not conceive of the call for a constituent assembly as representing some kind of intermediate stage of the revolution; in a pre-revolutionary situation, we could simultaneously call for the formation of a soviet-type unitary organization representative of the entirety of the

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The two adjacent documents were submitted in July 1973 to the pre-conference discussion of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) by supporters of the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency (RIT): the "Declaration of Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency" (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 31, No. 22, July 1973 and "The Fight in the United Secretariat: Reformist Appetite Versus Guerrillaist Centrism" (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 31, No. 28, July 1973).

The RIT had coalesced around the general political line of two earlier pre-convention documents written by Gerald Clark ("The Only Road to Revolution is Through the Proletariat" and "A Program for Building a Proletarian Party: In Opposition to the Centrism of the Party Majority" printed, respectively, in SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 31, No. 1, April 1973, and Vol. 31, No. 14, June 1973). Although partial, these two documents together presented a broad-ranging criticism of both wings of the factionally polarized "United" Secretariat (USec).

Moving swiftly to bureaucratically suppress a principled Trotskyist opposition, the reformist SWP leadership refused the RIT permission to participate in the international discussion within the USec. Although abiding by this anti-Leninist decision, the RIT supporters were summarily expelled from the SWP within a few weeks after the national conference, charged with "collaboration with the Spartacist League" (see "SWP Uses Watergate Methods Against Trotskyists," Workers Vanguard No. 29, 28 September 1973). The "proof" of this so-called "collaboration" was the testimony of four SWP members who spent days slithering in the grass near the site of an SL educational summer camp and who claim to have spied two RIT supporters.

Following his expulsion Clark (together with a member of the National Committee of the Communist League of Australia who had been expelled in September 1973 for solidarizing with the RIT) addressed an appeal to the Tenth World Congress of the USec protesting the bureaucratic expulsions of RIT supporters and demanding the circulation of RIT documents (subsequently reprinted in Spartacist [édition française] No. 6, June 1974). The appeal was denied and ignored through the common action of the SWP and the leadership of the International Majority Tendency (IMT).

One leader of the pro-IMT Internationalist Tendency (IT) of the SWP, apprehensive that theirs would be the next necks on the chopping block, registered an internal, pro-forma protest over the expulsion of Clark. Yet a year later the IT leaders carried out a no less bureaucratic purge within their own ranks, expelling two members of the IT Steering Committee who opposed the cynical wheeling and dealing between the IMT and the SWP over "reintegration" of the expelled IT members, and who had demanded an immediate break with the reformist SWP (see "IT Expels Left Oppositionists for Demanding 'Break with the SWP,'" Workers Vanguard No. 59, 3 January 1975).

Following their expulsion the supporters of the RIT joined the SL.

The Fight in the United Secretariat: Reformist Appetite vs. Guerrillaist Centrism

In the struggle within the United Secretariat, the minority, centered on the (fraternally related) SWP, represents a *reformist* tendency, approximating the pre-World War I Social Democracy, while the majority, centered on the French Ligue Communiste, is a *centrist* current presently defending insurrectionary nationalist Stalinism of the left Maoist-Guevarist variety. Both tendencies are profoundly opportunist, but with differing views as to the possibilities of realizing their opportunist appetites. In large part, these differences reflect the different political conditions in the U.S. and Western Europe. Overawed by the apparent stability of American society and the authority of its ruling class, the SWP leadership cannot conceive of attaining power except through collaboration with a section of the bourgeoisie. Thus, the dominant activity of the SWP in the past several years has been the creation of a non-electoral *popular front* in opposition to the Vietnam war (with no possibility of generating an electoral extension at present because the SWP has little to offer the powerful capitalist parties). NPAC [National Peace Action Coalition] and its predecessors were deliberately designed with a programmatic invitation to elements of the ruling class, and a few prominent Democratic Party politicians duly accepted the offer. The main reason the SWP has reversed its past enthusiastic (although platonic) advocacy of guerrilla war is that association with real guerrilla-terrorists threatens to destroy the SWP's respectability in the face of bourgeois public opinion. Would Senator Hartke or Congresswoman Abzug have joined a "coalition" with a party associated with people kidnapping U.S. business executives? This is the spectre that haunts the SWP leadership: the armed crazies in the United Secretariat will drive away our bourgeois liberal collaborators!

Existing in less stable societies, the international majority sections are more optimistic about the armed seizure of state power than is the SWP leadership, and are contemptuous of its legalistic respectability. However, the international majority is no less opportunist than the SWP leadership.

Thus Comrade Germain endorsed the fundamental line of the SWP's class collaborationist antiwar work: "The role played by the American Trotskyists in stimulating and helping to organise a mass antiwar movement in the USA expresses a similar transformation. This mass antiwar movement... became a political factor of great importance in the world relationship of forces helping the struggle of the Vietnamese revolution against the counter-revolutionary war of imperialism." (Ernest Germain, "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International," *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Volume X, Number 4, April 1973, page 41.)

By way of criticism, Comrade Germain merely observes that the SWP could also have devoted "more specific propaganda directed to a more limited vanguard, explaining the need to support the Vietnamese revolution till its final victory." (*Ibid.*, page 46.) Ah, but Vance Hartke wouldn't have liked that! It was not an accident that the SWP consistently avoided raising even a figleaf of class politics in the antiwar movement. But the international

majority, of course, was hardly in a position to criticize the SWP's class collaboration over the Vietnam war since the Ligue Communiste supported that classic and easily recognizable popular front, the Union of the Left, in the last French election. Expectedly the SWP leadership returned the favor by uncritically publicizing the Ligue's class collaboration on that occasion.

