

Fourth International

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Third Conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International

Resolutions, Reports and a Manifesto

The Struggle for Marxism in the U.S.A.

DOCUMENTS

**Declaration of the International Committee on:
Abram Fischer and the Imprisonment of Polish and
Hungarian Trotskyists**

Fourth International

A Journal of International Marxism

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of the Fourth International

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Editorial

THE Third Conference called by the International Committee of the Fourth International (April 1966) marked a major stage in the history of our movement. The work of Lenin and Trotsky in fighting for Marxist theory and practice against all opponents and revisionists is not something which can be carried on simply by clinging to the established texts. Marxism is the 'guide to action' of a living movement to change society by the proletarian revolution. Within the Marxist movement the disputes which make up its history are always reflections of struggles between the vital forces in the class war.

This issue of 'Fourth International' is devoted largely to the work and conclusions of our Third Conference. There is no better theoretical armament for the tasks now facing Marxists. For nearly 15 years the forces of the International Committee fought back the revisionism of Pablo and his collaborators, who took the relative equilibrium of post-1945 capitalism and Stalinism as the essential reality of the modern imperialist world. A bitter struggle was fought against all the consequences of this descent into impressionism and empiricism, a descent which ended in the abandonment of dialectical materialism.

It is only on the basis of that struggle against revisionism, for the continuity of Bolshevism as it was built into the foundations of the Fourth International, that a Marxist leadership can take its responsibilities in the new stage of the international class struggle. The working class of the metropolitan countries is now faced with the sharpest point of the capitalist offensive. All the national inflationary policies carried out in these countries have reached a full stop. Each 'national' economy is involved in an international economic crisis which necessitates attacks upon the metropolitan working classes sharper than ever before. Britain, with the accumulated problems of the oldest capitalist and colonial economy, expresses more clearly than any other country the economics and politics of this *international* crisis.

Against revisionism, the forces of the International Committee fought to insist that the Stalinist bureaucracy was a counter-revolutionary

force, that its basic interest was to hold back the working class's struggle, and above all to destroy any independent working-class leadership. Those who argued that Stalinism would be forced by 'objective' processes into 'progressive', 'liberalising' policies in Russia, and even 'revolutionary' action in the capitalist countries, found themselves utterly unable to expose and fight against the **butchers of the Hungarian Revolution**, just as later they were unable to defend the Cuban Revolution against the policies of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

One revisionist tendency after another has rejected the Marxist theory of capitalist crisis and the central task of building an independent working-class leadership.

Besides those who discovered that the 'permanent war economy' and 'state capitalism' had introduced a new type of international equilibrium, there were all of those in the Pabloite ranks, now split in various directions, who embraced the petty-bourgeois theories of a 'Third World' of underprivileged colonial peoples with a special type of revolution of their own. These revolutions were the 'central' struggles of our epoch, the 'storm-centre'; and so severe a forcing-house was this 'colonial revolution' that middle-class nationalist leaders could become Marxists, after the fashion of Castro.

Within the capitalist countries, already relegated to a secondary role by the revisionists, Marxists were told to bury themselves in reformist organisations—the so-called 'entry *sui generis*'. From these reformist 'mass organisations' would emerge big centrist movements.

The International Committee's sections followed through the fight against every one of these revisions. We insisted that the further development of capitalism, based on the class-collaboration of Stalinists and Social Democrats after 1945, in fact intensified all the contradictions, heightened the decisive character of the proletariat of the advanced countries, forced the exposure of the more and more counter-revolutionary role of the Stalinists, and that its accumulating contradictions would shake off like dust the apparently 'settled'

governments of the 'newly independent' countries. Against every one of the revisions we asserted the essential question of building Marxist parties of the Fourth International.

On the basis of this fight against the revisionism of our time, the sections of the International Committee trained their forces, particularly among working-class youth, for intervention against the reformists and Stalinists in the class struggle in their own countries. It was parties built on this basis which came together at the Third International Conference. It is these forces which now stand ready to accept the challenge of leadership in the metropolitan countries and to fight for this leadership in every country where they are.

When the representatives of certain sectarian groups calling themselves 'Trotskyist' came to our Conference, they came from another direction. After crossing our road and meeting us at the Conference, they continued on their way. The fact that the roads appeared to be converging made it necessary to settle and clarify the political differences. The French group *Voix Ouvriere* denied the value of the whole battle against Pablo's revisionism, on the grounds that it all took place in the confines of isolated middle-class groups. Our energy would, it seems, have been better spent in propaganda and agitation among the working class.

Robertson and his 'Spartacist' group (USA) came to the Conference with apparent agreement on political programme and on the struggle against revisionism. But the fight at the Conference itself revealed their opinion that the role of revisionism inside the Trotskyist movement was 'exaggerated'. To say that such revisionist trends were necessary to imperialism (as in Ceylon) was to give an absurd over-evaluation of our own importance, said Robertson. Together with his linked argument that in the US itself only propaganda tasks could be carried out by Marxists, this viewpoint placed him in the same camp as *Voix Ouvriere*. The arrogant pragmatist of the US, taking those parts of the International Committee's case which are 'useful' and rejecting those which are 'exaggerated', joined hands with the rigid rationalists of the French petty bourgeoisie, symbolising a middle-class opposition to the international role of the International Committee. This is because the IC insists on taking its responsibility now for the construction of the international leadership required by the proletariat. We insist that our struggle against revisionism, to constantly turn our forces into the struggles of the working class, to bring back into the theoretical battle the

lessons of these interventions, was the continuity of the Fourth International.

Outside of that struggle to carry forward the work of Lenin and Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, there was no political preparation for the struggles which have now broken out with renewed force as a consequence of the crisis analysed in our international resolution and Manifesto.

In Britain, beginning last May, took place a strike of profound importance, the strike called by the National Union of Seamen. This historic strike opened up a period of political strikes which will be of much greater magnitude and explosiveness. Here was not just a strike against the shipowners, but a strike in which the British Government, a Labour Government, from the very first day conducted a political battle against the seamen and their demands.

This Labour Government had undertaken to pioneer the so-called 'incomes policy'. Relying on its traditional association with the trade unions, the Labour Party's leaders staffed a Ministry of Economic Affairs and a Ministry of Technology, and provided a Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the hair-raisingly original idea of a planned capitalism. With the help of international bankers from the one side, and of the organised workers disciplined by the trade union bureaucracy on the other, they were going to solve the 'payments crisis' of British capitalism. On this basis, ignoring both the deep historical roots as well as the international conditions of this crisis, Wilson and Brown promised an era of expanding prosperity and productivity. At last, it was going to be proved that the capitalist property relations were not necessarily a barrier to the development of the productive forces and the development of mankind, provided only that Mr. Wilson and Mr. Gunter could get a sympathetic hearing for their moralising sermons. And then the claims of Marxists, that capitalism could no longer provide the basis for reformist politics, would be shattered.

But of course the objective reality of the class struggle is rather more resilient than the reformists suppose. Reformists can at times adapt the institutions of capitalism to the class struggle; they can corrupt and betray the working-class movement so that the full strength of the class is not brought into action. All those things they have done. But they cannot abolish the class struggle. Only the victory of the proletarian dictatorship and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie can do that. So long as capitalism remains, it will be driven more and more to destroy the working class as a class. This totalitarian or Fascist trend is the

reality behind the 'national interest', 'planning' and 'incomes policy' of Wilson.

The Wilson government showed its hand in the seamen's strike for all to see. Here was a Labour Prime Minister with his political origins in precisely those 'centrist' or 'left' circles of which such great things were promised by our revisionists. The 'new crop' of Left MPs next embraced by these revisionists made pious collections of small sums of money for the seamen's strike fund, and then voted Emergency Powers to Wilson without a single dissident. A few weeks later, now joined by Frank Cousins who had resigned from the Cabinet, these same MPs voted for the anti-Trade Union Legislation of the Wilson Government.

What was the role of the Stalinists, who, it had been anticipated by the revisionists, would be driven into a revolutionary role by the effects of 'mass pressure'? They used their daily paper, freshly christened 'Morning Star', as against the old 'Daily Worker', to constantly instruct their readers that the strike was a purely economic strike. When Wilson called it a strike against the community and the State, they said, he should be answered by the claim that it was purely against the shipowners. At public meetings the revisionist followers of the 'United Secretariat' followed the same line.

When the Lobby of Parliament on anti-Trade Union Legislation, called by the Young Socialists and supported by 10,000 striking Liverpool and Birkenhead dockers, coincided with the early days of the seamen's strike, the Stalinists had organised a later lobby in order to divide and weaken the support for May 25. In this they were supported by followers of the 'state capitalist' opponents of the Soviet Union.

At the May 25 Lobby the Stalinists provided the only effective support for the Labour Government and the bureaucracy of the National Union of Seamen in fighting to break up a united demonstration of seamen, dockers and other workers together with the Young Socialists.

The Young Socialists and the Socialist Labour League, fighting on the political line of the International Committee, were the only force based on the revolutionary programme of Marxism.

But this was no accident. The forces for their intervention were the same forces which had from the very first characterised the Labour Government as a *capitalist* Government. The Stalinists, seeking to divert militant workers behind the chimera of 'Left unity', called for gentle 'pressure' from 'public opinion' to change Wilson's policy.

The Pabloite revisionists characterised the Wilson Government in its early days as a 'left centrist', 'a left reformist' government. This was their preparation for the seamen's strike, and for the political strikes to come!

With this attitude towards the Labour leadership, which is utterly subservient to imperialism, they took *the other side* in the battle of the Social Democratic bureaucracy against the Young Socialists between 1961 and 1964. In that battle the Trotskyists in Britain defeated the Labour Party bureaucracy in the youth movement. From the fight emerged the Young Socialists of today. In the whole of that fight, the Stalinists stood by silently while the Labour bureaucracy attacked the youth movement. After the Young Socialists had set up their independent organisation in 1964, the Labour Party did not risk a Conference for one and a half years.

This Conference, with every political right taken away from the Labour Party's youth movement, was described by the Communist Party as highly progressive, and particularly so because it was not marked by the 'sectarian excesses' of previous years! In those years *majority* socialist policies defeated the Right Wing. Our Pabloites welcomed it as the best Young Socialist Conference yet, and were advised by their 'leader' to accept the abolition of their constitutional rights in order to stay inside the Labour Party.

The fight against revisionism is, therefore, entirely misunderstood if it is seen purely as a battle of ideas. It was a fight to prepare the living forces to intervene in the world crisis now facing imperialism. For us, the settlement of accounts with *Voix Ouvriere* and 'Spartacist' is an absolutely necessary step in this same battle. The abstentionist nonsense about 'we must not consider ourselves very important', 'there will be another day and our turn will come', is the latest and highly pernicious form of the liquidationist revisionism we have fought. In the situation now facing the workers, only the fight for a programme of transitional demands leading to the seizure of power can take the working class through the series of economic and political battles into which they are forced by the crisis.

The Fourth International has fought back the attempts of the Pabloites to destroy it. We do not intend now to throw away the fruits of this preparation at the behest of a few middle-class sectarians, whose reaction to the deepening crisis is to seek every means of going on in the old way. The International Party of the working class will be built!

Preliminary record of the Third World Conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International

THE third conference of the International Committee was held in London on April 4-8, 1966. Delegates and observers from ten countries attended. Delegates from two African countries were prevented from attending by passport difficulties.

After three days of discussion on the main political report, the conference voted on the report and on the resolution 'Rebuilding the Fourth International', which had been circulated internationally as the basis for the proceedings of the conference.

In the course of discussion, it became very clear that one of the delegations invited as observers (the group publishing the paper *Voix Ouvrière* in France) opposed completely the political line and theoretical basis of the International Committee. This group broke from the Fourth International in 1940 on the grounds of the petty-bourgeois social composition, organisational methods and political line of the existing French sections. It considers that the struggles conducted against revisionism inside the Fourth International since that time have been nothing more than a waste of time within a petty-bourgeois milieu. For this reason, the VO group accepted participation in the conference on the basis of their own interpretation of the references in the resolution 'Rebuilding the Fourth International' to the 'death' and 'destruction' of the Fourth International. The conference rejected this as an anti-theoretical tendency, a tendency which struck at the very root of the principled basis of the struggle for the Trotskyist programme and the building of revolutionary parties.

The conference accepted an amendment to the draft resolution, submitted by M. Banda of the British delegation, worded as follows:

Amendment I

'Delete the sentence referring to the destruction of the Fourth International by the Pabloite revisionists, and substitute the following:

"The Fourth International has successfully resisted and defeated the attempts of petty-bourgeois opportunism, in the shape of a hardened revisionist tendency which penetrated all sections of the Trotskyist movement, to destroy it politically and organisationally. The struggle against this tendency was and remains the necessary preparation for the rebuilding of the International as a centralised proletarian leadership."

The rest of the resolution to be amended to correspond to this change.'

A counter-amendment submitted by M. Varga (Hungarian delegation) read as follows:

Amendment II

'Re-write the first sentence of M. Banda's amendment as follows:

"In the framework of the Fourth International, and on the basis of its programme, Marxists have undertaken a successful struggle against, and have defeated the attempts of petty-bourgeois opportunism, etc."

Voting on the main political report and reply to discussion, Amendment I, on Amendment II, and on the amended resolution as a whole, were as follows: Report, etc. 11 For, 2 Against, 1 Abstention; Amendment I 10 For, 2 Against, 2 Abstentions; Amendment II 2 For, 10 Against, 2 Abstentions; Amended resolution 12 For, 2 Abstentions.

After the vote on the resolution, the *Voix Ouvrière* and Spartacist delegations left the conference. The spokesman of the *Voix Ouvrière* group announced that they had come under a misunderstanding: they were for the reconstruction of the Fourth International and therefore did not vote against the resolution, but they were convinced that the International Committee forces remained in the grip of the revisionism they talked about fighting, because they did not go to the roots of this revisionism in the question of Communist organisation. The *Voix Ouvrière* group thereby separated itself from the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International on the basis of the Transitional Programme. Their hostility to the battle to develop theory in a centralised international, preferring instead a 'centrist' international which puts aside theoretical differences, will bring them into sharp conflict with the International Committee.

The Spartacist delegation, and particularly its spokesman J. Robertson, displayed a similar anti-internationalist and anti-Marxist outlook. The International Committee proceeds in solidarity with the American Committee for the Fourth International, and declares that the Spartacist group in no way represents the positions of the International Committee. On the contrary, a section of the Fourth International in the USA, the most pressing need of the world proletariat, will only be built in struggle against the pragmatic,

petty-bourgeois, narrow 'American' politics of 'Spartacist'. The Report of the American Commission at the Conference, together with the statement on Robertson and the Spartacist delegation, are appended to this record.

Three Commissions worked to formulate and complete the work of the conference: the first was concerned with 'The Reconstruction of the Fourth International and the tasks of the International Committee'; the second with 'The Fourth International and the building of a section in the USA'; and the third with the drafting of a Manifesto on the political conclusions of the conference.