For even in order to establish erstwhile orthodox credentials, the SWP—at least while the elections were under way and illusions were high—did not attack the French section for capitulation to the *Union de la Gauche* popular front. The SWP has made popular frontism the very center of its so-called "mass" work through its major activity, the antiwar movement. The SWP's substantial numerical growth since the early 1960s has been achieved precisely through the party's immersion in the classless antiwar movement, where along with the reformist Communist Party, the SWP bears major responsibility for keeping the struggle within the bounds of the liberal capitalist framework through the "single issue" strategy. The whole purpose of this policy was the deliberate refusal to raise the *class question* of the Vietnamese revolution, and the denial of the interrelationship between struggling to sharpen the domestic class struggle and defending the Vietnamese revolution. Instead, the party prided itself on

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Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency

The present crisis of capitalism has entered into a new period. The turning point in this crisis was the August 15, 1971, policy of the United States government imposing wage controls upon the working class, and seeking as well to better its own position at the expense of the other imperialist bourgeoisies. These measures initiated a general, international crisis of bourgeois relations. The result has been a growing instability of bourgeois regimes, exacerbated by the continuing war in Southeast Asia and the rising competition in trade and a faltering monetary system.

The post-war stability of the capitalist system based upon American hegemony was first shattered in 1968 with the Vietnamese Tet offensive, which brought the Johnson administration to its knees, and this was accompanied by a wide-ranging new rise in the class struggle: the French general strike, the Czech events, followed by major upheavals in northern Italy, Poland, Ireland, Chile, and Argentina. In every part of the world—advanced capitalist countries, the deformed workers states, colonial and semicolonial nations—the class struggle has emerged with a vigor unseen since the 1930s.

The revolutionary socialist movement, small and isolated from the working class, must realize and take advantage of this new period to begin the long, uphill struggle to root our forces in the working class and prepare our cadre for the battles which are sure to come. But not to

simply proclaim to the world our proletarian character and love for the workers. No! Our strategy of penetrating the workers' organizations is based on our analysis of the deep-going crisis of leadership of the proletariat and the necessity to defeat the present misleaders who have tied the working class to the saddle of the bourgeoisie.

But so far the proletariat has refused to be whipped into line. Caught between the bourgeois parties and the traditional reformist and Stalinist misleaders, the working class struggles militantly against the attacks by capital but is unable to advance beyond the limits of bourgeois relations. Only under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard will it be possible to advance the struggle for socialism and defeat capitalism once and for all.

But the vanguard must be armed with a program which is in the interests of the proletariat and capable of organizing it for the successful conquest of power. The present leaderships of the United Secretariat and the Socialist Workers Party offer no such program. Both tendencies within the world movement offer us two forms of the same substance: political liquidationism. In the case of the SWP, liquidation into petty-bourgeois milieus and the subordination of the vanguard role of the revolutionary party to the reformist leaderships of the petty-bourgeois movements, and in the labor movement its support to government-tied reformers—like the UMW's Miller and

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RIT Declaration...

the NMU's Morrissey. In the case of the IMT [International Majority Tendency of the United Secretariat], liquidation into guerrillaism and the "new mass vanguard" of Europe, which also represents a subordination of the role of the vanguard party. Therefore, both tendencies are unsupportable.

On the international level the positions put forward in Comrade Clark's document "The Only Road to Revolution is the Proletariat," represents for us a generally correct program and strategy for building revolutionary parties throughout the world in the next period. A strategy which places the proletariat in the center of our work and the organization of a mass, democratic-centralist International, rooted in the working class and capable of leading workers in the struggle for power, as a major objective of the Trotskyist movement.

Within the United States, we are in general agreement with the line of the document "A Program for Building a Proletarian Party: In Opposition to the Centrism of the Party Majority," also authored by Comrade Clark. This document counterposes a revolutionary Marxist program and perspective to the reformist democratic program of the party majority. In opposition to the "sectoral" thesis of the party leadership, which adapts to the democratic demands of Blacks, Chicanos, women, gays, students, and labor bureaucrats, the document calls for immediate major implantation into the unions to carry out work based on the Transitional Program and the principle of class unity against capitalist exploitation. In calling for the formation of trade-union caucuses based on the Transitional Program, the document correctly poses the question within the workers' movement of who should lead the class: revolutionary socialists or the present labor lieutenants of capital. These tasks flow directly from the evaluation we had made of the present period.

The political bankruptcy of the SWP majority's program and perspectives has been clearly revealed in its stubborn clinging to a student orientation in the face of *qualitative* changes in the world situation. What is worse, the majority has dug *deeper* into this milieu the more openly the crisis of bourgeois society develops. Unable to face this reality squarely, i.e., act in a revolutionary manner, the majority resorts to a frenzied attempt to appear "orthodox" before the final curtain is raised and reveals its two-stage theory of revolution for *all* sectors of the world movement!

Yet with the present method and practice of the SWP majority, should it decide tomorrow to turn massively to a "labor orientation," as it may well be compelled to do, such an orientation could only be a reflection of its continuing practice in other arenas. The task of Leninists among all strata of the oppressed is to fuse together their struggles into the general class struggle, to transcend all narrow, partial, and therefore counterposed, aspects. Only the program and practice of revolutionary Marxism has the capacity to achieve this. Hence the centrality of a revolutionary proletarian perspective in no way excludes work in other sections of the oppressed but rather directs the thrust of such work.

Two years ago, a struggle was launched to orient the party toward the proletariat. It failed. It failed because the

comrades of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency refused to address themselves to the question of program, and underestimated the degree to which the party has retreated from genuine Trotskyism. But because these questions couldn't be avoided, a split took place in the POT within a year after the convention. Those who took up the question of program in a serious manner eventually grouped into the Leninist Faction.

But those who retreated from this question of program are now, in their majority, grouped into the Internationalist Tendency and the West-Coast Tendency. Both have declared that they are in principled agreement with the International Majority Tendency. What differences they do have with the IMT are subordinated in the interests of organizational maneuvers. Inside both the tendencies which support the IMT there are wide and divergent political views that centrifugal force will probably pull apart in the future again. Despite the many correct criticisms these tendencies make of the party's program, we cannot support them because of our principled disagreement with the program of the IMT.

The International Majority Tendency in standing for the petty-bourgeois guerrilla road in the colonial world — which even if successful could at best lead to a *deformed* workers state, and at the expense of a working-class centered revolution—has reaped with the PRT-ERP [the Argentine Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores — Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo] the inevitable consequences: that for such guerrillas, a Mao or a Castro, not a Trotsky, is their legitimate ideological hero and inspirer. In Europe, the IMT's latest fad is the phrase "new mass vanguard" and the revolution guaranteed within five years. These quick remedies are not one bit superior to the concept of "red universities" as bastions of revolution, or "from the periphery to the center," since for many years they lamentably failed to turn Stalinist and reformist bureaucrats into involuntary revolutionaries through the tactic of "deep entryism." And for the United States, the IMT has been content to endorse the whole past work of the SWP, suggesting only that it might have been given a somewhat more radical cover.

The issue of democratic centralism in the United Secretariat is a travesty of Trotskyism. Democratic centralism—internal democracy and iron front of discipline in external work—is a vital requirement for proletarian revolutionaries, no less on the international than on the national plane. In the disparity of elements in the United Secretariat whose marriage of convenience is profoundly shaken, the pretense of discipline can only alternate between centrist mockery and bureaucratic abuse.

We know that many left-wing members of the party have been drawn to the IMT because of some of its correct specific criticisms of positions of the SWP. We hope to show these elements that the concept of "the enemy of our enemy is our friend" is not always true: in fact in this case, is a destructive illusion.

On the basis of the position of this statement, we take our stance at this crucial moment in the history of our movement, and call upon all serious revolutionaries in the party to join with us.

July 12, 1973

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being the "best builders" of impotent parades and rallies prominently featuring bourgeois politicians.

In an attempt to obscure the fundamentally popular frontist character of its antiwar work, the SWP has published in its *Education for Socialists* series two chapters from "The People's Front: The New Betrayal," written by James Burnham and published by the SWP in 1937 as its principal public declaration against the people's front. But the SWP has not republished the last chapter of Burnham's pamphlet, which describes how the Stalinists applied the people's front to the U.S., where they were not strong enough to bargain away proletarian revolution for governmental posts.

Burnham wrote: "Most significant of all is the application of the People's Front policy to 'anti-war work.' Through a multitude of pacifist organizations, and especially through the directly controlled American League Against War and Fascism, the Stalinists aim at the creation of a 'broad, classless People's Front of all those opposed to war.' The class-collaborationist character of the People's Front policy is strikingly revealed through the Stalinist attitude in these organizations. They rule out in advance the Marxist analysis of war as necessarily resulting from the inner conflicts of capitalism and therefore genuinely opposed only by revolutionary class struggle against the capitalist order and in contrast maintain that all persons, from whatever social class or group, whether or not opposed to capitalism, can 'unite' to stop war."

This Trotskyist condemnation of the popular front policy of the U.S. Stalinists reads as if it had been written specifically to describe the precise practice of the SWP in the antiwar movement—the practice which Comrade Germain finds principled!

Similarly over the question of the SWP's blatant accommodation to petty-bourgeois nationalism. Comrade Germain seeks to establish orthodox Leninist credentials for the international majority by denouncing the Canadian section and counterposing to the LSA/LSO [League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière] extensive quotations from Lenin on the difference between the right of nations to self-determination on the one hand and

nationalism—a pernicious anti-working-class ideology covering overt collaboration with the class enemy—on the other.

But when push comes to shove, Comrade Germain has nothing but fulsome praise for the SWP's abandonment of Leninism over Black and Chicano nationalism: "The analysis and projections made by Comrade George Breitman in that respect were among the most important creative contributions to Marxist thought realized by the world Trotskyist movement since the murder of Leon Trotsky. The conclusion was obvious: Black (and Chicano) nationalism in the United States are objectively progressive forces which revolutionary Marxists had to support, stimulate and help organise independently from the two big American bourgeois parties and from the still non-existent labour party." ("In Defence of Leninism..." page 43.)

Not "Armed Struggle," But Proletarian Revolution

The central revision of revolutionary Marxism by the international majority is the separation of the *class organization of an insurrection* from the society emerging from it. A revolutionary workers state, in which the working class democratically governs on the basis of collectivized property, can *only* be established if the *armed forces of the labor movement itself* play the dominant role in overthrowing the capitalist state. The insurgent peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie are necessary allies of the proletariat in socialist revolutions in backward countries. However, as Trotsky insisted again and again in his fight against Stalinism, the decisive question is whether the proletariat leads the petty bourgeoisie or vice versa. The leadership of the proletariat in a social revolution does not have a general or nebulous political or ideological form. Any bourgeois nationalist, petty-bourgeois radical or Stalinist can and often does claim to be fighting for workers power. "Proletarian leadership" is meaningless rhetoric unless extended to military dominance during an insurrection. *The leading role of the proletariat in a social revolution also means the military dominance of proletarian armed forces* (workers militias and proletarian sections of the old armed forces) *during the insurrection*. This is a fundamental principle of revolutionary Marxism. Whoever denies it is not a Trotskyist!

Where capitalism has been overthrown primarily by petty-bourgeois armed forces (Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, Cuba), what has emerged are *deformed workers states*—bureaucratic ruling castes based on collectivized (i.e., working-class) property forms. That the guerrilla road to power *necessarily* leads to a Stalinist regime is shown by the Cuban revolution, where the insurrectionary leadership did not begin as conscious Stalinists. Rather, the 26th of July Movement was a heterogeneous radical nationalist group originating out of the militant adventurist wing of the party of the Cuban liberal bourgeoisie (the Ortodoxo Party). However, in order to overthrow capitalism *and* maintain bonapartist rule of the consolidating bureaucratic caste over the Cuban working class, Castro's movement had to become a Stalinist party, merging with the wretched Cuban CP.

In a generally politically correct document, Comrade

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Fight in the USec...

Gerald Clark states, "By incorrectly generalizing the unusual experiences of the Cuban revolution and applying them on a continental scale in Latin America, the majority has revealed its petty-bourgeois adaptation to non-revolutionary currents in the workers movement." (Gerald Clark, "The Only Road to Revolution Is Through the Proletariat," *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 31, Number 1, April 1973, page 8.)