The following documents represent the work of the conference:

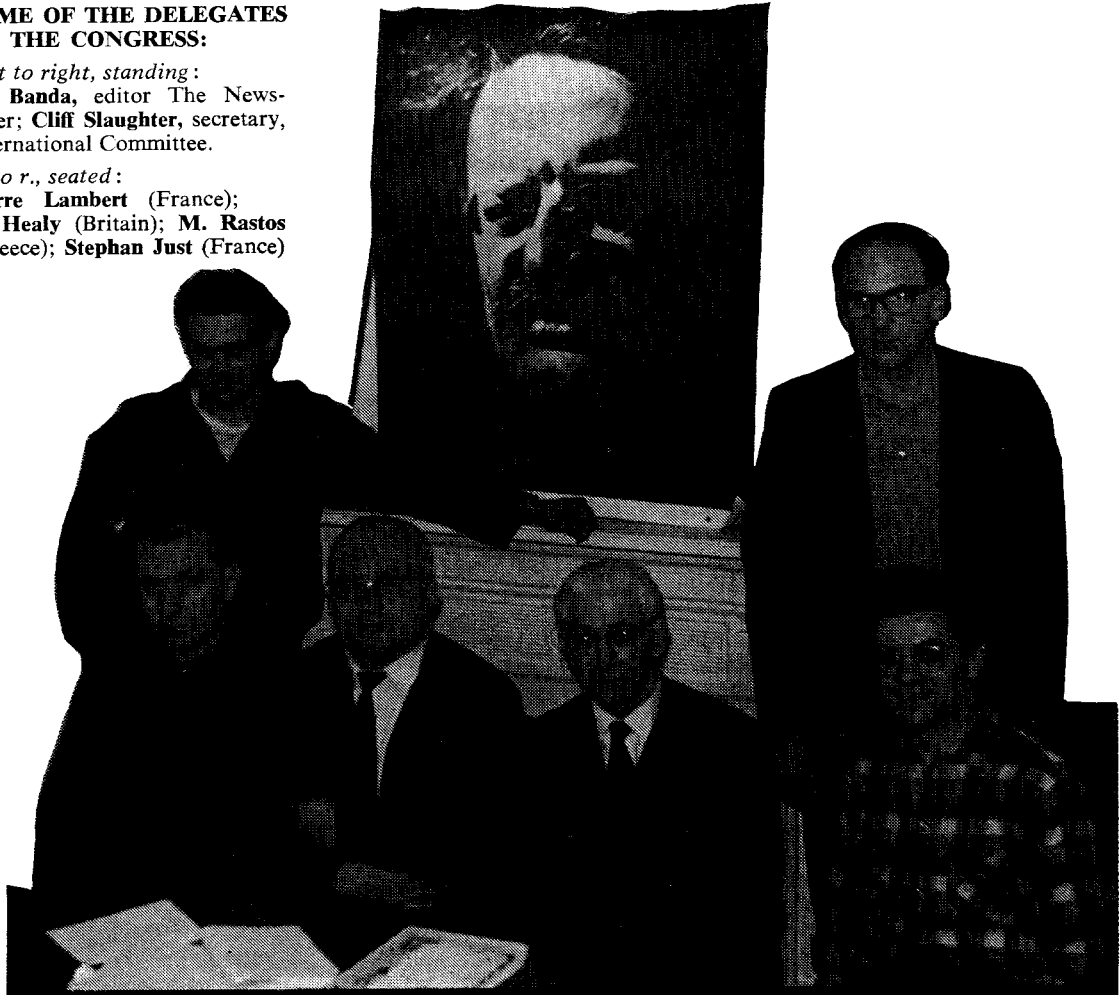
1. Amended resolution, 'Rebuilding the Fourth International'.
2. Report of the Commission on Rebuilding the Fourth International and the Tasks of the International Committee.
3. Report of the Conference American Commission.
4. Statement of the International Committee on Robertson and the Spartacist delegation to the conference.
5. Manifesto of the International Conference.

Other documents submitted to the conference are referred to the International Discussion Bulletin.

SOME OF THE DELEGATES AT THE CONGRESS:

Left to right, standing:
M. Banda, editor The Newsletter; **Cliff Slaughter**, secretary, International Committee.

L. to r., seated:
Pierre Lambert (France);
G. Healy (Britain); **M. Rastos**
(Greece); **Stephan Just** (France)



***Resolution for the International Conference of the
International Committee, 1966***

Rebuilding the Fourth

I The class struggle is international. World capitalism has long since played out its historical role of laying down the objective bases for socialism; the struggles of the workers of all countries have meaning only in terms of the world socialist revolution which began in October 1917 in Russia, as part of the world proletarian revolution. The Third (Communist) International was set up to answer the needs of the working class in this epoch of wars and revolutions. Following the betrayals of Social Democracy after 1918, the degeneration of the CPSU and the Comintern led eventually to the defeats in Britain and China in 1926/27 and the victory of fascism in Italy, Germany and Spain. Between 1933 and 1938 Trotsky and the Bolshevik opposition prepared to establish a Fourth International in response to the needs of the working class in a period of defeats, when Stalinism passed definitively to the side of counter-revolution.

The history of the class struggle since 1938 has proved correct the basic starting-point of Trotsky and the founders of the Fourth International: the working class remains oppressed by capitalism because of the betrayals of the working-class leadership, particularly by the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR; *our epoch is the epoch of crisis of working-class leadership*. All the economic and political developments since then have shown the correctness of insisting that the development of imperialism constantly deepens the contradiction between the productive forces and capitalist social relations. But at every critical stage in the development of this contradiction, the traitorous social-democratic and Stalinist leaderships and the Soviet bureaucracy have misled the workers; these petty-bourgeois formations have divided the workers along national and sectional lines and held back the development of a revolutionary consciousness. The post-war economic and political crisis in the advanced countries, the breakdown of capitalist rule in Eastern Europe, the victorious revolution in China, the mass struggles in the colonial countries—all of these international capitalism has survived because of the treachery of these misleaders who disarmed the working class.

Only an international revolutionary Marxist leadership could have enabled these class struggles to be used for the overthrow of capitalism in the main centres, the advanced countries. Only the Fourth International and its parties, intervening in the class struggle in these countries, giving them international significance, could have given leadership to the independent organs of working-class power, and could have led the peasant masses beyond the leadership of the petty-bourgeois nationalists in the colonial countries.

Imperialism was able to overcome its post-Second World War crisis through the collaboration of international Stalinism and of other petty-bourgeois tendencies. Such collaboration, fully developed in the bureaucracy's strategy of peaceful co-existence and peaceful competition between the two world systems since the death of Stalin and particularly since 1956, now takes on an added significance for the rebuilding of the Fourth International. This new and more advanced phase of the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism is the response of the bureaucracy not only to the increased pressure of imperialism but also to the upsurge of the political revolution in Eastern Europe after 1953. At the same time, movements like the General Strike of August 1953 in France showed that the policies of the Stalinist and Social Democratic bureaucracies in the advanced capitalist countries were coming into contradiction with the mass movement. The containment of the working class in those capitalist countries where the Stalinists had mass influence became more difficult and fraught with danger. Every partial mobilisation of the strength of the class threatened to rapidly develop into a general class confrontation, putting in question the whole capitalist system. The Stalinist bureaucratic leaderships of the working-class movement found themselves faced with the necessity of making themselves open agents of the maintenance of bourgeois order like the Social Democrats before them. In a different form, the historic defeat of French imperialism at Dien-Bien-Phu forced the international Stalinist apparatus into direct collaboration with imperialism for the purpose of preventing the ex-

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tension of the revolution in the colonial countries.

The Hungarian Revolution represents the principal manifestation up to the present of the insoluble contradiction between Stalinism and the extension of the socialist revolution. At the same time as it was the first political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy, and was for a time victorious, it was also an expression of the international class struggle taking its specific form in the countries of Eastern Europe. It posed the problem of workers' power through workers' councils not only in Hungary but throughout the USSR and Eastern Europe. Its actual development raised the question of the social revolution in the countries of Western Europe. Thus the increasingly international character of the proletarian revolution threatens the existence of both the Kremlin bureaucracy and imperialism. The Sino-Soviet conflict is another major external manifestation of the insoluble contradiction between Stalinism and the international revolutionary struggle. This struggle must be led by a Marxist leadership if capitalist counter-revolution is to be prevented in China, the USSR and Eastern Europe, and if imperialism is to be defeated throughout the rest of the world.

Another major principle of the founders of the Fourth International is thus more than confirmed. Stalinism is not a new social system but a regime of crisis in a degenerated workers' state, a regime which will fall in the political revolution of the working class; the political revolution can succeed only under the leadership of parties of the Fourth International. This is the lesson of the recurrent crises in the USSR since 1953, the East German and Polish uprisings, the Hungarian revolution and the Sino-Soviet split; the establishment of degenerated or deformed workers' states in Eastern Europe and China, far from ending the isolation of the USSR and softening its contradictions, has accelerated and deepened them. The more the planned economy develops under the control of the Soviet bureaucracy, the sharper become the social contradictions, thus giving more and more concreteness to the alternative posed in the founding programme of the Fourth International.

'The political prognosis has an alternative character: either the bureaucracy, becoming ever more the organ of the world bourgeoisie in the workers' state, will overthrow the new forms of property and plunge the country back to capitalism; or the working class will crush the bureaucracy and open the way to socialism.'

In neither event can there be any peaceful conclusion. The actual outcome will be the product of the world class struggle, primarily in the developed capitalist countries and in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China. The unity of the workers' struggle in Eastern Europe with the workers' movement in Western Europe now urgently requires conscious and concrete expression. This can only be done by the rebuilding of the Fourth International of Marxist parties in every one of these countries. The Socialist United States of Europe is a living slogan: in Eastern Europe the bureaucracy clumsily attempts economic co-operation between the different workers' states (Comecon); in Western Europe the capitalists try to discipline the working class and resolve their contradictions in the framework of the European Common Market, itself a reflection of sharpening inter-imperialist contradictions; between the imperialists and the bureaucracy an uneasy series of compromises is negotiated, and the economy of Eastern Europe and Russia is penetrated more and more by the prevailing relationships and prices in the imperialist world market. Thus, along with its political rapprochement with imperialism since 1953, the bureaucracy is made more sensitive and responsive to the contradictory economic development of international capitalism. It is the task of the Fourth International to create working-class parties which consciously respond in struggle to these objective contradictions and potentialities. The historic division between the workers of Russia and Eastern Europe on the one hand, and those of Western Europe and America on the other, the result of Stalinism, can only be overcome through the conscious experience of the unity of their struggles; this conscious experience takes concrete form in the rebuilding of the Fourth International, rooted in the working class of the advanced coun-

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In neither event can there be any peaceful conclusion. The actual outcome will be the product of the world class struggle, primarily in the developed capitalist countries and in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China. The unity of the workers' struggle in Eastern Europe with the workers' movement in Western Europe now urgently requires conscious and concrete expression. This can only be done by the rebuilding of the Fourth International of Marxist parties in every one of these countries. The Socialist United States of Europe is a living slogan: in Eastern Europe the bureaucracy clumsily attempts economic co-operation between the different workers' states (Comecon); in Western Europe the capitalists try to discipline the working class and resolve their contradictions in the framework of the European Common Market, itself a reflection of sharpening inter-imperialist contradictions; between the imperialists and the bureaucracy an uneasy series of compromises is negotiated, and the economy of Eastern Europe and Russia is penetrated more and more by the prevailing relationships and prices in the imperialist world market. Thus, along with its political rapprochement with imperialism since 1953, the bureaucracy is made more sensitive and responsive to the contradictory economic development of international capitalism. It is the task of the Fourth International to create working-class parties which consciously respond in struggle to these objective contradictions and potentialities. The historic division between the workers of Russia and Eastern Europe on the one hand, and those of Western Europe and America on the other, the result of Stalinism, can only be overcome through the conscious experience of the unity of their struggles; this conscious experience takes concrete form in the rebuilding of the Fourth International, rooted in the working class of the advanced coun-

tries as well as of the planned economies. There will be no spontaneous formation of such parties. In Hungary in 1956, despite a high level of political development and the formation of workers' councils, such a party was not built, and any conscious intervention by the Fourth International was sabotaged by the Pabloite revisionists. The workers' struggle continues in these countries since 1956, and it is the responsibility of the Fourth International to provide conscious leadership which can build on the lessons of 1956.

In the same way, the International and its parties are the key to the problems of the class struggle in the colonial countries. The petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders and their Stalinist collaborators restrict the struggle to the level of national liberation, or, at best, to a version of 'socialism in one country', sustained by subordination to the co-existence policies of the Soviet bureaucracy. In this way, all the gains of the struggle of the workers and peasants, not only in the Arab world, India, South East Asia, etc., but also in China and Cuba, are confined within the limits of imperialist domination, or exposed to counter-revolution and imperialist intervention (the line-up against China, the Cuban missiles crisis, the Vietnam war, etc.). In each country, the organic link between the colonial workers and the struggle of the workers in the advanced countries and in the workers' states can be understood and given concrete expression only under the leadership of parties of the Fourth International.

The period 1953-56 marks a turning point in the world situation. At the end of the Second World War, the changed relation of class forces on a world scale broke the old capitalist equilibrium. However, to the extent that the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies were able to contain or manipulate the strength of the working class in the advanced countries, the most decisive consequences of this changed situation were not immediately apparent in all their significance.

There was a growing together of the social and economic contradictions of the advanced capitalist countries and of the planned economies. In the long term, imperialism cannot survive except by bringing the workers' states back into the orbit of capitalist exploitation. At the same time, the harmonious development of the planned economies of Russia and Eastern Europe demands that the most advanced productive forces in the world be included in socialist planning. But the economy cannot be considered in and of itself. Its contradictions must be translated into class terms.

The Kremlin bureaucracy and all its satellite

bureaucracies, precisely because they have the character of parasitic social groups, are no less attached to a purely national framework, to national states, than the bourgeoisie of the various capitalist nations. These national states constitute the basis of their exploitation of the working class in their own country. The idea that it is possible to achieve 'socialism in one country' is not only a false theory; it is at the same time the ideological expression of the conditions of growth and survival of the parasitic bureaucracy and its material interests.

A mechanical idea of working-class internationalism leads to a misunderstanding of the national factor in the struggle for emancipation of the working classes subjected to imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy. But it is no less dangerous to ignore the internationalist content of the workers' struggles in these countries. The workers must liberate themselves from the oppression and exploitation both of imperialism and of the Kremlin bureaucracy, a task which goes beyond a struggle within national frameworks. Except in this context, national independence is meaningless.

The struggle of the working class in Eastern Europe can only be understood as a struggle against regimes produced by a revolutionary movement which has been doubly distorted:

(a) It is part of a revolutionary upsurge which threatened the very existence of capitalism in the whole of Europe, a threat which was dispelled by the complementary actions of American imperialism, the Soviet bureaucracy and its agencies, the European Social-Democracy;

(b) The Kremlin bureaucracy used its power to decapitate the revolutionary action of the workers of these countries, using for this purpose the old apparatus of the capitalist state.

The movements of August 1953 and of the summer of 1955 in France, together with the rising revolutionary wave in Eastern Europe, must be considered in their historical continuity, at the same time as marking a turning point in the world class struggle. From one point of view, they carried forward the revolutionary struggles in Europe of the years 1943-45; from another, they inaugurated a new period in the international struggle of the working class.

Independently of their level of consciousness of the question, the working classes of Eastern Europe and of France in particular fought struggles which

tended towards the dictatorship of the proletariat; only through this dictatorship is it possible to achieve the planned use of the productive forces of the world, based on common property in the means of production and the breaking down of national boundaries. In this sense the struggles of this period were the response of the working class to the contradictions both of the capitalist system and of the planned economies. In these struggles, they came into direct conflict with the Soviet bureaucracy, with its international Stalinist agents, and with the reformist bureaucracies, as well as with the bourgeois state machines.

The linked crisis of imperialism and of the Soviet bureaucracy does not arise solely from the contradiction between capitalist economy as a whole and the planned economies. It consists also of contradictions between the imperialist powers themselves, which constantly nourish the class struggle and give it sharper forms in the advanced countries, and of the inability of imperialism to arrest the development of the revolution in the backward countries; the crisis is also fed by the fact that the Kremlin and satellite bureaucracies cannot resolve the problems posed by the development of the planned economy, whose harmonious development demands not only the extension of social ownership and planning to the means of production in the advanced countries, but also the

participation of the working class in the management and control of industry; this is only possible if they exercise political power, which is impossible without the overthrow of the bureaucracy. This linked crisis creates the conditions for intensification of the world class struggle, and it is in that struggle that the crisis will find its solution. For this reason, the struggles engaged in by the workers of the advanced countries during the years between 1953 and 1956, and the changed relationship which these struggles expressed between the workers and the bureaucratic apparatus of the labour movement, were decisive factors. This fact was partially obscured by the defeat of the Hungarian Revolution, which was basically a victory for imperialism, encouraging pro-capitalist tendencies in the USSR and Eastern Europe and reformist trends in the Communist Parties. Nonetheless, this defeat was temporary and not fundamental, since in not a single advanced country has the working class been subjected to a defeat like those of the 1920s.