This statement indicates that Comrade Clark has not yet entirely transcended the theoretical framework of Pabloism. Revolutionary Marxists oppose the abandonment of "the Leninist norm of proletarian revolutions" in favor of "the Cuban road to power" not because "the Cuban road" is unlikely to succeed elsewhere—indeed, the Bolshevik revolution has not yet been repeated elsewhere—but because it necessarily produces a nationalist, anti-working-class regime. Soviet Russia in 1917-24 and Cuba (or China or Russia today) are two different types of societal organizations separated by a *political revolution*. Between Trotskyism on the one hand and Castro, Mao, Ho Chi Minh and their ilk on the other is a line of blood! They know this and so should we.

The Consistency of the Argentine PRT

The debate has centered around the politics and activities of the international majority-supported group in Argentina, the PRT (Combatiente). The international majority has simultaneously defended the PRT against minority accusations of adventurism and criticized it for Guevarist deviations.

Even when Comrade Germain seeks to demonstrate the PRT's close ties to the working class, he demonstrates just the opposite—a thoroughgoing petty-bourgeois elitism:

"The ERP detachments penetrated into some 30 factories where special conditions of repression existed and where armed factory guards of the bosses and the army terrorized the workers. They disarmed the guards, convened all the workers into general assemblies and held long discussions with them on the present stage of the class struggle in Argentina." ("In Defence of Leninism...", page 17.)

We might remind Comrade Germain that in 1949 Mao's Red Army, on a much broader scale, disarmed the repressive bourgeois army and convened (that is, ordered) the workers to assemble to hold "long discussions" with them. Revolutionary Marxists seek to replace the repressive bourgeois state apparatus with armed forces controlled by the workers movement. By contrast, the PRT seeks to replace the bourgeois state apparatus with armed petty-bourgeois bands which are not controlled by the organized working class.

The PRT's support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and its belief in the revolutionary character of the Cuban, North Korean and Vietnamese Stalinist parties is not "inconsistency" or "theoretical eclecticism" as Comrade Germain contends. The PRT is a consistent insurrectionary Stalinist organization. It is opposed to workers democracy in the state which it is seeking to establish and it is pursuing insurrectionary methods designed to ensure military control over the working class should it come to power. It is the PRT's uneasy apologists of the international majority who are inconsistent. The international majority claims to believe that a workers state should be governed through soviet democracy, but advocates insurrectionary methods which deprive the working class of decisive military power. The kindest thing one can say of the international majority position is that it is utopian. Just as pre-Marxist socialism looked to the enlightened members of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie to liberate the working class, so the interna-

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tional majority believes that enlightened and heroic petty-bourgeois guerrilla fighters will overthrow the capitalist state and magnanimously grant the working class soviet power.

The PRT seems to be rapidly moving away from the United Secretariat. This is easily understandable. Not only does it flow inevitably from the actual urban guerrilla struggle the PRT undertakes, but, as Comrade Germain has himself noted, the initiating PRT cadres who had been more "Trotskyist" have been largely exterminated. (This is the usual fate of terrorists practicing terrorism and is a sufficient comment on the international majority's approach to the difficult and lengthy task of building leadership.) Comrade Germain cannot justly disown those who engage in the "strategy" he defends when they go on to embrace the corresponding left-Stalinist ideology. Because they are fundamentally nationalist, regimes which come to power via the guerrilla road repudiate the perspective of socialist revolutions in other nations when these are an obstacle to making diplomatic deals with bourgeois states. Appropriately, Fidel Castro has evolved in a manner parallel to his onetime publicist, Comrade Hansen. Castro too once advocated guerrilla war, but now finds it "ultraleft." The Havana regime has repudiated guerrilla war in order to form an alliance with Latin American bourgeois nationalism (the Peruvian junta, the Chilean popular front, Peronism). In a like manner, Mao has endorsed capitalist counterrevolutionary terrorism in Bangladesh and Ceylon. Some Maoist-Fidelistas are repelled by the present policies of the Havana and Peking regimes. These dissident left Stalinists can only be won to Trotskyism by proving to them that the counterrevolutionary foreign policy of Havana and Peking is the organic and necessary result of the manner in which these regimes came to power: without the dominant role in the revolution being played by the working class under Trotskyist leadership. But all wings of the United Secretariat have adapted to left Maoism-Guevarism by presenting Trotskyism as a form of insurrectionary left Stalinism. This is the crime of the centrist international majority in its policies toward Argentina.

Terrorists, Guerrillas and Stalinist Bureaucrats

Much confusion exists in our movement about what Stalinism is. It is far more than an ideology, a particular political-organizational tradition, and certainly not simply a phase in the history of the USSR. Stalinism is a social phenomenon—bureaucratic rule on the basis of working-class property forms. In addition to being a reformist working-class current, Stalinism has organic roots in the urban petty bourgeoisie of the backward countries. Petty-bourgeois radical nationalists identify with and take as models the Maoists, Viet Cong and Fidelistas as people like themselves who have made good. In one of its aspects, Stalinism is a form of petty-bourgeois radical nationalism—the politics of aspiring bureaucrats.

No one should be taken in by the international majority's attempt to make a fundamental distinction between classical terrorism and contemporary guerrillaism of the ERP-Tupamaros type. Both represent the same basic political class content: the attempt by a section of the petty

bourgeoisie to overthrow the bourgeoisie and succeed as the dominant stratum in society. Guerrillaism is nothing more than the current characteristic method of struggle by petty-bourgeois radical nationalists who in particular circumstances smoothly transform themselves into Stalinist bureaucrats.

Decades before the emergence of "Marxist-Leninist guerrillas," Trotsky pointed out the organic connection between left-wing terrorism and Stalinist bureaucratism:

"Individual terrorism is in its very essence bureaucratism turned inside out. For Marxists this law was not discovered yesterday. Bureaucratism has no confidence in the masses and endeavors to substitute itself for the masses. Terrorism works in the same manner; it seeks to make the masses happy without asking their participation. The Stalinist bureaucracy has created a vile leader-cult, attributing to leaders divine qualities. 'Hero' worship is also the religion of terrorism, only with a minus sign. The Nikolaevs imagine that all that is necessary is to remove a few leaders by means of a revolver in order for history to take another course. Communist terrorists, as an ideological grouping, are of the same flesh and blood as the Stalinist bureaucracy." (Leon Trotsky, "The Stalinist Bureaucracy and the Kirov Assassination," *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1934-35*, Pathfinder Press, page 124.)