It is the perspective of combined revolutionary struggles threatening at the same time the existence of imperialism and of the Kremlin bureaucracy, bringing the proletariat into conflict with the bureaucratic apparatuses which control the workers' movement, which demands and makes possible the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

2 No starting point for revolutionary practice in the present international political situation can be found simply from contemplation of the 'objective forces' at work. The lessons of the struggles within the revolutionary Marxist movement are decisive to the grasping of these opportunities in the objective situation. The Fourth International has successfully resisted and defeated the attempts of petty-bourgeois opportunism, in the shape of a hardened revisionist tendency which penetrated all sections of the Trotskyist movement, to destroy it politically and organisationally. The struggle against this tendency was and remains the necessary preparation for the rebuilding of the Fourth International as a centralised proletarian leadership. This revisionist tendency developed into a centre for liquidation of the revolutionary party and the International, now gathered in the self-styled 'Unified Secretariat', which is the product of fusion between the International Secretariat of Pablo and the revisionist groups previously associated with the International

Committee and the SWP of the USA. Revisionism became liquidationism when the French section was expelled from the International because of its defence of Trotskyism, of the Transitional Programme, and of its own very existence. The onslaught of the revisionists reached its peak in the split of 1952-1953. The liquidationist centre has become a major obstacle to the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

Revisionism and liquidationism in the Fourth International, with its primary political expression subordination to the bureaucratic instruments of imperialist penetration of the workers' and national-liberation movements, must be seen not only as a result but also as an objective contributory factor to the success of these bureaucracies in containing the struggles of the international working class. The Fourth International cannot be rebuilt without a struggle against these 'Trotskyist revisionists'. In this period, when the counter-revolutionary actions of the Stalinist bureaucracy are an indispensable support to imperialism,

revisionism and liquidationism take particular forms of capitulation to this bureaucracy. Centrist tendencies within the Stalinist movement, in Eastern Europe, USSR and China, as well as in the various Communist Parties, base themselves on the perspective of a reform of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism is the expression of this revisionism of our epoch within the revolutionary movement itself. The first steps of a fight against Stalinism in the countries ruled by the bureaucracy go through forms which tend to accept this revisionist framework. In this way, the dominance of Pabloite revisionism in the Fourth International objectively hindered the development of the political revolution in 1953-1956. Thus Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism has not been a purely 'internal' or 'subjective' experience of the Fourth International.

The split in the International of 1951-53 was linked with the development of revisionism into liquidationism. The abandonment of the programme of the Fourth International which had been contained in the earlier theses of Pablo developed into actual support for the Stalinist bureaucracy against the revolutionary workers of East Germany. This constituted proof that the revolutionary organisation founded by Trotsky no longer existed. In 1953, the revisionism contained in Pablo's earlier theses was most sharply expressed in his retreat from the programme of political revolution in Eastern Europe at the time of the East German workers' uprising. The theories of 'centuries of degenerated workers' states', 'mass pressure on the bureaucracy', and the resultant tactic of 'entry *sui generis*', were the revisionist background of this betrayal and later of the Pabloites' similar attitude towards the Hungarian revolution of 1956, and to the whole phenomenon of 'de-Stalinisation'. The fundamental perspective of the founding programme of the Fourth International, the construction of revolutionary parties to fight for the political independence of the working class in the struggle for power, was abandoned. The Pabloite conception of an international centre whose role consists of influencing through abstract 'theoretical and political support' the 'leftward-moving' sections of the bureaucracy, as the latter supposedly respond to the pressure of the masses and of 'irreversible' objective trends, is the negation of the basic task defined by the Transitional Programme: '. . . the crisis of the proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International.' The fundamental perspective of the founding pro-

gramme of the Fourth International rests on the following appreciation: 'The orientation of the masses is determined first by the objective conditions of decaying capitalism, and second, by the treacherous politics of the old workers' organisations. Of these factors, the first, of course, is the decisive one: the laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus.' The question is to fight in the course of the class struggle itself for the destruction of the bureaucratic apparatus and the building of the International and its parties.

Instead of the struggle to build the International, to construct in the course of this struggle an international leadership selected in and through the struggle, the Pabloites substituted their false idea of an international centre, and this resulted in the negation of the construction of revolutionary parties to fight for the political independence of the proletariat in the struggle for power. The active construction of revolutionary parties in Eastern Europe and the USSR was abandoned, and this assisted in the isolation of the workers in these countries from the working class of the capitalist world. (This liquidationism is the essence of Pabloism in all sectors of the international class struggle.) In the capitalist countries themselves, the counter-revolutionary role of the Stalinist parties and of the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy is covered up by the Pabloite revisionists, who speculate on the 'irreversible' progressive tendencies within the bureaucracies. Pablo's theory that the Stalinist party would be forced to the left and even to take power disarmed the vanguard of the French working class at the time of the 1953 General Strike, just as surely as it disarmed the Fourth International in relation to the political revolution in Eastern Europe. Clearly then, every national section of the Fourth International must carry out a determined struggle against Pabloite revisionism if it is to build a revolutionary party with a real perspective of international working-class unity.

The bankruptcy of this revisionism became particularly clear in the Pabloite evaluations of the split between the Russian and Chinese Communist parties. Instead of an objective analysis of the causes and consequences of this division as a way of strengthening the Fourth International in its struggle to defeat the bureaucracy, the Pabloites discussed at length the false problem of which line, the Chinese or the Russian, best expressed the needs of international socialism. The fact is that, although the Chinese make formally correct criticisms of the revisionist formulations of the CPSU, these are only a theoretical dressing for an

empirical rejection of the consequences of the Soviet bureaucracy's attempted agreement with the American imperialists at the expense of China. Correct formal criticisms of the role of the national bourgeoisie and of the Soviet attitude towards them in the colonial countries has not prevented the Chinese leaders from sabotaging the struggle of the workers, for example in Indonesia and in North Africa, in accordance with needs of Chinese diplomacy. Chinese criticism of the theory of peaceful co-existence is again narrow and purely empirical because it does not go to the point of posing an alternative strategy of international mobilisation of the working class against imperialism. This emerges clearly from the oft-repeated distinction between the colonial 'storm centre' and the advanced countries. The problem of unifying these struggles through the construction of revolutionary parties and above all of uniting these with the linked struggles in the workers' states against the bureaucracies, cannot be solved by the Chinese bureaucrats. Their attitude to Stalin and towards Trotskyism is entirely consistent with this limitation. It is objectively impossible for them to state clearly that proletarian revolution is the only escape from barbarism; they can present no overall strategy based on the nature of the epoch, because such a strategy puts in question their own existence.

In the advanced countries, the revisionists who usurp the name of the Fourth International are prostrate before the Social Democracy as well as before Stalinism. Here, too, the building of independent working-class parties is abandoned. Everything is concentrated on 'deep entry' and the encouragement of 'mass centrist' tendencies in the social democratic parties. In this way, the cadres of these sections are trained in opportunist adaptation to professional centrists and play their part in bolstering up the social-democratic bureaucracy. In Belgium the General Strike of 1960-61 found the revisionists around Germain, because of their failure to prepare the way for the establishment of an alternative leadership, tailing behind centrist demagogues who opposed turning the movement into a struggle for power. They put forward the demand for 'structural reforms' derived from the minimum programme of the Belgium Socialist Party. Empirically they adapted themselves to the separatist moods produced by the lack of leadership during the strike and gave wholehearted support to the petty-bourgeois movement for Walloon federalism. From this time they were on the defensive, moving from one opportunist position to another until they

found themselves helpless in the face of the bureaucracy's attacks on their freedom of expression in the Belgium Socialist Party in 1964. After years of 'deep entry' they now indulged in the sectarian adventure of proclaiming a new workers' party along with a handful of non-Marxists and demagogic elements. Their policy of 'structural reforms' is no different from that of the left Social Democrats and Stalinists of Italy and other parts of Western Europe. Germain and his collaborators provide the ideological cover for the Social Democracy in those countries where Social Democracy is the main reflection of capitalism in the working-class movement, just as they play the same role on behalf of the Stalinists in Eastern Europe or in those capitalist countries where the Stalinists are strong. In Britain a tiny group of supporters of the Pabloites has concentrated its efforts on attacking the more and more successful construction of a Marxist alternative to the Social Democrats and the Stalinists, particularly in the Labour youth movement. To this end they have collaborated with renegades and anti-communists in service to the social-democratic bureaucracy.

The general swing to the right of all the social-democratic and Stalinist parties since 1956 is their response to the renewed upsurge of the international workers' struggle. The increasing subordination of the revisionists to the bureaucracies even during this right turn indicates clearly the international class nature of this tendency in international Trotskyism. Their theory that mass pressure forces opportunist bureaucracies to the left is a treacherous and reactionary theory. These bureaucracies serve imperialism, and any adaptations they make to mass struggles are for the purpose of betraying these struggles to the imperialists. Only a struggle against the Pabloite 'objectivist' revisions of dialectical materialism can prepare for the building of real revolutionary parties based on Marxist theory. Without this fight, there can be no working out of the detailed strategy and tactics necessary in the international class struggle in response to every development in the linked crises of capitalism and the Stalinist bureaucracy.

As we have seen, this dialectical connection between imperialism, bureaucracy, revisionism and the fight to reconstruct the International holds just as true for the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The Algerian national-liberation struggle against French imperialism culminated in the establishment of the Ben Bella government and the Evian Agreement with de Gaulle, leaving French imperialism's North African interests protected,

Instead of working for an independent working-class party in France which would forge the real international link between the French and Algerian workers against their common enemy, the Pabloites subordinated their sections in Western Europe to the FLN apparatus and collaborated in the new regime's repressions against the working class, at the same time excusing Ben Bella's deal with the imperialists at Evian. Even the building of independent working-class parties against bourgeois regimes in countries like Egypt and Syria is condemned as sectarian, and some spokesmen of the Pabloites characterise not only Algeria but these countries too as workers' states.

Castro's regime in Cuba has been uncritically praised as a 'healthy workers' state' and all independent working-class struggle, including the building of a party, renounced. Even Castro's repressions of the Trotskyist party there (part of the Posadas group which split from the Pabloites in 1962) has been justified by the revisionists. The building of an independent workers' party and the establishment of workers' councils in Cuba as part of a proletarian internationalist orientation, with the extension of the revolution to Latin America and a revolutionary alliance with the workers of the USA and the rest of the world, is completely abandoned. The 'aid' of the Soviet bureaucracy is not seen in the context of the international class struggle, with the bureaucracy striving to trade the Cuban revolution for its own purposes, but as a 'progressive' assistance to Cuba. The theories about petty-bourgeois revolutionists being 'unconscious Marxists', about 'Jacobin leaderships *sui generis*', about 'revolutionary parties being built

in the course of the revolution itself', about 'special conditions' in the backward countries which outdate the theory of crisis of leadership, all of these have served in practice to assist the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois nationalist leaders who, assisted by Stalinism, have managed to contain the mass revolutionary struggles in the colonial countries within the framework of continued world domination of imperialism.

The most striking confirmation of the definitively opportunist role of Pabloite revisionism has been provided by the political evolution of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in Ceylon. Adhering to the Pabloite centre, the leaders of the majority of this party responded to the call of Mrs. Bandaranaike and her bourgeois Sri Lanka Freedom Party to enter a coalition government. Here we had expressed concretely the fact that the theory about middle-class leaders being pushed to the left, a substitute for the building of independent working-class parties, is the cover for capitalist politics. Imperialism's survival in Ceylon depended upon the workers' resistance being divided and broken, above all upon their leadership being beheaded. The 'unification' of the revisionists in 1963, explicitly carried through without discussion of such questions as the opportunism of N. M. Perera and company, was an essential part of the preparations of the betrayal of the LSSP in Ceylon in 1964. In this way, the spurious internationalism of the Pabloite revisionists ends by actively assisting imperialism. Under the cover of international 'unification', the politics of the national sections are left to adapt themselves to service the direct agents of imperialism in their own countries.

3 The revisionism and liquidationism which has attacked the Fourth International is an international class phenomenon responding to the needs of imperialism in its latest phase of extreme contradictions and dependence upon the Stalinist bureaucracy, Social Democracy, and the nationalist leaders. The abandonment of Marxist theory within the Fourth International, not only the abandonment of the programme but even of the fundamentals of dialectical materialism, was the mechanism by which the cadres were prepared for this capitulation. The objective situation—physical liquidation of many sections in the late 1930s and the Second World War, the apparent strength of Stalinism in the workers' movement from 1942 to 1953, the divisions and pressure of the cold

war period, the McCarthy repressions in the USA—all provided the circumstances for the decline, particularly by physically separating the class struggle in Eastern Europe and Russia from that of the capitalist world. But the emphasis placed on revolutionary consciousness by the Transitional Programme must be our guide. The death of Trotsky weakened the Fourth International immeasurably. There had not yet been time to train a cadre which had absorbed the living theoretical heritage of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, particularly the lesson learned by Trotsky in the October Revolution of the need for a centralised Bolshevik party, founded solidly on Marxist theory, responding to every need of leadership by the working class in accordance with an

internationalist perspective. This theoretical and political weakness, reflected in a dogmatic attitude towards theory and programme, not developing Marxist theory against hostile ideologies but attempting to 'preserve' it, was the reason for the inability of the Fourth International to develop the programme and build parties in the post-war period.

Instead the cadres of the International adapted easily to the petty-bourgeois trends dominant at that stage of political development, particularly to the Stalinists. A false and artificial 'international centre' was set up, relying on a propagandist contemplation and commentary upon 'objective' developments in the class struggle. Such a centre did not discuss the living experiences of the sections in the course of developing Marxist theory and programme but instead either left the sections without guidance or intervened bureaucratically (upon the basis of the most 'Bolshevik' of organisational statutes) to impose an abstract international line against the sections. Such an international centre, isolated from real struggle, adapting programmatic formulae to the surface atmosphere of politics and certain circles of the 'left' intelligentsia, dominated as it was by the petty-bourgeois elements who inhabit the Labour bureaucracies, was inevitably exposed to the pressures of the cold war, of international Stalinism and

imperialism. Its theory and programme developed not in active connection with living struggle but in the rarefied atmosphere of 'international secretariats'.

The theoretical backwardness of the SWP leaders, who paid no heed to Trotsky's warnings of the need to do battle against pragmatism, the dominant American philosophy, made it easy for them to adapt to the Pabloite revisions and to end in the position of pragmatists themselves. Such adaptation amounted in fact to a narrow nationalism in party matters, an abdication of internationalism and of responsibility to the International. This explains why the rejection of Pablo's revisionism by the SWP stopped short of a real theoretical analysis. Cannon and the SWP leaders reacted empirically to Pablo's gross capitulation to Stalinism and to his organisational abuses in organising factions within the national sections, especially in the USA, but they did not probe to the theoretical roots of the revisions and therefore themselves fell victim to revisionism; their abandonment of the programme of political revolution and the building of revolutionary parties in Eastern Europe, their increasing support for petty-bourgeois leaders in Algeria and Cuba, as well as in the Negro struggles in the USA itself, have all prepared a situation where the SWP is now in immediate danger of liquidation.

4 The assassination of President Kennedy provoked from the Socialist Workers Party leaders a reaction which revealed the depths of their capitulation. They addressed their 'condolences' to the widow, and published a statement denouncing the methods of terrorism. This action was only part of their liquidationism under the direct pressure, not of any Stalinist or social-democratic bureaucracy, but of U.S. imperialism itself. Cannon's break with Pablo in 1953 only concealed this process of degeneration. It was perfectly possible, in the USA, to reject a tendency which took the *form* of a capitulation to the Stalinist bureaucracy, and at the same time to fall victim to the pressure of imperialism itself. That this was, in fact, the nature of the process was confirmed by the Socialist Workers Party's turn to the Pabloites after the crisis of Stalinism reached its peak in 1956.