The SWP Leadership: For and Against the Guerrilla Road to Power

For many years, the SWP leadership was not only an ardent advocate of guerrilla war, but engaged in idiot enthusing over the Castro regime and Fidelista movement. The SWP's self-styled orthodox turn against guerrillaism is part of its *rightward* motion in adopting a reformist program acceptable to sections of the liberal bourgeoisie. The present arguments over which tendency has a distorted interpretation of the Ninth World Congress decisions are quite beside the point.

For the major document which in 1963 laid the basis for the SWP's unification with the European Pabloists to form the United Secretariat stated: "(13) Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasants and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the second world war. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries." ("For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement," Statement of the Political Committee of the SWP, *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 24, Number 29, April 1963, page 39. Also quoted in "On the Disputed Questions in the Fourth International: A Brief Summary," by C. Howard (IMG), *SWP Internal Information Bulletin*, Number 3 in 1973, June 1973, page 25.)

Interestingly, at that same time the oppositional tendency which later became the Spartacist League produced the following explicit counterposition on

continued on next page

Fight in the U.Sec...

guerrilla war: "(15) Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decayed imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the *proletarian* leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for 'building revolutionary Marxist parties in the colonial countries.' Marxists must resolutely oppose any adventurist acceptance of the peasant-guerrilla road to socialism—historically akin to the Social Revolutionary program on tactics that Lenin fought. This alternative would be a suicidal course for the socialist goals of the movement, and perhaps physically for the adventurers." ("Towards Rebirth of the Fourth International—Draft Resolution on the World Movement," submitted for the Minority by Shane Mage, James Robertson and Geoffrey White, *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 24, Number 26, June 1963, page 16.)

It might now appear that the SWP majority has capitulated to Spartacism on the guerrilla war question! Such a view however would be inverted. The SWP leadership's present opposition to guerrillism flows directly from its reformist appetites, not simply from opposition to a tactically adventurist policy. The Spartacist tendency, while condemning tactical adventurism, opposed guerrilla war primarily because of its class content and the type of regime which emerges from it if successful.

To the international majority's "strategy of armed struggle," the SWP leadership has counterposed "the strategy of the Leninist method of party building." Taken in an abstract and isolated way, the term "Leninist method of party building" is meaningless and not distinct from the Kautskyan conception of party building by the old German Social Democracy. It is deliberately designed to avoid consideration of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois state. And the SWP leadership wants to avoid such a discussion because, at bottom, it is opposed to the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist state.

The strongest weapon each side in the international discussion possesses is the obvious departure from Trotskyism by the other side. Thus the international minority can denounce the PRT for Guevarism—but only by glossing over the SWP's years-long panegyrics to Castro and Che. It can denounce the Bolivian POR [Partido Obrero Revolucionario] (Gonzales) for joining the FRA [Frente Revolucionario Anti-Imperialista] under a "common bourgeois program" but this is pure hypocrisy for the enthusiasts of the single-issue reformist NPACs and WONAACs [Women's National Abortion Action Coalition]. Only those at a great distance from the practice of the

SWP can take these cynical protestations of orthodoxy as good coin. Similarly, those who can write approvingly of the European sections for a presumed proletarian orientation are simply naive if they are not willfully blind.

To take one example: "While the SWP leadership interpreted the aborted French revolution as a reaffirmation of their intercontinental-wide student strategy, the European comrades absorbed the true lessons: the importance of being able to challenge the Stalinists and reformists inside the workers movement." ("Statement of Support to the International Majority Tendency," by Ralph Levitt *et al.*, *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 31, Number 11, June 1973, page 3.) In fact the entire thrust of the Ligue Communiste's "from the periphery to the center" strategy is the thesis that the party can conquer the crucial sections of the proletariat by working through marginal and petty-bourgeois sectors, precisely without having to confront the entrenched Stalinist and Social-Democratic leaderships of the organized workers movement. Similarly, the international majority's protestations of outrage at the Canadian section's line on nationalism in English Canada and Quebec are exposed as empty posturing in the light of the European sections' own capitulatory positions on the "Arab revolution," the IRA, the Vietnamese Stalinists, and all the rest.

Conclusion

The SWP leadership is in its working program committed to a legalistic perspective based on class collaboration as that which flowered in Kautskyan Social Democracy. Only the absence of a *mass base* in the trade-union bureaucracy, labor aristocracy, and "progressive" petty bourgeoisie separates the SWP from classic Social Democracy. The SWP's present "orthodox" attack on guerrilla adventurism is, in reality, a frightened reaction to the threat posed by the international majority line to disrupt the acquisition of such a mass base by the SWP, i.e., it is based upon the SWP's own opposition to the revolutionary overthrow of the state. The international majority is a genuine centrist swamp. Whatever the subjective revolutionary intentions of some of them, its denizens range from the thoroughly corrupt union bureaucrats of the Ceylonese LSSP(R) [Lanka Sama Samaj Party (Revolutionary)] to the workerist sectarians of the British IMG [International Marxist Group]. The international majority is currently defending a policy of insurrectionary nationalist Stalinism which denies the leading role of the proletariat in social revolution as concretized in the military dominance of workers militias during the insurrection. The Fourth International as Trotsky conceived it—a democratic-centralist revolutionary proletarian international—can only emerge through implacable struggle against the reformism of the minority and the centrism of the majority tendency.

July 9, 1973

*The above contribution is not a document of or does not necessarily express the views of the other members of the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency. [Footnote in the original.]

Liga Comunista...

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organized workers. As to the call for a workers government, we raise this as a call for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is possible that a workers government might arise in a dual power situation and would be transitional in the sense of not yet having imposed a single proletarian state power against the rule of capital. But we warn sharply against any attempt to turn the slogan of the workers government into a call for the working-class parties to administer the capitalist state (as both the majority and minority of the USec do) in the guise of being a tactical application of the algebraic slogan. Particularly in a general strike situation, the task of the workers government must be to suppress the capitalist state apparatus. Any attempt to take it over (as in Germany in November 1918, when an SPD-USPD government took over the bourgeois state with the "support" of the reformist-dominated workers councils) must mean a bloody suppression of the workers in the streets. While there may be, in the event, a separation in time between the overthrow of the dictatorship and the overthrow of capitalism, the communists must always put forward the demand for the overthrow of capitalism rather than some kind of stagist concept (first the overthrow of the Franco dictatorship by a general strike, then a struggle against capitalist rule).

"Democratic Control of the Army"

In this respect, a slogan which has appeared in several publications of the LCE, for "democratic control of the army" as a task of the workers government, seems dangerously misleading. In some cases you have phrased this as "democratic control by soldiers committees," but in either case it tends to equate the situation of the state apparatus with industrial production in the factories. We do not call for workers control of the bourgeois state apparatus (much less "democratic" control); rather, our task is to smash it. Likewise, the task of the soldiers committees is to destroy—not control—the bourgeois army.

Trotsky trenchantly criticized this dangerous view in a polemic against the POUM's "thirteen points for victory" during the Spanish civil war:

"The fourth point proclaims: 'For the creation of an army controlled by the working class'.... The army is a weapon of the ruling class and cannot be anything else. The army is controlled by whoever commands it, that is, by whoever holds state power. The proletariat cannot 'control' an army created by the bourgeoisie and its reformist lackeys. The revolutionary party can and must build its cells in such an army, preparing the advanced sections of the army to pass over to the side of the workers."

"Is Victory Possible?" April 1937

Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

We have sought to lay out briefly our views on subjects where there seem to be major areas of disagreement between the international Spartacist tendency and the Liga Comunista of Spain. Unfortunately we cannot take up all topics at once. In order to obtain a more complete

presentation of our positions on fundamental questions facing the workers movement, we refer you to the documents collected in *Cuadernos Marxistas* No. 1. And we invite a reply by the LCE.

In fighting for the rebirth of the Fourth International, the international Spartacist tendency not only rejects the fraudulent claims of the various impostors who today claim to be the FI. We also counterpose a fundamentally different concept of building the world party of socialist revolution, contrasting with Healy's "International Committee," whose phony "dialectics" serve only to mask a constantly changing line and whose only principle is unconditional submission to the Führer principle; with the OCI's "Organizing Committee," whose sole basis is abstract acceptance of the Transitional Program and agreement that it has "The Continuity"; and most especially with the "United" Secretariat, which seems to have as its only criterion for membership affirmation of the myth that it is the Fourth International.

Because we struggle to crystallize a politically homogeneous and authentically Trotskyist democratic-centralist international tendency, Mandel accuses the Spartacist tendency of trying to build a "monolithic" International (as he did in Australia last September) and Alain Krivine accuses us of equating democratic centralism with "helmets and truncheons" (a speech in Toronto in July 1974). We would point out, however, that it is the Mandels, Hansens and Krivines who have repeatedly expelled principled left oppositionists from their organizations, while simultaneously covering up the betrayals of their own factional partners (the case of Bala Tampoe, for instance). Our tendency is not "monolithic"—it is however founded on a principled basis of programmatic congruence.

The swamp of the "United Secretariat" cannot be reformed. From the very beginning its program has been based on Pabloist revisionism, committed to chasing after an endless succession of petty-bourgeois misleaders. As this putrescent bloc decomposes at an accelerated rate into wings which want either to capitulate to Guevarist youth or to become the mainstream social-democratic party of their country, the task of principled Trotskyists is *not* to seek unity of all those opposed to the dominant tendencies in the USec. The bankruptcy of this approach was graphically demonstrated by the ill-fated "Third Tendency," which could not agree on a common document until days before the "10th World Congress" and then fell apart immediately afterwards. Rather, it is only by fighting to build an authentic Trotskyist international tendency based on real political agreement that the Fourth International can be reformed. ■

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Trotskyist Faction...

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aggressive political confrontation with ostensibly Trotskyist groups. But the NII [Necessary International Initiative] is by no means an "instrument" of such policies, rather it constitutes a barrier to programmatic regroupment. The NII is neither an open forum for discussion nor a democratic-centralist international tendency. Since its formation the NII has been carrying out common propagandistic work (Portugal) and includes a mutual "non-aggression pact"—the questions where there are political differences are passed over in silence to outsiders (and to a large extent internally as well). The call for discussion at the conclusion of the NII [document] expresses its character as a rotten bloc: "all those who accept the spirit of this general statement should participate." It is not *program* which is the basis of participation, but rather a *feeling* of mutual ties—not excluding state capitalists, for example, though it does exclude elements which stand on Trotsky's Transitional Program.

The NII is a confused conglomeration of left-Pabloist groups which have gotten together on the basis of standing somewhere to the left of the USec majority and to the right of the iSt. What *truly unites* the NII (as opposed to Bender's scholastic exegeses of its "spirit") is: 1. rejection of the Transitional Program of 1938 as the program of the imperialist epoch; 2. a defeatist position on the split in the Fourth International in 1952-54; 3. support for petty-bourgeois nationalists (for example, in Angola: "For the Victory of the MPLA," *Spartacus* No. 22; Lebanon, Palestine); 4. electoral support to workers parties in popular fronts (Chile in 1970, France in 1973/74, Pato in Portugal, the "historic compromise" in Italy).

The superfluous character of the NII becomes evident in its contradictory stance toward the USec. Whereas the Spartacusbund declared at the time of the Fifth NC that it wanted to smash the USec politically, Roberto wanted (wants?) to reform it. In any case he weeps bitter tears for the dead and gone "Third Tendency" of the USec (report on the meeting of the Joint Commission of the NII on 2 November 1976 in Paris, p. 1). The position of the Matgamna group (I-CL [International-Communist League]) toward the USec is downright impenetrable—after years of "critical support" to the USec its present position is: "The I-CL continues to believe that the USFI is the main stream that has emerged from the communist tendency personified by Leon Trotsky" ("The I-CL and the Fourth International," p. 6).

OUT OF THE ROTTEN NII BLOC, THE NII IS A BARRIER WHICH MUST BE SMASHED!