The 'reunification' of the Pabloite revisionists in 1963 was preceded by the defection of Posadas and a number of Latin American Pabloite sections.

The unification was followed almost immediately by Pablo's own break with the Unified Secretariat and by the debacle in Ceylon. This decomposition is not accidental. The revisionist theories of the Pabloites adapted them to the Labour and Stalinist bureaucracies and to the petty-bourgeois nationalists who in turn are the agents of imperialism. Consistent with the politics of this adaptation they revised out of existence the role of revolutionary consciousness and Marxist parties. Blinded by the apparent strength of the bureaucracy and the nationalists at the end of a period of working-class defeats and world war, they were taken unawares by the revival of revolutionary working-class struggles in Eastern Europe and later in the imperialist world. They had capitulated to the dominant bureaucracies. The betrayals of the bureaucracy and the opportunists strengthen imperialism, but only *temporarily*. In the very act of perpetuating a system racked by contradictions and conflicts, the counter-revolutionary Social Democrats and Stalinists in fact lay the basis for

more violent and all-embracing class struggles, which demand ever more insistently an international proletarian leadership. Just at the point where the linked crisis of imperialism and the bureaucracy provoked the sharpest struggles, so do the revisionists support more faithfully the petty-bourgeois nationalists and bureaucracy. This is clearly seen in Ceylon, in Belgium, in Britain and in relation to the Sino-Soviet dispute. The Socialist Workers Party plays a similar role in relation to the Negro movement and its leadership in the USA. There is nothing spontaneous about the growth of a successful revolutionary movement to end the rule of the imperialists. The reconstruction of the Fourth International is a real task which must be consciously carried forward in every country.

In every country the sections of the Fourth International will be built by insisting above all on training a political leadership which starts not from tendencies within the bureaucracies but from the movement of the working class which brings it into conflict with the bureaucracy, learning in struggle the treacherous nature of the official leadership and of their theoretical apologists, the revisionists. The policy of the working-class United Front has nothing to do with the policy of capitulation before the apparatus. It is necessary because it opposes the working class as a whole to the capitalist class, to the capitalist state and to the capitalist government. Consequently it implies the exposure of the bureaucracies' politics of class-collaboration, either with a section of the capitalist class, or with the bourgeoisie as a whole. The United Front rests upon the correct aspiration of the working class, including those workers who

are members of reformist and Stalinist organisations, for unity in action against the united forces of the capitalists, an aspiration which necessarily conflicts with the politics of the bureaucracy. It is not excluded that the bureaucrats in the traditional leaderships may be forced to take steps along the road of the United Front under pressure from the working class and their own members. In such cases, we support and participate in all actions which can be organised in that direction.

In any event, the policy of United Front must be taken in the context of the construction of independent revolutionary parties. Not even the semblance of a United Front can arise from spontaneous developments. It demands political struggle by independent organisations carrying the Transitional Programme into practice. It must serve as the springboard for the development of these organisations. In sum, the policy of the United Front can only really exist through the building of the organisations of the Fourth International. At certain stages, entry into mass organisations will be the best way of effecting this tactic, but in no case is such entry to be regarded as a permanent or semi-permanent feature. It is always a tactic, subordinated to the general strategy of the struggle for power, of which the construction of an independent revolutionary party is the general prerequisite.

The decomposition of Pabloism, with its politics emerging clearly as a necessary part of opportunism, is thus a consequence of the crisis of capitalism and its agencies, to which the Pabloites subordinated themselves through their abandonment of the Transitional Programme and of dialectical materialism.

5 It follows that the most serious theoretical preparation in struggle against revisionism is necessary for the rebuilding of the Fourth International. The deepening crisis of capitalist society and the connected crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy are dissolving the old political relationships and creating favourable conditions for the construction of revolutionary parties. The changes in the internal relations of the international workers' movement at present taking place, and the need to exploit the linked crises of imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy, demand that our national tasks must be placed correctly in their international context as part of the construction of the Fourth International; only in this

way will the international class struggle be resolved in favour of the working class. But these parties will nowhere develop spontaneously; they depend in every case on the intervention of Marxists who base their programme on the international perspective of Trotskyism. In particular, these national sections must grasp in theory and in practice the revolutionary role of working-class youth in the USA, Western Europe, Russia and Eastern Europe and in all the colonial and semi-colonial countries. It is these proletarian youth who are now drawn into struggle against the capitalists and the bureaucracy. In the building of parties of the Fourth International, youth play a special role as one of the most exploited sections of the proletariat. But

the construction of sections of the International requires the mobilisation behind the programme and organisation of the Fourth International of all the principal fighting forces of the proletariat. It is in this perspective, and not in isolation from it, or as a substitute for it, that work among the youth takes on its real importance. The Negro struggle in the USA, intensified especially by the impact of automation under capitalism, the heroic struggle of workers and students in Spain, the political opposition to the bureaucracy in the workers' states, the fight against the Social Democrats and Stalinists in Britain, France and all Western Europe, as the youth strive to join battle with capitalism, the workers' battles in Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Latin America and Africa, all of these bring a new generation of workers to the fore. As all the old working-class political tendencies swing sharply to the right, a heavy responsibility falls upon the International Committee and the sections grouped around it. They have the responsibility, beginning from scientific analysis, of providing the motive force for the rebuilding of the Fourth International on the foundations of this revolutionary potential. It is not a question of a 'youth movement' as such, but of a generation of the working class radicalised by new international revolutionary opportunities, resulting from the crisis of imperialism. The cadres of the Fourth International are on trial: in these struggles we must develop Marxism, defeat revisionism and demonstrate in practice in each national section the capacity for leadership of the Trotskyist parties as the only answer to the capitalist class and its bureaucratic servants.

In each country, therefore, the starting-point must be the construction of revolutionary Trotskyist parties based on a Marxist analysis of the present international class struggle. The national tasks of the sections can only be carried out as part of the construction of the Fourth International. In this way they will contribute to the enrichment of Marxist theory and the strength of the International.

(a) Imperialism is in a deepening crisis. The development of the productive forces during and since World War Two, particularly the production of nuclear weapons and the introduction of automation, strains to breaking point the conflict between the productive forces and capitalist property relations. The struggles produced by this contradiction radicalise the working-class youth. The parties of the Fourth International will be built through these struggles.

(b) The realisation by the imperialists of the threat to their world position, and their determination to uphold their domination no matter what the cost in human life, have been shown time and time again. The latest moves by the U.S. government in Vietnam and Latin America, with the full support of the British Labour government, underline still more the danger which imperialism represents for mankind. In Vietnam the U.S. imperialists are developing a new strategy for dealing with the colonial revolution and with the USSR and China. It is no longer a question of 'peaceful co-existence', but of a Pax Americana maintained with destructive weapons which can blast out every living creature from large areas. These are not nuclear weapons—which are now only in the background. They are weapons for *use* they are bound up with the military requirements of imperialism at the present stage, in which it can only maintain itself by violence and terror. 'War is the continuation of politics by other means'—the politics of imperialism have no appeal to the masses but have to be imposed, not on states so much as on peoples.

The U.S. imperialists are not concerned about their unpopularity. They know that every bomb dropped in Vietnam makes it more difficult for the agents in the colonial countries to defend their policies, but they obviously do not care about this. They show contempt for the national bourgeoisie and intend to keep them in line by demonstrating that they possess overwhelming military force.

It is not a case in Vietnam of defending U.S. investments, or even only of defending imperialism in South-east Asia. It is rather the need for a testing-ground and demonstration of U.S. striking power to impress Africa and Latin America and the bureaucracies of Russia, Eastern Europe and China as well. The U.S. is concerned principally with the strategy of counter-revolution adapted to the needs of the present stage. The Russian adherence to 'peaceful co-existence' has contributed to its success. The overthrow of imperialism cannot be the result of a number of struggles in the less developed countries: it is necessary to carry out the struggle internationally, with the task of building parties in the advanced countries and in the countries of planned economy as a prime necessity.

(c) Imperialism is not only an epoch of wars and revolutions. More concretely, its life has been preserved through these wars and revolutions because the working class has not resolved its crisis.

of leadership. Since 1953, the Stalinist bureaucracy, severely shaken by the working-class upsurge in its own camp, has entered into closer collaboration with imperialism. But this reflects above all the deepening of their own crisis. The construction of revolutionary parties of the Fourth International in Eastern Europe, Russia and China, with the programme of political revolution as the basic requirement of the workers in these countries, is a primary task of the Fourth International. Whereas in the late 1930s defence of the Soviet Union implied primary emphasis on support for its military defence against imperialism, it is now necessary to stress the necessity of building revolutionary parties in these countries as the only answer to the capitulationist policies of the bureaucracy, which now directly endanger the basic conquests of October as well as holding back the struggle of the international working class, upon which the future of these conquests depends.

(d) Revisionism, which separates into distinct sectors the revolution in the advanced countries, the 'colonial revolution', and the political revolution in the workers' states, is a most important cover for capitalist domination of the workers' movement and for obstructing the construction of revolutionary parties. This revisionism is expressed particularly in the theory and practice of the self-styled Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International, which was formed without discussion of theoretical and political questions. The next phase in the building of the Fourth International must on the contrary be accompanied by a most serious theoretical discussion in all sections of the policies and theory of the movement, past and present.

Many workers all over the world, particularly the youth, are in battle against the bureaucratic leaderships who want to confine them to narrow and sectional struggles. The Fourth International and its sections must be able to lead these struggles, explaining the class role of the bureaucratic leaderships and bringing forward the essence

of these struggles—the perspective of world socialist revolution.

The intervention in the class struggle is not separate from the theoretical discussion upon which we have insisted. There is no development of Marxist theory except insofar as revolutionary parties fight in practice to penetrate living reality with that theory, enriching it in the course of the struggle, to negate the revisionism which has destroyed the International originally founded by Trotsky. It is not enough to make formal theoretical corrections on the one hand and to carry out intensive activity in the class struggle on the other. Such a procedure might give the appearance of limited success, but only when Marxists see themselves and their consciousness as part of the living class struggle, developing with it and transforming its quantitative ebbs and flows into an enriched theory from which to develop the programme of the International, is the unity of theory and practice actually realised. Only in this way will the cadres of the sections of the International be trained. Their internationalism will be worthy of the struggles of the international working class, because it develops as a living part, the conscious and most vital component, of these struggles. The International Committee has been built in the course of the struggle against Pabloite revisionism, and as such has successfully fought for the continuity of the Fourth International. During the last 28 years, the founding programme of the Fourth International has expressed correctly the strategy of the international socialist revolution. It has no less importance for the struggle for the proletarian revolution than had the Communist Manifesto for the Marxist method and the fundamental aims of communists. In its appeal for the reconstruction of the Fourth International, the International Committee must show clearly the indissoluble link between this reconstruction and the building of revolutionary parties in every country, as the path to the victory of the socialist revolution.

April 1966

Through what stage are we passing?

This is the text of a speech made by L. D. Trotsky to the 5th All-Union Congress of Medical and Veterinary Workers in the summer of 1924. Of particular interest to our readers in view of the specific references to Britain and metropolitan Europe.

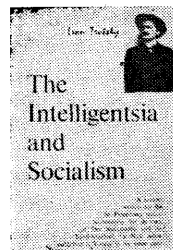
Price: Two shillings



The Intelligentsia and Socialism

A review written for the St. Petersburg review *Sovremennyy Mir* in 1910, of *Der Sozialismus und die Intellektuellen*, by Max Adler published in Vienna in the same year.

Price: One shilling



Report of the Commission on Rebuilding the Fourth International and the Tasks of the International Committee

1. The London Conference reaffirms that the programme and method for the building of the revolutionary parties and the Fourth International are to be found in the Transitional Programme. This programme remains the only one that is capable of providing a solution to the problems raised by the historical crisis of revolutionary leadership.

2. The Conference affirms that Pabloism (whether of Pablo, Frank-Germain, Hansen, or the Posadas tendencies) constitutes a revisionist current alien to the programme and methods of the Fourth International.

3. The Conference affirms that the Fourth International has not degenerated. The historical continuity of the Fourth International founded in 1938 by Leon Trotsky, re-formed in the years 1943-46, which Pabloism attempted to destroy in 1950-53, has been maintained since 1953 by the struggle waged by the Trotskyist organisations grouped within the International Committee.

As a result of this, the International Conference proclaims that the continuity of the Fourth International has been fought for and maintained by the International Committee's actions.

4. The Conference recognises the inability of the leadership of the International, after Leon Trotsky's death, to

succeed in the tasks required by the building of revolutionary parties and the International.

During the course of this hard battle for Trotskyism, some cadres have been exterminated, victims of imperialist and Stalinist repressions, others worn out, and the leadership of the Fourth International became bankrupt. This leadership collapsed because of its distortion and abandonment of Marxism, i.e., of the method of dialectical materialism. This is why this leadership was unable to root the movement in the struggle of the working class, and particularly the youth. As a result, they were incapable of assimilating the methods and principles of communist organisation. In no case can this failure be considered the failure of the Fourth International.

5. The essential unity of the international class struggle, flowing from the international character of the joint crisis of imperialism and the bureaucracy, implies the direct consequence of the necessity of building Trotskyist parties in every country. As against the liquidationist conclusions flowing from the revisionist 'division of the world into sectors'; this perspective emphasises the urgency of building independent revolutionary proletarian parties in the countries of Eastern Europe, USSR, and China, and in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

6. This central task of building independent revolu-

tionary parties stresses yet again the essential struggle for the political independence of the working class, against the politics of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the reformist leaderships. This fight for the Party implies a determined struggle against syndicalism and all ideas that a revolutionary party can be spontaneously produced from the working class.

7. The International Conference stresses that the Trotskyist movement, in the course of the struggle to build the International, works towards the creation of a centralised leadership of the world revolutionary party, in a struggle organically linked to the fight in each country to rebuild revolutionary centralised parties leading the struggles of the masses. This building of parties and of the International must be carried out on the basis of the lessons of the struggle against revisionism and of the continuation of this struggle.

8. The proceedings of this Third Conference emphasise the necessity for the International Committee to politically prepare within 18 months the Fourth International Conference, whose aim will be to rally all Trotskyist organisations fighting for the programme of the Fourth International. This will include a struggle by the International Committee to rally to the ranks of the Fourth International the militants and groups who are misled by the revisionist leaders of the United Secretariat.

9. In order to achieve the tasks before such a Conference, the International Committee must organise an international discussion on the following subjects:

(a) The building of revolutionary parties on the basis of the Programme in the context of the concrete struggle for the rebuilding of the International. Trotskyists, organised as sections of the Fourth International, must struggle for the construction of revolutionary proletarian parties based on the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International. They carry the fight for this programme and for the construction of the Party as the main basis of their work in the mass organisations and trade unions of the working class, and in particular towards the working class youth, as the principal source of new forces for the Fourth International. All such work is subordinated to the main task of constructing the Party. The building of the Party necessitates the production of a newspaper able to constantly fight for the overall programme of the Party, to raise the consciousness of the working class in all spheres of the class struggle. This fight for the independent party is the only basis for the defence of the positions won in the past by the working class, and all tactical considerations are subordinated to it. In conditions where the tactic of entry into existing working-class parties is necessary, this tactic is conducted in a manner which subordinates it to

the main task of the construction of the independent party.

- (b) The unity of the international class struggle.
- (c) Defence by revolutionary methods of the conquests of the international working class, in the capitalist countries, in the USSR, China and all the countries which have been removed from the sphere of imperialism. This discussion will be carried out on the agreed framework of the unconditional defence of these states.