The Trotskyist Faction fights for a policy of aggressive regroupment on the basis of a clear Trotskyist program. In basing our politics on the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Comintern and on the founding documents of the Fourth International, we recognize the further programmatic development of the proletarian world revolution on principled bases—an historical development proceeding from the revolutionary phases of the international world parties of the proletariat.

This statement is directed at all Trotskyist elements in the Spartacusbund. By our analyses we shall demonstrate

to these comrades that the defeats of the Spartacusbund, in particular in respect to its present main task, the construction of the party of proletarian world revolution, are not tactical/episodic but rather derive from its programmatic confusion, from its understanding of programmatic particularism, which continue to unambiguously stamp it as a centrist organization from a typical mold.

Clarity in the following points is central to a Trotskyist orientation:

I. The Transitional Program is the program of proletarian world revolution in our epoch. The document springs from the Marxist methodology in analyzing the present historical period. Hence the basic conclusions stemming from it have a necessary political and organizational form and constitute the foundations of our strategy and tactics.

We thus reject all suggestions which take the "destruction" of the program of the Fourth International as the basis for political work and which therefore must inevitably lead to a revision of the Trotskyist program. The organizations of the NII, which are by no means of one mind as to *when* the Transitional Program became inadequate and *how* it is to be "reconstructed," express only their common revisionist appetites when they adopt this position.

II. On the one hand the "popular front," on the other fascism—these are the last means of imperialism *against* proletarian revolution. The program and politics of such a coalition government are never anything but bourgeois through and through. We thus reject all tactical maneuvering vis-à-vis such coalitions, precisely because the class line passes not through but rather outside "popular fronts."

We explicitly reject every form of electoral support for parties or groups taking part in, or directly working toward, a "popular front." Only a break with the bourgeois "allies" *may* make such critical support for reformist or revisionist workers organizations possible. The FMR (Roberto's electoral support ("Vote red," printed without criticism in *Spartacus* No. 29) for the "repulsive class collaboration of the PCI [Communist Party of Italy]" (*ibid.*) is merely the last in a long series of capitulations vis-à-vis pop fronts. The dividing line between Bolshevism and Menshevism is, as Trotsky wrote, drawn by one's attitude toward popular fronts.

III. The social-democratic and Stalinist parties are in their essence simultaneously bourgeois and proletarian. These parties are particularly characterized by the antagonism between the proletarian class and a traditional leadership, between the working-class rank and file and the worker bureaucracy. Hence the Stalinist, as well as the social-democratic, parties are currents *in* the workers movement with a twofold character. They are simultaneously bourgeois and workers parties—or in Lenin's words, "bourgeois workers parties."

The additional ties of Stalinist parties to the "worker bureaucracies" of the deformed or degenerated workers states do not in principle alter the *quality* of this definition, since these bonapartist bureaucracies are channels for bourgeois influence on the workers movement (the Stalinist parties' severing of ties with these state bureaucracies—as in Spain, France and Italy—is ex-

pressed as a process of their transformation into national reformist parties). On no point are the positions of the NII groups more contradictory than on the question of reformism. Though the Spartacusbund (see Tanas, *Ergebnisse und Perspektiven* No. 2) made a qualitative distinction between the SPD [Social Democratic Party of Germany] as a "bourgeois" party ("based on support by the workers") and Stalinist workers parties, this position is contradicted by their being qualitatively equated in the NII [document] (which speaks of the "counterrevolutionary role of reformist parties.... [whether] Stalinist or social-democratic"). The I-CL practices entrism in the Labour Party and gave "critical support" to Anthony Benn (as a "Labour left") in the election of the BLP's new candidate for prime minister.

IV. We use the slogan of the workers government in the sense in which it was understood by the Bolsheviks in 1917 and by the Fourth International in its founding documents. Accordingly it is an anti-bourgeois, anti-capitalist slogan, in which the need for the proletariat to seize power by its own means is unambiguously expressed. All the slogans of the Transitional Program, i.e., our entire revolutionary strategy and tactics, give the slogan of the workers government only one single concrete meaning, namely, as the popular term for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Spartacusbund's fatal misunderstanding of this slogan emerges most brutally in its demand for Spain, where a (PCE/PSOE [Communist Party/Socialist Party]) "workers government" brought to power by a general strike is supposed to convene a Constituent Assembly (*Spartacus* No. 23). This slogan is identical with the demand that the working class should, after a successful uprising, hand over power to the "democratic" counter-revolution (and offers a close analogy to events in Germany in 1918-19, where an uprising placed power in the hands of the Ebert-Scheidemann "workers government"—as the Spartacusbund understands the term—which then, after smashing the revolutionary workers movement, proceeded to convene the National Assembly).

V. The Trotskyist Faction supports the right of all nations to national self-determination. But in so doing there can be no question of politically supporting petty-bourgeois nationalist liberation movements; instead one must carry out the military struggle against repressive imperialist measures in common with them—under one's own flag. In no case do we give our military support in order to play off a "more progressive" nationalist movement against other petty-bourgeois nationalist groups or even to assist them to power through our military support.

Concerning military support against imperialist conquest, we are in every case guided by the viewpoint that in the last analysis the working class can come to power only when it has dealt with its own bourgeoisie. The recognition that the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders of today—if victorious—are the national bourgeoisie of tomorrow excludes our support for *one* bourgeois-nationalist faction against another, since the sole question is *who* will stabilize a bourgeois-nationalist regime. From the standpoint of the historical interests of the working class every nationalism is *reactionary*.

VI. The organizational form of a Trotskyist party is

inseparably linked to its programmatic clarity and consists in practicing democratic centralism in line with the Bolshevik-Leninist conception (codified in the Resolution on the Organization Question of the Third World Congress of the Comintern); hence it must be recognized from the beginning as a principle to be applied internationally. The principle of democratic centralism means the most complete freedom of discussion internally, along with a complete unity of action externally. We decisively reject using "external freedom of criticism" to appeal to backward elements of the working class standing outside the Marxist organization in order to mobilize these elements against other sections of the Marxist Vanguard.

VII. We recognize that a currently embryonic party organization must necessarily constitute itself in the form of a "fighting propaganda group" in order, by destroying ostensibly revolutionary organizations, to initiate and/or drive forward a regroupment process in order thereby to build up one's own organization.