10. In the framework of the objectives agreed at this Conference, the International Committee must, so far as its resources permit, give assistance in:

- (a) the building of Trotskyist organisations;
- (b) the activity of Trotskyist organisations;

so that they can advance from the stage of propaganda groups to being Communist organisations fighting in the class struggle for the leadership of the proletariat in the struggle for power.

11. The International Committee will publish an official internal bulletin in English to be translated into the various languages by each section.

12. The financing of the International Committee's tasks will be decided according to the possibilities of each section. The International Committee

will work out for the next Conference the basis of financial contributions for the budget of the International Committee as such.

13. The International Committee will set up a youth commission working under its direction and consisting of representatives of the Young Socialists and Révoltes. The immediate tasks of this Commission to be:

- (a) Convening of an international conference of revolutionary youth organisation;
- (b) Organisation of mass participation in the Liège demonstration against NATO and the Vietnam war in October 1966.

14. The International Committee must make a political and practical study of the tasks to be achieved in the building of sections in Eastern Europe, in the first place in strengthening the Hungarian section.

15. The International Committee is recommended by the Conference to organise visits to the United States and Latin America, and to Greece and Denmark. Also recommended are exchanges of cadres between sections as methods of strengthening sections.

16. The International Committee will appoint a Commission to begin work immediately on a history of the Fourth International.

Resolution adopted unanimously by the E.C. of the Fourth International

8.4.66

American Commission

1. The Commission believes that the main task before the American Committee for the Fourth International is to work politically along the line of the International Committee of the Fourth International. The Voorhis Act makes impossible any affiliation of a U.S. section to the Fourth International.
2. The American Committee of the Fourth International must immediately begin work on the drafting of a perspective for the construction of a revolutionary party in the USA. This would include a concretisation of the demand as elaborated by Trotsky for the formation of a Labour Party. It must concretise demands in relation to our work in the anti-war in Vietnam movements, the Trade Union and Negro movements. This perspectives document would include an economic analysis of U.S. capitalism in relation to world imperialism. This draft must be ready not later than June 30.
3. A national conference of all the members of the American Committee for the Fourth International should be held towards the end of September or early October—a representative of the International Committee to be present.
4. The International Committee will undertake to produce a public statement concerning the attitude of the Robertson delegation towards the International Conference. This would become the basis for winning over members of the Robertson tendency towards the American Committee for the Fourth International.
5. As soon as possible a comrade must become a full-time official of the American Committee for the Fourth International prepared to make a national tour conveying the decisions of the International Conference. The pre-conference discussion should discuss a change of name for the American Committee for the Fourth International.
6. A serious effort must be made to study dialectical materialism against pragmatism and idealism. The International Committee will request from time to time as to how this work is progressing.

**Resolution adopted unanimously by the
International Conference of the Fourth
International 8.4.66**

Statement of the International Committee on the Robertson Group (USA)

The Spartacist group (USA) was invited to participate in the Third International Conference called by the International Committee for April 4-9, 1966. A delegation of four attended the first sessions as observers. (The Voorhis Act in the USA prevents political tendencies from making international political affiliations.) During the course of the conference the political position of Spartacist was revealed as being fundamentally opposed to the programme and methods of the International, and the Spartacist delegation left the conference before its proceedings were completed.

Their presence at the conference resulted from an initiative from the International Committee, whose official representative, G. Healy, met delegates of the Spartacist group and of the American Committee for the Fourth International in October 1965. At this meeting on the basis of the acceptance by both groups of the International Committee's resolution 'Rebuilding the Fourth International' it was agreed to work towards a unified organisation of the two groups in the USA, in political solidarity with the International Committee; the aim was to complete the preparation for this fusion for the International Conference.

Subsequently, discussion between the two groups and a certain amount of joint political activity were carried out and a delegation from both groups were sent as observers to the International Conference.

The Spartacist group led by J. Robertson originated in the opposition to the revisionist course of the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party in 1960-62. The Robertson group broke with comrade T. Wohlforth and those who now form the American Committee for the Fourth International on the basic question of the necessity to start from the building of the Fourth International. This took the specific form of Robertson and others' refusal to accept the leadership of the International Committee in the fight against the Socialist Workers Party leadership. Robertson and the Spartacist group placed questions of procedure and questions of their estimate of American problems above internationalism.

In the intervening period Robertson and his group published some International Committee material and claimed to stand on the positions of the International Committee. In the course of preparations for its International Conference therefore the International Committee called upon all those in the USA who accepted the Transitional Programme, the decisions of the first four congresses of the Communist International and the resolution 'Rebuilding the Fourth International' to work towards the building of a Marxist party. This was the basis of the proposals accepted by Spartacist and the American Committee for the Fourth International in October 1965. It was absolutely essential to clarify at the international level the political problems involved in building a party in the United States.

In the conference after the secretary's report on International Perspectives based on the resolution 'Rebuilding the Fourth International', Robertson spoke at length on the third day of discussion (Wednesday, April 6). Despite Robertson's claim to agree with the resolution before the conference his contribution showed very clear disagreement with the main political line of the report and resolution. After making this contribution Robertson failed to appear for the subsequent session of discussion on the grounds that he was tired due to his having worked overnight on a draft document on American Perspectives for the conference.

The conference expressed the unanimous opinion that Robertson must immediately return to the proceedings. Not only were his reasons for his absence quite unacceptable, but he had made no

approach to the chairman of the conference before leaving.

Robertson saying that he was 'not available' refused to return to the conference for the whole of the session in question in which a number of comrades made serious criticisms of points made in Robertson's contribution.

On Robertson's return for the Wednesday evening session, the Secretary began his reply to the discussion by saying that Robertson's absence from the exhaustive discussion on his own contribution was utterly irresponsible and that Robertson's request for permission to be absent had been rejected by the conference as inadmissible in a communist organisation. Here Robertson interjected on what he called 'a point of personal privilege'. In the first place, he explained, he had not requested permission to be absent and did not know of any rule requiring him to request such permission. He was present at the conference not as an individual but as part of his delegation; his delegation was fully empowered to note the discussion and participate in it during his absence. It was pointed out to Robertson that his responsibilities to the international movement through its highest body, the conference, were clearly involved, and he was asked to apologise to the conference. This he refused to do.

A motion was then put demanding an apology from Robertson and stating that if he refused then he must leave the conference. In the course of discussion on this motion Robertson again stated that he did not know the rules of the conference. The original motion was modified to say that its application would take place only at the end of the general discussion and the vote on the resolution and report of the Secretary of the International Committee, thus giving Robertson an additional opportunity to reconsider his position. This motion was carried, and Robertson stayed to the end of the discussion, reply and vote on the report and resolution of the International Committee. Robertson and the Spartacist delegation voted for the amended resolution but abstained on the report.

In accordance with its earlier resolution, the conference then asked for Robertson's statement on his absence the previous day. He again refused to apologise. Thus, the resolution applied only to Robertson's breaking communist discipline in refusing to accept the decisions of the International Conference and not to the rest of his delegation. The chairman asked Robertson to leave. He then left followed by his delegation.

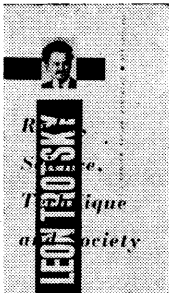
By their behaviour the Spartacist delegation

showed that they constitute a petty-bourgeois opposition to the programme and discipline of the Fourth International. This rejection of the primary importance of the building of the international is consistent with Robertson's position in 1962, and demonstrates decisively that Robertson and the Spartacist delegation have failed to break from the pragmatist and anti-internationalist politics, first of Shachtman and then of the revisionist Socialist Workers Party leadership. So-called agreement on programme has a history in the communist movement. Robertson's actions in the conference constituting a breach of democratic centralism, speak louder than any declaration on programme and such behaviour is linked to a political method and programme, a petty-bourgeois method which rejects communist methods of building the revolutionary movement. Even if Robertson had thought the conference wrong on a procedural question or that he had been organisationally dealt with on the political questions his duty as an internationalist and a communist would have been to abide by the conference decision and fight to clarify the movement. His refusal to do so and his placing of personal prestige above considerations of his international responsibility condemn him.

Since the Spartacist group has in the past claimed to adhere to the positions of the International Committee it must be categorically stated that the International Committee not only dissociates itself from the activities and publications of the Spartacist group but insists that a Marxist party can be built only in opposition to it. Marxists in the USA must start from the building of the International as the only basis for constructing such a party. Only in this way can they begin from their responsibilities to the international working class. The comrades in the American Committee for the Fourth International represent this international tendency in the USA.

The International Committee reaffirms that the building of a revolutionary party in the United States of America is an indispensable requirement of the international proletariat. It calls upon all those who accept the programme of the Fourth International to devote all their efforts to this end through the activities of the American Committee for the Fourth International. In particular, we call upon members still in the Spartacist group to learn the lessons of the behaviour of their delegates and the Third Conference, to rally to the positions of the International Committee and to join the American Committee for the Fourth International.

The International Committee 9.4.66



Radio, Science, Technique and Society

A speech delivered on March 1, 1926, as the inaugural address at the First All-Union Congress of the Society of Friends of Radio. A brilliant anticipation of the major advances of nuclear science and inter-planetary flight.

Price: One shilling



Culture and Socialism and a Manifesto Art and Revolution

An article compiled by the author from a talk he gave to a Moscow club on February 3, 1926, and a number of other addresses.

The Manifesto, appearing in 1938 under the signatures of Andre Breton and Diego Rivera, was in fact drawn up in collaboration with Trotsky.

Price: Two shillings and sixpence

MANIFESTO

of the International Committee of the

I. The crisis opened by the war continues

THE Third Conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International declares that, as the founding programme of the Fourth International stresses, 'the crisis of humanity is the crisis of revolutionary leadership'.

Trotsky's prediction has been completely confirmed: the second imperialist world war opened an unparalleled revolutionary crisis, a crisis which still continues, despite the ebb and flow of the world class struggle. Only the absence of revolutionary leadership has allowed capitalism to survive with the collaboration of Stalinism and reformism. But imperialism has not been able to inflict an historic defeat on the working class.

It is on the basis of the revolutionary crisis opened by the Second World War that the present phase of the class struggle is developing. The deepening of the crisis of imperialism has destroyed beyond recall the equilibrium between the classes upon which the Kremlin bureaucracy rested. The

apparent stability of the Kremlin bureaucracy on the morrow of the Second World War masked the deeper processes which revealed themselves in a series of crises as the Kremlin bureaucracy sought a new centre of gravity. The revolutionary movements of 1953-56 expressed in terms of the proletarian revolution the joint crisis of imperialism and of the Kremlin bureaucracy. This phase of the crisis of imperialism and of the Kremlin bureaucracy can only be provisionally surmounted by the class enemy if there is an absence of national and international revolutionary leadership. But here too, Trotsky's prediction is verified: the Kremlin bureaucracy cannot survive in the long run once the international equilibrium between fundamental class forces which gave rise to it is destroyed. The perspective henceforth is that of the social revolution in the capitalist world and the political revolution in the degenerated and deformed workers' states, fused into a single process.

SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM

THE basis of the class struggle is to be found in the contradiction between the development of the productive forces on the one hand, and private ownership of the means of production and national frontiers on the other. The two imperialist world wars were nothing else but the revolt of the pro-

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Atomic energy, one of the most powerful technical conquests of mankind, was revealed to the world through the bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Automation in the framework of capi-

talism is developed primarily through its military uses. There could be no better example of capitalism's inability to develop technique except under the sign of parasitism, destruction and barbarism. If imperialism survives, these incredible technical means which, under socialism, would very rapidly free humanity from the humiliating constraints of satisfying daily material needs, which, under socialism, would be the basis of a new culture and a new civilisation, can only lead to the destruction of humanity. It is the gains of thousands of years of civilisation which are at stake.

ALL THE CONQUESTS OF THE WORKING CLASS ARE THREATENED

FROM henceforth, imperialism can survive only by threatening all the conquests which the world working class has torn from it in class struggle over more than 100 years.

Every day, hundreds of Vietnamese workers and peasants are murdered by the mercenaries of U.S. imperialism, burned to death by napalm. In Indonesia, members of the Communist Party have been murdered by the hundred thousand. In the whole of Africa and South America bloody repression by the civilian or military cliques in the service of imperialism spreads. The strategy of terror and annihilation which U.S. imperialism tests out in Vietnam, after the collapse of all its plans for the stabilisation of the national bourgeoisies, is the only answer that it can give to the disintegration of economy and society in the

economically backward countries under its impact, and to the will of the worker and peasant masses of these countries to free themselves from imperialist domination.

The working class is threatened no less in the economically developed countries. The attempt of the bourgeois state to incorporate the trade unions stems from the necessity for the bourgeoisie of these countries to destroy all forms of independent organisation of the working class. As Trotsky put it, 'the bourgeoisie in crisis must destroy the positions of proletarian democracy inside bourgeois society'. Directly and immediately aimed against the capacity of the working class to organise and to fight, the attempt to incorporate the trade unions into the bourgeois state shows that the bourgeoisie of every country, even in the

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economically developed ones, can only survive by the unconditional crushing of the working class. The lot of the great mass of immigrant workers, their wages and living conditions, are a kind of anticipation of the future destiny of the workers of the advanced countries. And this would only be the first stage.

The workers of the capitalist countries risk being turned into a rootless urban mass with no place in the productive process, before being annihilated in a new imperialist war. The millions of starving people in India, the victims of the strategy of terror in Vietnam, are merely the first victims of the destiny reserved for the workers of the most technically advanced capitalist countries. Far from improving constantly, the standard of living of the workers of the dominant capitalist countries is at the mercy of the insoluble contradictions of imperialism. The working class of the advanced capitalist countries will not always be privileged in relation to other working classes. Inside capitalist 'prosperity' itself are contained the premises for their being thrown back to the economic and political conditions of the period of the primitive accumulation of capitalism. The attempt of the bourgeois state to incorporate the trade unions is nothing else but an expression of these deep tendencies.

These fundamental contradictions between capitalist productive relations and the development of the productive forces find their sharpest expression in the United States, the bastion of world imperialism. Its dominant position does not only mean a greater concentration of riches and productive power, it also carries the weight of responsibility of defending, politically and militarily, the whole of imperialism. What is more, automation threatens to reduce to a state of poverty millions of workers inside a capitalist society which depends on a major extension of the internal market. The orientation of the political struggles of the Negro worker is beginning to proceed from the reality of this contradiction. The struggles arising from this will have all the violence and all the intensity resulting from the international conflicts which gave rise to them and which will find in them their most concentrated expression. The struggles of the Negroes must inevitably be linked to the struggle of the entire American working class and of the world working class. It is in its relationship with the international class struggle that the Negro question must be understood and the strategy and tactics of the American Marxists worked out.

The building of a section of the Fourth Inter-

national in the United States, with its roots in the masses, is of immense importance for the entire world working class. It is in this context that the revisionist degeneration of the leadership of the Socialist Workers' Party takes on its full meaning. Precisely because the Socialist Workers' Party did not develop Marxist theory, together with organic ties with the class struggle in the United States, it was incapable of undertaking its responsibilities at the level of the leadership of the Fourth International, after Trotsky's death. This opened the way for serious mistakes in relation to the international perspectives which, in their turn, led to even more serious capitulations before the agents of imperialism in the United States itself. It is against this revisionism that a section of the Fourth International will be built in the United States.

The USSR, the European countries under its control and China are not oases in which the economy can develop harmoniously and independently until it peacefully reduces the social antagonisms, and arrives at socialism. Socialism can only be established on the basis of a mode of production which incorporates and overtakes the gains of the capitalist mode of production. One of the most important of these gains, a productive force in its own right, is the international division of labour. The economic growth of the USSR, of the countries under its control and of China demands their ever growing and ever more organic participation in the international division of labour. The 'theory' of the building of socialism in a single country expresses the inability of the bureaucracy of the Kremlin and of its satellites to go beyond the framework of national frontiers and to organise a rational international co-operation of labour. Incapable of overcoming the framework of bourgeois nationalism, it cannot appeal to the conscious participation of the worker and peasant masses for the harmonious development of the planned economy, whose growth and diversification comes more and more into contradiction with its bureaucratic management. Its inability to overcome national frontiers by any other means than national oppression, its inability to have recourse to the control of the producers to develop planning, marks its socially parasitic and petty bourgeois character. The parasitism of the Kremlin bureaucracy multiplies the consequences of the economic, military and political pressure of imperialism (which has the main productive forces at its command), upon the USSR, Eastern Europe and China. The Kremlin bureaucracy must subordinate planning more and more to the fluctuations of the world market dominated by imperialism, and resort

to the laws of the market as a regulator, to the detriment of conscious planning. The economic military and political pressure of imperialism grows as its own contradictions deepen. But the pressure of imperialism only becomes effective through the growing social contradictions in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China.

The USSR, the countries of Eastern Europe and China do not constitute an independent sector of the world economy and class struggle any more

than do the economically backward countries directly under the control of imperialism.

The further survival of imperialism demands the destruction of what remains of the conquests of the October Revolution, of their extensions in Eastern Europe and China, just as it means the destruction of the conquests of the working class inside capitalist regimes, just as it means the attempt to destroy any revolutionary movement in the economically backward countries.

THE SHARPENING OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE

FAR from expressing some kind of stabilisation of imperialism, the blows which it is dealing are episodes in a world class struggle which is part of the revolutionary period opened by the war. They mean a sharpening of the international class struggle in the coming years, and an alignment of social forces in relation to the fundamental classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, leaving less and less room for the balancing politics of the petty-bourgeois social strata—the Kremlin bureaucracy and its satellites, the national bourgeoisie of the economically backward countries, the petty-bourgeois apparatuses which have come out of the working class in the advanced capitalist countries. The confrontation which is being prepared on a world scale has as its basis the conflict between the development of productive forces and bourgeois social relations, of which national frontiers are part. Either the proletarian revolution will hand over the decisive productive forces of humanity to the world proletariat, through the political and economic expropriation of the world bourgeoisie, through the revolutionary overthrow and liquidation of the parasitic bureaucracies; or imperialism will threaten the physical survival of hundreds of millions of proletarians, just as much in the countries dominated by imperialism, whether economically advanced or backward, as in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China.

Imperialist aggression in Vietnam is directed against the conquests of the Chinese revolution. Its destruction by imperialism, given the devotion of the Chinese workers and peasants to these gains, would demand the use of means of destruction, the vastness of which is underlined by the resistance of the Vietnamese workers and peasants. The proletarians of the USSR and Eastern Europe will defend the gain represented by state owner-

ship of the means of production against imperialism and the bureaucracy with no less heroism than the Russian proletariat fought during the second imperialist war. The proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries will not allow itself peacefully to be stripped of its economic and political conquests. Imperialism is dealing its blows in an historical period in which the proletariat has reinforced its conquests and its positions and in which the world bourgeoisie is in retreat. Gigantic class struggles on a world scale are inevitable. They will place on the agenda the social revolution against imperialism, combined with the political revolution against the Kremlin bureaucracy and its satellites.

The outcome of these struggles, in the last analysis, depends on the building of revolutionary leaderships in every country and of an international revolutionary leadership, for the crisis of humanity more than ever boils down to the crisis of revolutionary leadership. This leadership can only be built on the programme of the Fourth International, in the tradition of the Fourth International expressed by the 1966 Conference of the International Committee.

We are in a period in which we must prepare the workers for revolutionary tasks on a world scale. In their struggle for the programme of the Fourth International and to build revolutionary parties fighting for workers' power, the sections of the International offer the only real strategy for the indispensable mobilisation of the working class for the defence of the conquests of the international proletariat.

It is in the light of these considerations that the Third Conference of the International Committee takes on its full significance.

AGAINST REVISIONISM

For the Continuity of the Fourth International

THE International Committee of the Fourth International has fought since 1953 to defend, maintain and enrich the theoretical and political inheritance of the Fourth International. It has had to fight against all forms of revisionism disguised in the mantle of Trotskyism: from the liquidationist revisionism at the top of the Fourth International to the insidious revisionism of the groups fed 'from the crumbs fallen from the table of the Fourth International', which try to take advantage of the crisis opened inside it by Pabloism to question the Marxist method, the programme and the continuity of the Fourth International.

The Third Conference of the International Committee—which was held in London from April 4 to 8, 1966—is part of the continuity of the Fourth International. The IC has become the axis and the motive force of the rebuilding of the Fourth International as the centralised proletarian leadership. The Pabloite organisation is in full decomposition. After the open betrayal of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party of Ceylon, which entered a bourgeois government in June, 1964, after the capitulation of the Socialist Workers' Party, which lauded the Castroite leadership and sent their condolences to Kennedy's widow, Pablo, the ex-general secretary of the revisionist organisation and its political and 'theoretical' head for more than 15 years, splits from the so-called Unified Secretariat. Revisionism contains the seeds of its own decay. It consists of, fundamentally, adaptation to bourgeois society, therefore inside it the contradictions of bourgeois society must necessarily express themselves.

The 'theory' of the division of the world into three sectors—'the socialist states'—'the advanced capitalist countries'—'the countries of the third world or the storm-centre'—which complemented the 'theory' of 'objective forces' supposedly forcing Stalinism and the petty bourgeois leaderships to play the role of revolutionary leadership, implying the liquidation of the Fourth International and its organisations, introduced the seeds of decay into the revisionist international organisation because it implied adaptations to the 'national necessities' of imperialism, of the bourgeoisie of the economically backward countries, and of the parasitic bureaucracies, starting with that of the Kremlin. The impact of the world-wide sharpen-

ing of the class struggle, together with the activity of the International Committee split the unity of the revisionists who, starting from a common trunk, have now spread out in different branches.

Revisionism dealt some very hard blows to the Fourth International, especially between 1953 and 1956. Whereas on a world scale 'the laws of history were stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus', as the programme of the Fourth International puts it, whereas the workers of Eastern Europe were marching, weapons in hand, to the assault on the Kremlin bureaucracy, whereas the French working class, stepping over the bureaucratic apparatus, carried out a general strike in August 1953, whereas this international movement of the working class culminated in November 1956 with the Hungarian revolution; the international Pabloite movement and its national branches intervened as the rearguard of the Kremlin bureaucracy and of the bourgeoisie. By destroying any possibility of a conscious expression of the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat under the direct control of imperialism and under the control of the Kremlin bureaucracy, the revisionist organisation contributed to the defeat of the Hungarian revolution. It prevented the emergence and organisation under the banner of the Fourth International of the vanguard of the international proletariat. It undermined the organisations of the Fourth International and jeopardised their existence.

But the establishment of the International Committee expressed the strength of the programme and the vitality of the Fourth International: from inside it came the organisation and the forces which would ensure its continuity in the class struggle. The Third Conference of the IC marks the victory won against the attempts of Pabloite revisionism to destroy the programme and the historical continuity of the Fourth International. It took up the fight against the groups which tried to use the crisis of the Fourth International to jeopardise its programme and its method. The struggle for the method and the programme of the Fourth International carried out by the IC, enables it to undertake the new tasks of rebuilding the Fourth International as the centralised proletarian leadership. This is the stage opened by the Third Conference of the International Committee.

2. The bureaucracies against the revolution in Vietnam

IMPERIALISM has not miraculously recovered its health and strength. The blows which it is dealing to the international proletariat result from the counter-revolutionary policies of the Kremlin bureaucracy, of its agencies and of the reformist bureaucracy. Imperialist aggression in Vietnam is a consequence of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, which robbed the workers and peasants of their victory over imperialism at Dien-Bien-Phu and divided Vietnam into two. It can only develop under the protection of the international policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy and of the reformist bureaucracy. The arms handed out so sparingly by the Kremlin bureaucracy are only an alibi. Insufficient to allow a military victory over imperialism to the Vietnamese workers and peasants, they can serve the Kremlin bureaucracy as a means of pressure on the government of North Vietnam.

The revolutionary war of the Vietnamese workers and peasants is an expression of and a factor in the world class struggle. The throwing-out of US imperialism from Vietnam would mean a resounding defeat for imperialism. It would be a major factor in the extension of the revolution in Asia. All the fragile equilibrium painfully preserved by imperialism in Asia would crumble. From India to Japan, the proletarian revolution would spread. Complementarily to its betrayal at Geneva in 1954, the Kremlin bureaucracy made itself the direct courtier of imperialism at Tashkent. Worried as much as imperialism by the consequences of war between the Indian bourgeoisie and the Pakistan bourgeoisie, knowing that the rotten economic and social structure of India and Pakistan would collapse under the strains imposed by the necessities of war, fearing the growth of revolutionary movements encompassing 400 million men and women reduced to the most fearful conditions, the Kremlin bureaucracy, to the plaudits of imperialism, undertook to negotiate a compromise which tramples underfoot the right of peoples to self-determination, and the most elementary rights of the exploited masses of India and Pakistan. Its role preoccupation consists in preventing the extension of the revolution in Asia.

US imperialism, like world imperialism, con-

gratulated itself on such an enterprise. Experiencing the greatest difficulties in forcing the Vietnamese masses to submit, despite the enormous use of its military power, US imperialism would be impotent before a revolutionary conflagration which, starting from India, would set the whole of Asia alight. The great struggles which are tending to develop amongst the workers and peasants of India to the powerful highly-concentrated Japanese proletariat, are ripening the forces which will destroy imperialism in Asia. The specific weight of the Japanese proletariat in the phase of the crisis of imperialism and of the world revolution which is beginning, is considerable. It is an urgent task for imperialism to arrest and discipline this class. This task is today carried out for it by the Stalinists, with their reformist orientation of 'national independence' and of class-collaboration with Japanese imperialism.

Through its entire policy, but openly at Tashkent, the Kremlin bureaucracy tries to isolate the Vietnamese proletariat in a ghetto. It attempts to establish a situation enabling US imperialism to deploy its entire military strength against the workers and peasants of Vietnam.

There is no separation whatsoever between the policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy towards Vietnam and the policy that it has towards China. The accusation made by Moscow against the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party of wanting to unleash a thermo-nuclear war, the delivery of military equipment and political support given to the Indian bourgeoisie at war with China, are so many steps in a policy tending to justify a thermo-nuclear attack by US imperialism against China. At present, the Kremlin bureaucracy is trying to obtain, through all the means of pressure at its disposal, the capitulation of the Chinese bureaucracy before US imperialism, especially in Vietnam.

But social democracy and the trade union bureaucracy are no less responsible. They support with just as much ardour American genocide in Vietnam. The policy of the Labour Party, because it is in power in a country whose working class could play a considerable part against the intervention of US imperialism in Vietnam, as much by the direct influence that it could have on the

American working class as by its position at the centre of the oldest and most powerful colonial empire, illustrates the policy of the social demo-

cratic and trade union apparatus. It consists in support without a murmur of protest for the worst crimes of US imperialism.

THE BUREAUCRACIES ARE AGENTS OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE TRADE UNIONS INTO THE STATE

SINCE their capitulation to their own bourgeoisies in 1914, the social-democratic parties have always carried out a policy of class collaboration and flown to the aid of the bourgeoisie every time they were threatened. The Kremlin bureaucracy and the international Stalinist apparatus demonstrated by their capitulation without a fight in Germany at the time of Hitler's seizure of power in 1933, that they had definitely gone over to the side of the bourgeois order on the international scale. At the end of the war and immediately after it, imperialism only survived thanks to the political support of the Kremlin bureaucracy, its international apparatus and the social-democratic and trade union apparatus.

With the sharpening of the class struggle during these last few years, the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism, of the social democracy and of the trade union apparatus has become more open and direct. Not only do they cover up for the genocide of US imperialism in Vietnam, the preparation of a thermo-nuclear war against China, but they are also the agents of the destruction of the conquests of the labour movement in the advanced capitalist countries, in the USSR and in the countries controlled by the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The policy of the Labour Party leadership in power, with the co-operation of the trade union leadership, is to impose the Incomes Policy on the British working class, to carry out legislation against the independence of the trade unions, and to incorporate the trade union apparatus into the state machine. In other words, they are beginning the process of subordinating the labour movement to the bourgeois state machine, which can only lead to its destruction.

Although it is 'in opposition', the German social democracy plays no less a role in the policy of subordinating the West German labour movement to the bourgeois state. It has officially renounced Marxism and the class struggle and presents itself as a national German party since its Godesberg

congress in 1959. It is ready to associate itself with anti-strike and anti-union legislation set up by the laws on the state of emergency. The German trade union apparatus has made itself the champion of co-management, the German form of subordinating the workers to the prosperity of the capitalist firm. It is ready to capitulate before the legislation on the state of emergency. These are so many steps towards the incorporation of the trade unions into the German bourgeois state, which the 'theoreticians' of this incorporation call the 'formed society'.

In France, the leaderships of the Socialist and Communist Parties place themselves, on this question, on the very same footing as Gaullism. They have made themselves the champions of 'democratic planning', a phrase invented by the 'theoreticians' of the participation of the trade unions in the plan, in 'concerted' management of the economy by capital, the bourgeois state and the trade unions. The trade union apparatuses take part in all the organisations for the incorporation of the trade unions into the state, like the Economic and Social Council, the planning commissions, and the commissions for regional economic development. They take part 'critically' in the organisations for the application of the Incomes Policy.

The social-democratic, Stalinist and trade union bureaucracies are taking one more step forward in their policy of supporting the bourgeoisie. What the Conservative Party was unable to carry out in Britain, is carried out by the Labour leadership; what the CDU cannot accomplish alone in Western Germany, the social democracy helps it to accomplish; what de Gaulle demands in France, the socialist, Stalinist and trade unionist leaders hasten to carry out. In order to save bourgeois society in crisis, the petty-bourgeois apparatuses which have come out of the labour movement take part in the destruction of the labour movement with their own hands. They are sawing off the branch on which they are sitting.

THE KREMLIN BUREAUCRACY, AGENT OF IMPERIALISM

THE policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy in the USSR and in the countries under its control has similarly reached a new stage. The Kremlin bureaucracy becomes more and more the organ of the world bourgeoisie inside the workers' state, as the Founding Programme of the Fourth International foresaw. The putting down of the revolutionary movement in Eastern Germany in June 1953, the bloody liquidation of the Hungarian revolution in November 1956, are the hardest blows that have been aimed at the world proletariat since the second imperialist world war. Faced with the rise of the political revolution, obsessed by fear of the proletariat of Eastern Europe and the USSR, the Kremlin bureaucracy has only one solution: to lean on and to reinforce the pro-bourgeois tendencies in the USSR and in the countries which it controls. The blind alley that the bureaucracy finds itself in results from its parasitism. The development of bourgeois norms

of profitability in the economy, as the solution to the crisis of bureaucratic planning, is closely linked to the need of the Kremlin bureaucracy and the bureaucracy of the satellites to fight against the proletariat of the USSR and of Eastern Europe. Thus, it makes itself the direct agent of imperialism. The only hope that imperialism can have of destroying what remains of the conquests of October in the USSR rests on the policies of the Kremlin bureaucracy in the USSR and in Eastern Europe, and, for that matter, in the rest of the world.

Whether it be in Vietnam and against the conquests of the Chinese revolution, in the economically advanced capitalist countries, or in the USSR and the countries under the control of the Kremlin bureaucracy, the social democracy, the trade union bureaucracy, the Kremlin bureaucracy and its agents are more and more involved in attempts to destroy the conquests of the proletariat.