In doing so the character of this work must always be regarded as exemplary, rejecting out of hand any voluntaristic notion of intervening as a propaganda group into all the daily struggles of the working class, inasmuch as this would lead to dissipating one's own forces and to liquidating the program.

VIII. The Trotskyist Faction advocates the principle of the united front tactic, according to which complete freedom of criticism must be preserved in each action carried out jointly with other organizations. We reject every form of common propaganda with other organizations. We consistently apply the principle of unity in a given *action*, which must have a short term and practical goal corresponding to the method of "march separately, strike together." Both the bloc with Quicuchi [leader of a small Angolan group much touted by the Spartacusbund] and the common struggle of all workers organizations "against the police state and repression" (defensive-offensive alliance) contradict this Leninist concept and imply a common understanding of the strategy and tactics of proletarian class defense.

IX. Implanting the organization in the working class through factory and trade-union work must be carried out without any restrictions at the programmatic level and, at the present stage of constructing the party, can be carried out only in an exemplary fashion if one is not to succumb to the impressionist pressure of possible resulting social relationships, such as wishing to lead or initiate struggles in a given plant or trade union without having constructed a leadership there as the instrument of the party.

"Communists always and everywhere advocate the historical tasks of the proletariat as opposed to all particular interests, under some circumstances even without, or in opposition to, large sections of the working class and its organizations."

—Resolution of the Fifth National Congress of the Spartacusbund

The Trotskyist Faction is fighting for support to the above platform, the dividing line between revolutionary Trotskyism and Menshevism.

Berlin, 14 December 1976

Spartacusbund Expels Left Opposition

Trotskyist Faction Fuses with TLD

Reprinted below is the founding document of the Trotskyist Fraction (TF) of the German Spartacusbund. When confronted by a principled Trotskyist opposition at their sixth national conference in January 1977, the Spartacusbund centrists bureaucratically expelled the TF solely for refusing to repudiate its political positions and to "recognize completely the authority of the past and future leadership of the Spartacusbund" (see "Trotskyist Faction Expelled by Spartacusbund," Workers Vanguard No. 142, 28 January 1977).

Originating as a left split from the German section of the United Secretariat (USec) in 1969-70 the Spartacusbund never definitively broke with central tenets and traditions of Pabloist revisionism, despite its short-lived binge of self-criticism and left-sounding anti-Pabloism begun at the fifth national conference in August 1975. Foundering in centrist disorientation, and increasingly beset by severe demoralization (losing half its membership during the past year), the disintegrating Spartacusbund in March 1976 cast its lot with the so-called "Necessary International Initiative" (NII), a left-of-the-USec rotten bloc brokered by the Italian Frazione Marxista Rivoluzionaria (now renamed Lega Comunista) and also including the Austrian Internationale Kommunistische Liga and the British International-Communist League.

As the TF document demonstrates, the NII conglomerate has little in common beyond similar appetites for opportunist maneuvers with the USec and mutual antipathy for the authentic Trotskyism upheld by the international Spartacist tendency. Although at odds with one another over a range of crucial issues the centrist groups lashed together in the NII share a Pabloist methodology which finds its fullest expression in their rejection of the Transitional Program; the NII document claims that both the Fourth International and the Trotskyist program were "destroyed" during World War II and consequently must be "reconstructed" anew.

Following their expulsion from the Spartacusbund the comrades of the TF began extensive political discussions with the Trozktistische Liga Deutschlands, German section of the international Spartacist tendency. At the beginning of February 1977 the two organizations fused.

The Fifth National Conference stated: "The Spartacusbund must break radically with its nationally limited past. . . ." This desire to break with the "national Trotskyism" of the early Spartacusbund (and of the KJO [Kommunistischen Jugendorganisation] and BL [Spartacus/Bolschewiki-Leninisten]) was a positive impulse—as was the stated wish to put an end to the

"practice of unprincipled propaganda blocs" and to "politics beneath the level of the Transitional Program," which also found expression in the "Resolution of the Fifth NC" (*Spartacus* No. 19, August 1975).

Such a break with the practice of the past was and is particularly pressing in view of genuine possibilities for a Trotskyist regroupment on an international scale. In the period after the Tenth World Congress there occurred a number of "cold" splits, after effects of the Chilean defeat, between the European-led majority of the USec [United Secretariat of the Fourth International—USFI] and the SWP [Socialist Workers Party]-led minority (Argentina, Australia, Canada, USA, etc.). In addition, the international "Third Tendency" for the most part dissolved: elements of it have capitulated to the majority (as with the Kompass tendency in the GIM [Gruppe Internationale Marxisten]), have gone over to the SWP faction (parts of "Tendency Four" in the LCR [Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire] and parts of the Italian FMR [Frazione Marxista Rivoluzionaria]) or have either split or been expelled (the Roberto wing of the FMR, etc.). Finally, groupings from the USec have gone over to the iSt, as with a wing of the FMR, several groupings from the LCR, etc.

At present the opportunities for programmatic regroupment are perhaps even more favorable than last year. The Maoist Stalinists have been plunged into a process of political fermentation by the events in China and are obviously beginning to fragment. In the course of the year the SWP-PST [Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores] bloc has broken up and the general crisis of the USec has intensified (Mandel announces his willingness to put aside "labels" like the "Fourth International" should his revisionist appetites demand this). Since its support for Mitterrand in 1974, the OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste] has been moving rapidly to the right: it is casting amorous eyes at the SWP, publishes its weekly paper *Informations Ouvrières* not as a party organ but rather as a "free tribune of class struggle" and is increasingly incapable of drawing the class line in its solidarity campaigns for those being politically persecuted in East Europe (the reformist IAK [Internationale Arbeiter Korrespondenz], without a tradition and base, merely presents the opportunist tendencies of the Lambertistes in a particularly crass form). The Healyites are sinking lower than ever before with their gangster tactics, their slanders of Hansen and Novack, their celebration of Libyan "socialism," and the fact that they have been able to set up their national office in Essen can be ascribed only to the pitiful weakness of the Spartacusbund.

This situation requires an international tactic of

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