BANKRUPTCY AND CAPITULATION OF THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS LEADERSHIPS

THE powerful revolutionary movements of the last twenty years in the economically backward countries were and are expressions of the world crisis of imperialism. The national bourgeoisie in these countries has demonstrated the limitations of its independence from imperialism. Protected on the left by the Kremlin bureaucracy, which subordinated to it all the mass workers' and peasant movements, it could, for a time, ride on the mass movement and play a Bonapartist role between the masses and imperialism. But it was unable to resolve the fundamental tasks of the bourgeois revolution. On February 14, 1964, Suslov, in his report to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, rattled the sabre of the Kremlin bureaucracy against the working-class and peasant masses of the economically backward countries dominated by imperialism:

'It is absurd to say that the task of armed insurrection is posed to the workers of Algeria, Ghana, Mali and certain other countries. To say this would be, in fact, to call for support for the reactionaries who seek to overthrow these governments. And what could such a call bring in countries like, for example, Indonesia and Ceylon?'

The recent series of military coups d'état in Algeria, Indonesia, Ghana, etc., is the consequence of this policy. The petty-bourgeois Bonapartist cliques are collapsing. Their political role, which gave them an apparent independence in relation to imperialism, consisted essentially in canalising the mass movements. The most radical of them, however far they may have gone with their split from imperialism, have finally remained under its domination. The most extreme example—Cuba—is no exception to the rule. US imperialism forced the Cuban petty-bourgeoisie to go so far as to expropriate the American firms and to call on the Cuban worker and peasant masses to support its measures. But no matter how far Fidel Castro and the 26th July Movement may have gone, the social nature of the regime remained bourgeois. In its struggle against U.S. imperialism, its main support could only be the Kremlin bureaucracy, and this made it its prisoner. Inevitably, the petty-bourgeois Castro leadership had to come into conflict with the Cuban workers and peasants, become more and more the prisoner of the Kremlin bureaucracy and be a bargaining counter between U.S. imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy. It sought a compromise with imperialism itself. The offers to negotiate compensation for nationalised

imperialist property, the struggle against the 'lefts', the trials of the original leaders of the Castro movement, the discovery of plots against Fidel Castro, the anti-Trotskyist attacks, are so many symptoms showing that the Cuban revolution is reaching a critical stage. Under the petty-bourgeois

Castroite leadership the contradictions of the regime grow. In the absence of a revolutionary workers' party, they will lead to the decay of the regime to the benefit of imperialism, whatever may be the personal destiny of Fidel Castro and his petty-bourgeois entourage.

REVISIONISM AND THE CONTINUITY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

THE policies of imperialism feed on the counter-revolutionary activity of the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies and of the petty-bourgeois cliques, who form a chain, the last link of which is the revisionism which has developed inside the Fourth International. This revisionism is the expression of social forces hostile to the proletariat—imperialism, the labour bureaucracies, the petty bourgeoisie—inside the Fourth International. It takes up the recurrent positions of revisionism inside the Marxist movement, whilst masking them in 'Trotskyist' language. The world class struggle is reduced to a series of isolated operations. It shatters at the level of consciousness, organisation and action, the historical and organic unity of the struggle. It transforms dialectical materialism into a working of 'objective' forces, which are to force the Stalinist, reformist and petty-bourgeois leaderships to become revolutionary leaderships, each one in its own 'sector'. It abandons the struggle for revolutionary leadership, for parties, and for the International. What is more, it becomes an obstacle to their building. Revisionism, as it has developed inside the Fourth International, is not only liquidationist but, usurping the tradition which it represents, serves as a 'left' cover for the counter-revolutionary apparatuses.

The programme of the Fourth International is the most finished product of the historical development of the labour movement. It is the result of experience accumulated in more than a century of class struggle, and most especially since the beginning of the epoch of wars and revolutions, analysed through the method of dialectical

materialism. But a programme is not an inert and lifeless thing. The programme was born with the Fourth International. It has remained alive in and through its action. The Pabloite crisis did not lead to the liquidation of the Programme. For it is from the programme and action of the Fourth International that the forces have arisen who have fought against Pabloism and have organised in the International Committee of the Fourth International, ensuring its historical continuity.

Revisionism rejects the history of the labour movement, its theoretical and practical struggles. All the tendencies which reject the history of the labour movement, which want to stay on the fringe of its theoretical and practical struggle, reject along with this the whole of historical materialism, Marxism and the fight for the building of the revolutionary leadership, for pragmatism, eclecticism and impressionism. By their method, they are petty-bourgeois tendencies. They have broken with proletarian internationalism.

The historical continuity of the Fourth International was ensured by the International Committee, for it alone was able to carry out the theoretical and practical fight against revisionism, indispensable for the building of the revolutionary leadership. Whosoever turns his back on the Fourth International, on its struggle for its historical continuity, on its organised expression—the International Committee—breaks with its programme, with proletarian internationalism, of which the IC is the concrete expression.

3. Build the revolutionary leadership!

THE task of the Fourth International is the abolition of capitalism's domination. Its aim—socialism. Its method—the proletarian revolution.' These definitions of the Transitional

Programme are today more than ever living. The Fourth International fights on the ground of the world proletarian revolution, for the building of a world revolutionary leadership and of revolu-

tionary parties in every country. Only in this way can the crisis of humanity, which is none other than the crisis of revolutionary leadership, be resolved.

'The Fourth International pays particular attention to the young generation of the proletariat. . . . Only the fresh enthusiasm and aggressive spirit of the youth can guarantee the preliminary successes in the struggle; only these successes can return the best elements of the older generation to the road of revolution. Thus it was, thus it will be.'

The entire struggle of these last few years confirms these lines of the Transitional Programme. In Britain, the Young Socialists are the vanguard of the struggles of the British proletariat, of the struggle to build a revolutionary Marxist workers' party. In France, working-class youth played a leading part during the 1963 miners' strike, the student youth was in the lead of the action against the counter-revolutionary war of French imperialism in Algeria. In Japan, the Zengakuren were the moving force of the mass action against the imperialist US-Japan pact. In June 1953 in Eastern Germany, in October 1956 in Poland, and during the Hungarian revolution of November 1956, working-class and student youth manned the revolutionary front line. In the USSR the ferment in the working-class and student youth

shows that revolutionary movements are beginning to develop. In Vietnam, working-class and peasant youth make up the vast mass of the revolutionary army, whilst in the USA it is in the student youth that the first actions are born against the counter-revolutionary war of US imperialism. It is also the youth who are the most determined element in the struggle of the American Negroes.

Mobilising the youth, organising it, ordering its struggles, demands that the broadest perspectives be opened to it, smashing the strait jacket of this society which oppresses and suffocates it. The mildewed and conservative bureaucracies fear the youth, its aspirations and its struggles. Only the programme of the Fourth International, because it is the programme of the world proletarian revolution for socialism, offers the youth a perspective measuring up to its demands, its aspirations and its legitimate ambitions. Only the Fourth International can organise it by uniting it to the mass of the working class in action for the proletarian revolution.

The International Committee of the Fourth International gives complete support to the internationalist initiatives taken by the youth organisations, the Young Socialists and Révoles.

The fight to rebuild the Fourth International is inseparable from the most active participation in the class struggle everywhere and in all conditions.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS UNCONDITIONALLY FOR: THE VICTORY OF THE VIETNAMESE WORKERS AND PEASANTS FOR THE DEFEAT OF U.S. IMPERIALISM

THE heroic fight of the Vietnamese workers and peasants is part of the world proletarian revolution. Vietnam is at present a point of convergence of the world class struggle. The Fourth International does not pronounce hypocritical homilies whilst in practice leaving imperialism a free hand. It does not praise the heroism of the Vietnamese workers and peasants only to betray their fight in the name of 'peace'. It does not rely on de Gaulle or any other bourgeois politician to re-establish 'peace in Vietnam'. It stresses and denounces, on the contrary, the deep solidarity of the imperialists, whatever their different interests may be, with US imperialism, the policemen of world imperialism in Vietnam, as it is everywhere else in the world. It brings out the real significance of the positions of the partisans 'of a negotiated and peaceful solution in Vietnam' perfectly illustrated by the words of de Gaulle: 'we must

wait for things to ripen in Vietnam', or in other words for hundreds of thousands of workers and peasants to be assassinated and burnt by napalm. Then perhaps these pacifists hope, imperialism will be able to impose its 'peace'.

The Fourth International takes the Vietnamese revolution, the heroic struggle of the workers and peasants, as a strengthening of the call for the struggle against imperialism, for the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie in every country. At the same time as it initiates and supports on every occasion specific actions for the unconditional withdrawal of the troops of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, and the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination, it links the struggle for the victory of Vietnamese revolution, for the defeat of imperialism, to the extension of the proletarian revolution throughout the world.

It supports the Vietnamese revolution by calling

the workers to revolutionary action in New York, Moscow, Paris, London and Peking. Every blow against its own imperialism, every blow landed

by the proletariat against the Kremlin bureaucracy, is effective help for the Vietnamese workers and peasants.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS FOR THE UNCONDITIONAL DEFENCE OF THE CONQUESTS OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

THE defence of the conquests of the Chinese revolution is an integral part of the struggle for the world proletarian revolution. In the present circumstances it has the same importance as the defence of the USSR had on the eve of and during the second imperialist world war. The conquests of the Chinese revolution are threatened by the combined actions of imperialism and of the Kremlin bureaucracy. They are also threatened by the consequences of the policy of the Chinese bureaucracy and the Chinese Communist Party. By upholding the Indian bourgeoisie, and then the Pakistani bourgeoisie, by supporting the policy of the Indonesian Communist Party, which subordinated itself to the Indonesian bourgeoisie before becoming its victim, by giving complete support to the Algerian, Ghanaian etc., bourgeoisies, the Chinese bureaucracy and Communist Party paralyse the worker and peasant masses and the development of the proletarian revolution in those countries.

They prepare bloody defeats for the proletariat of those countries, like that of Indonesia. As in India, they reinforce the bourgeoisie of those countries, who inevitably will become the tools of imperialism against the conquests of the Chinese revolution. They isolate the Vietnamese worker and peasant masses from the world proletariat and reinforce in this way the aggression of US imperialism in Vietnam.

The 'theories' of the 'storm centre' and of America as 'the main imperialism' cover up a policy which is no less ill-omened for the conquests of the Chinese revolution. The revolution in the colonial countries develops as part of the world revolution; the counter-revolutionary intervention of US imperialism is possible only in so far as imperialism can stabilise the class relations in the economically developed countries, including those where, as in France, the bourgeoisie has differences with US capital. The struggle of the American workers, their acquisition of political consciousness, is intimately linked to the struggles and consciousness of the proletariat of the economically developed countries. By supporting the Gaullist regime and its policies, on the pretext of

differences and contradictions in imperialism, on the pretext that the main enemy is US imperialism, the Chinese Communist Party contributes to the strengthening of the bourgeoisie in Europe and by this facilitates the counter-revolutionary action of US imperialism, which is aimed against China.

In the same way, the Chinese Communist Party weakens the defence of the conquests of the Chinese revolution by condemning the revolutionary acts of the proletarians of Eastern Europe against the Kremlin bureaucracy and the satellite bureaucracies. The suppression of the revolutionary movements of Eastern Europe—June 1953 in East Germany, October 1956, in Poland, the Hungarian revolution of November 1956—this suppression is part of the chain of counter-revolutionary acts carried out by the Kremlin bureaucracy, which, in the last analysis, are all to the advantage of imperialism. The counter-revolutionary agreement between imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy against the conquests of the Chinese revolution, basically, has the same origins as the bloody repression of the revolutionary movement of Eastern Europe and of the Hungarian revolution by the Kremlin bureaucracy. The conquests of the Chinese revolution can only be safeguarded in the long run by their extension, in Asia and in the world. The transformation of the economic and social structure of the countries of Eastern Europe demands their integration in an economy planned on the basis of collective ownership of the means of production on a European scale, which is incompatible with the existence of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The Fourth International defends unconditionally the conquests of the Chinese revolution. That is, independent of the fact that they are under the control of the Chinese bureaucracy. It does not raise the overthrow of that bureaucracy as a condition of the defence of these conquests.

But the Fourth International defends the conquests of the Chinese revolution as a component part of the strategy of the world proletarian revolution. The defence of the conquests of the Chinese revolution in no way implies alignment with the

policies of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. It is indissolubly linked to the building of the Chinese Party of the Fourth International. The defence of the Chinese revolu-

tion implies a merciless struggle against the policies of the Chinese Communist Party, policies which jeopardise these conquests because that Party is opposed to proletarian internationalism.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS FROM THE STATE

THE destruction of all the independent organisations of the proletariat is a vital necessity for the bourgeoisie in crisis. The working class does not live on abstractions. Through the daily struggle which brings it into opposition with capitalism, it has built trade union organisations. The incorporation of the trade unions into the bourgeois state means the destruction of the class nature of the trade unions. It is only possible to the extent that the trade union organisations have developed within themselves petty bourgeois apparatuses, the mouthpieces of capitalist policies inside the working class, whose constant feature is adaptation to the needs of bourgeois society. The struggle against the incorporation of the trade unions into the state is inseparable from the struggle for the proletarian revolution, for the building of revolutionary workers' parties. The founding programme of the Fourth International states:

'The Bolshevik-Leninist stands in the front-line trenches of all kinds of struggles, even when they involve only the most modest material interests or democratic rights of the working class. He takes active part in mass trade unions for the purpose of strengthening them and raising their spirit of militancy. He fights uncompromisingly against any attempt to subordinate the unions to the bourgeois state and bind the proletariat to "compulsory arbitration" and every other form of police guardianship—not only fascist but also "democratic". Only on the basis of such work within the trade unions is successful struggle possible against the reformists, including those of the Stalinist bureaucracy.'

At present, the struggle against the incorporation of the trade unions into the state takes on overwhelming importance. Through the attempt to incorporate the trade unions into the state pass all the attempts, and this on an international scale, to destroy the working class's means of organisation and struggle. The class struggle is expressed inside the trade unions. It is only possible to build the revolutionary party by fighting for the defence of the gains of the working class and in all fields of the class struggle.

The partisans of the Fourth International do not desert any battlefield of the class struggle. The defence of the trade union organisations and their independence from the state is a fight against the bureaucracies of all kinds. It demands that this fight be integrated into the programme of the proletarian revolution, and that the partisans of the Fourth International organise inside the unions as the most conscious section of the working class, that they associate with their struggle all those who have decided, inside the unions to take steps to defend the class independence of the proletariat.

The attempts to incorporate the trade unions into the state are expressions of the sharpening of class contradictions. The capitulation of the bureaucratic apparatuses has no other source than the impossibility of defending the most elementary interests of the workers without blowing up the framework of capitalist society, without raising the question of power. It has the same origins as the capitulation of the reformist apparatuses and of the Kremlin bureaucracy before imperialism in the world class struggle. In this sphere, as in all others, the question is that of the proletarian revolution and of revolutionary leadership. The struggle against the incorporation of the trade unions into the state is linked to, and must be understood as a political task inseparable from, the rebuilding the Fourth International. It is an international task.

This is why the Fourth International re-affirms: 'self-isolation of the capitulationist variety from mass trade unions, which is tantamount to a betrayal of the revolution, is incompatible with membership of the Fourth International.' And that: 'If it be criminal to turn one's back on mass organisations for the sake of fostering sectarian factions, it is no less so passively to tolerate subordination of the revolutionary mass movement to the control of openly reactionary or disguised conservative "progressive" bureaucratic cliques. Trade unions are not ends in themselves; they are but means along the road to proletarian revolution.'

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS FOR THE UNITED FRONT OF THE WORKING CLASS

THE present phase of the class struggle places the struggle of class against class more than ever on the agenda. The proletariat must present a united front to the bourgeoisie, its state and its governments. This is the lesson of more than a century of class struggle. The more class antagonisms sharpen, the more the working class needs to fight as a whole. It is the bureaucratic apparatuses that divide and fragment the proletarian front. The tactic of the United Front, as it was defined at the Third and Fourth Congresses of the Comintern, is more than ever valid. Confronted by the economic and political attacks of the bourgeoisie against the working class—the incomes policy, the attempts to incorporate the trade unions into the state—the working class must oppose the bourgeoisie as a class. The tactic of the United Front does not mean denying in practice that the vast majority of the militants of the working class are organised in the reformist and Stalinist parties. It means, starting at all times from the concrete situation in the class struggle and from the demands of the struggle, to propose policies which break from the bourgeoisie and draw up the working class and its

organisations face to face with the bourgeoisie as a class. It implies the denunciation of policies of class collaboration either with a section of the capitalist class or with the bourgeoisie as a whole. The United Front necessarily comes into conflict with the policies of the bureaucracy. It cannot be ruled out that the bureaucrats of the traditional leaderships might be forced to take steps towards the United Front under pressure from the working class and their own members. In such cases, we support and take part in all activities that can be organised in this way.

The struggle for the United Front implies the building of revolutionary workers' parties. The accomplishment of the United Front cannot be left to spontaneity. It demands the political struggle of independent organisations translating into practice the Transitional Programme.

The revolutionary party cannot be built independently from participation and intervention in the real class struggle as it takes place under our eyes, or just through commentaries on the class struggle. The policy of the United Front can take on its real significance only in the building of revolutionary parties.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS FOR THE UNITED SOCIALIST STATES OF EUROPE

THE Europe which came out of the second imperialist war is even less viable than the Europe resulting from the first imperialist war. The mosaic of European states has not disappeared. In Western and in Eastern Europe it is maintained both by the bourgeoisie and by the Kremlin bureaucracy and the satellite bureaucracies. To this has been added the division of Germany into two, cutting into the living flesh of the German working class.

This mosaic of states, and the division of Europe into two, is incompatible with the development of productive forces. The capitalist attempt to overcome the narrowness of the national frontiers by the setting up of the European Economic Community and by the establishment of the European Free Trade Association are only agreements between groups of capitalists according to the relationship of forces. They are established at the expense of the working class. Each bourgeoisie

puts more pressure on its working class to the extent that it 'collaborates' with other bourgeoisies on the European scale. At the slightest sign of economic tension, cracks and groans are heard from inside both the EEC and EFTA.

Under the guidance of the Kremlin bureaucracy the bureaucracy of each national state of Eastern Europe, far from harmonising the economy of its country has, on the contrary, reinforced the national divisions, thus multiplying the contradictions. The bureaucracy has no answer to this problem.

The division of Europe into two, and of Germany into two, can only be resolved on capitalism's side by the destruction of the economic and social structure of Eastern Europe and Eastern Germany and the reintroduction of capitalism. It would mean the liquidation of whole sections of the economy, the control of the remainder by American and European capital, millions of proletarians re-

duced to unemployment and poverty, and national oppressions of unheard-of brutality. The Kremlin bureaucracy has no solution. All that it can hope for is to prolong indefinitely a status quo which is impossible in the long run.

Revolution in a European country could not bring the working class to power without the whole of Europe being shaken. No working class in a single country could hold power in Europe without the extension of the revolution to the whole of Europe. The struggle for the proletarian revolution in Europe cannot ignore the question of national frontiers, of the division of Europe in two, of the unification of Europe. In Europe the social revolution in the capitalist countries and the political revolution in Eastern Europe and the USSR come together. The programme of the proletarian revolution in any European country demands the struggle for the United Socialist States of Europe, established by the dictatorship

of the proletariat.

This slogan demands: the denunciation of the division of Europe in two brought about at Yalta and Potsdam; the struggle against all forms of national oppression whether it be by imperialism or by the Kremlin bureaucracy; the struggle for the unconditional reunification of Germany.

It demands the denunciation of the adulterated internationalism, consisting of participation of the trade union organisations in the organisations of the Common Market, which is only one facet of the incorporation of the trade unions into the state.

The slogan of the United Socialist States of Europe is a weapon in the building of revolutionary parties in each European country. It is the concrete answer to the national division of the European proletariat and unifies the social revolution and the political revolution in a single process. It demands that the working class take power in every country.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS AGAINST SLANDER AND REPRESSION

THE joint crisis of imperialism and of the Kremlin bureaucracy is expressed in the search by thousands and thousands of militants for the programme of the proletarian revolution, by the search of millions of proletarians for the path of proletarian revolution. It confirms the total bankruptcy of the Stalinist, reformist and petty-bourgeois leaderships. The policy of capitulation before imperialism requires from these leaderships slander and repression against revolutionaries. To prevent the workers from finding the path of proletarian revolution necessitates for these leaderships that all means be used to prevent a vanguard from forming and establishing links with the programme of proletarian revolution and the organisation which expresses it, the Fourth International.

To offset the bankruptcy of Castroism, Fidel Castro made a violent attack on the Fourth International and its programme. He thus acted not only on behalf of the petty-bourgeois Castroite leadership but also on behalf of the Stalinist apparatus. Against the revolutionary militants, the Fourth International and its programme, he uses the same methods and even the same words as the gravedigger of the revolution: Stalin. The Kremlin bureaucracy uses the revolutionary prestige which Castro has, and which it no longer can claim for itself.

Castro's attack on Trotskyism is part of an international wave of slanders and repressions by the Stalinist apparatus. In France, the revolutionary militants grouped around 'Révoltes' were the object of a campaign of slander during the presidential election campaign, emanating from the French Communist Party, because they denounced the treachery of the support for the bourgeois Mitterand by the Socialist and Communist Parties.

But the repressions also rage in the USSR, in Hungary and in Poland. The trial of Daniel and Sinyavsky was aimed to prevent any possibility of free expression. In Poland those arrested are militants known for their devotion to the proletariat, their roots in the labour movement of Eastern Europe and their sympathy for Trotskyism. In Hungary, more than 40 workers who took part in the revolution of November 1956 have again been convicted and thrown into gaol.

The aim is to destroy everything which can make up the elements of the building of an international revolutionary vanguard, on the only possible basis: that of the Fourth International. The struggle against this offensive of slander and repression has as much importance for the Fourth International as had the struggle against the Moscow trials in 1934-38.

FOR THE REBUILDING OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

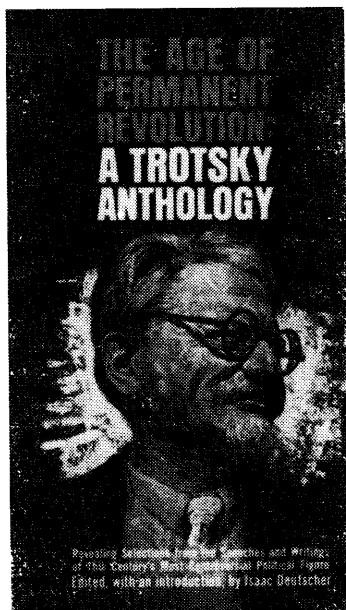
THE struggle for the rebuilding of the Fourth International is linked to all the problems that confront humanity. Thus is expressed concretely the fact that the crisis of humanity is the crisis of revolutionary leadership. Particularly important in this struggle is actively to build a revolutionary workers' party in the USA, the bastion of imperialism. The American Trotskyists have a particularly heavy task, complicated by the abandoning of the programme of the Fourth International by the Socialist Workers' Party. The Trotskyists of the entire world must give their fraternal support to the American Trotskyists who fight alongside the

International Committee. No less important is the task of building revolutionary parties in the USSR and the countries that the Kremlin bureaucracy controls. The accomplishment of these tasks is essential for the rebuilding of the Fourth International and to open the perspective of the proletarian revolution and the world revolution.

The International Committee continues the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International against revisionism, under whatever mask it conceals itself. It carries out this struggle in all fields, theoretically, politically and organisationally.

*Forward to the victory of the
Fourth International!*

THE AGE OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION



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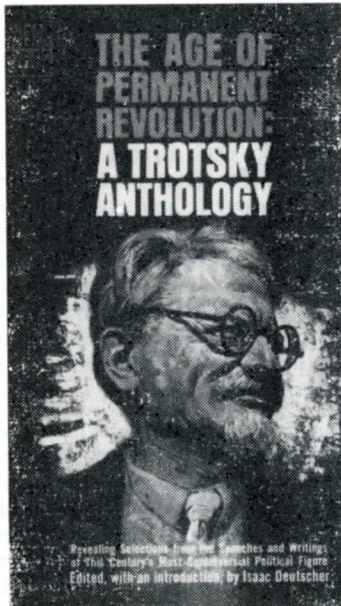
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(V) American Trotskyism's second great crisis

The struggle for Marxism in the United States

by **Tim Wohlforth**

C. THE SECOND GREAT CRISIS —1951-1954

The 1950s was a very difficult period for the American Trotskyist movement. The post-war boom was in full swing and as a result struggles on the part of the working class were at a minimum. In addition a witch-hunt against radicals was in full swing. It was certainly a dark period for building a revolutionary party—a period which brings out every weakness and accentuates every contradiction within a party.

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There is a tendency to look upon the relationship of a party to objective conditions as a sort of automatic process. Under favourable objective conditions a party bounds ahead and grows. Under unfavourable objective conditions a party begins to shrink and split up. In this way the conscious role and responsibility of the party's leadership is minimised in both favourable and unfavourable objective situations. In truth a party can grow quantitatively under favourable objective conditions and not really advance qualitatively at all. The result can even be a qualitative *loss* as opportunist trends grow in the party. Conversely a party can shrink quantitatively under adverse objective conditions but grow qualitatively as it puts its cadre to severe tests and the cadre educates itself and prepares for future advances. Such a party may come out of a reactionary period considerably *stronger* than it went into it. Objective conditions may be blamed for creating an environment which encourages internal crisis but it cannot be blamed for the way a leadership handles itself during such a crisis.

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The 1952-53 Cochranite struggle has many similarities to the 1939-40 struggle. It was without a doubt the most profound internal struggle the SWP experienced since the death of Trotsky.

As in 1940 the constituent elements which made up the bloc that was the SWP came apart at the seams and turned on each other. This time, however, the elements combined in a very different manner and not one of these elements was capable of bringing real clarity to the dispute.

We have previously described the political position which had been evolved by the International leadership. The International had broken completely from the Marxist method and had come to deeply liquidationist political conclusions. This method and these conclusions were codified at the Third World Congress held in 1951. George Clarke returned from this Congress determined that the SWP should actually carry out this new line. In this effort he had the factional backing of Pablo. Clarke's mission threatened to break down the basis for the long-standing bloc between the Cannon leadership and the Pablo international leadership. Now Pablo was insistent that the United States was also part of the world and was seeking to get the SWP to implement the liquidationist international line. Clarke's return from Europe can be seen as the *catalyst* which started into motion the various forces that came into bitter conflict in a very short time.

The orientation of Clarke, and his lieutenant in New York, Bartell, towards the Stalinists was in part based on the very real crisis then going on in Stalinist ranks. This was the period of the CP decision to dissolve the American Labour Party and the Progressive Party and to return to open support of the Democratic Party. It was certainly a situation in which the party should have properly intervened.

However, the crisis in the decimated Stalinist ranks of 1953 was nowhere near as important as that of the immediate post-war period when the organisation was much bigger and more *proletarian* elements were involved. The 1953 crisis largely affected the petty-bourgeois Stalinist periphery. Of course the Clarke-Bartell orientation was a liquidationist one, and the section they were most interested in consisted precisely of such petty-bourgeois dilettantes as Huberman and Sweezy.

A second factor in the situation was Cochran and the forces which he stood for. Cochran's base in the party was the party's strong auto fractions in Detroit and Flint, Michigan. In addition old-time trade unionists in almost every branch throughout the party supported Cochran. Cochran's base was thus a working-class base. It was, however, a working-class base of a very special kind—an aristocratic stratum in the working class which Trotsky had warned about so

clearly in 1940 and earlier. This is the way Cannon was to describe the Cochran formation:

The old union militants who are still in the plant, after 13 years of war and post-war prosperity, are now 13 years older, and many of them are 13 times softer and more conservative. They have many years seniority, and that has become a sort of vested interest, a special privilege in steady employment, as against the younger, newly-recruited slaves of the assembly line who have no privileges whatever. . . . And some of them—some of our own trade unionists—have become infected with this conservatism themselves.

We have that infection *right in our own party!* We have that reflection of the combined pressures of 13 years of prosperity, and six years of witch-hunt, expressed in the conservatism of a section of our own trade unionists! That is the bitter truth. And these conservatised trade unionists are the real social basis of Cochranism in our party. They are the conservative right wing of the party.⁴²

Thus we can begin to see the elements which came together as the Clarke-Cochran minority inside the SWP in late 1951. There was a small group of petty-bourgeois and worker elements who were seeking to jump over the extremely difficult objective circumstances facing the party through a special capitulatory orientation towards the Stalinists who, according to the Pablo thesis, would be propelled along the revolutionary road everywhere. This was the Clarke formation. Behind Clarke stood Pablo and the International leadership. Combined with Clarke-Pablo was a large section of the party's trade unionists who were not that much concerned with the Stalinists. In fact Cochran himself denied the very existence of the 'Stalinist milieu' towards which Clarkeites wished to orientate the Party. This section of the party had been as Stalinophobe as any section of the party in the past. This was no small section of the party. It had support of the most important trade union fraction left in the party and many, many other important trade unionists throughout the country. Most of these Cochranites had been in the party since the late 1930s. These were the same people Trotsky had in mind in his 1940 discussion.

What was the real programme of the Cochran section of this minority? Cannon describes it this way:

Their conservatism, which clashes head-on with the revolutionary line of the party, expresses itself

42. Cannon, James P. 'Some Facts . . .', *op. cit.*, p. 21.

in a revolt against the party. Under the inspiration of Cochran, this revolt sometimes even takes the character of hatred of the party; denigration of the party; and denial of its historic mission. They exaggerate and whimper about petty 'grievances' which are mostly imaginary, and not worth two cents anyway. They want to withdraw from the political struggle in the open arena. They want to retreat into a propaganda circle. They oppose any programme of rounded activities proper for a revolutionary party, which is not the same thing as a mere group of progressive trade unionists.⁴³

The cement which held together the Pablo-Clarke pro-Stalinists with this section of the party's trade unionists was obviously a common desire to liquidate the party.

On the other side of the struggle was an equally heterogeneous combination. The first grouping in the party to tackle the Cochranites was the group around Murry Weiss. Weiss's base in the party was an essentially petty-bourgeois one. Though this group included a number of older comrades, its vitality and dynamism came from petty-bourgeois youth who had joined the party in the late forties and who had grown impatient and disturbed by the party's growing conservatism in this period. They wanted a more dynamic party. Little concerned with trade union work, their loyalty was to the party as a propagandistic instrument and apparatus. Weiss was rather ill-equipped for a struggle against a Pablo-inspired pro-Stalinist tendency, for he and his brother Dave has been among the most enthusiastic early supporters of Pablo, especially on Yugoslavia. The Weiss tendency wanted a party of propagandistic activity but not necessarily one of proletarian intervention. The ideal of a young Weiss supporter was full-time party work quite removed from the American working class.

Combined with Weiss from the beginning was Cannon. Cannon, almost alone of the old party cadre, responded strongly to the Cochranite threat because Cannon, above all else, felt deeply about the necessity of a party. It was this deep conviction of the need for a party more than anything else which led him into a head-on struggle with a section of the party's old trade union cadre.

The role of Dobbs and the whole older cadre of the party which did not go along with the Cochranites was, at the beginning, quite ambiguous. The Dobbs section of the party—the great majority of the party—feared a break with the Cochranites and did everything they could to compromise the struggle and to avoid a showdown with Cochran. They viewed Cochran and his supporters as one of

their own, as part of the same stratum of the party, and having pretty much the same outlook. In the early stages of the dispute Cannon accused Dobbs of actually maintaining neutrality in the struggle and there is no doubt but that for a while he actually did do this.

Cannon describes his relation to Dobbs this way in a letter written to V. R. Dunne following Dobbs' decision to go along with Cannon in the struggle:

He thought, it seems, we were hellbent on organising a factional fight in the party without consulting him and before the party members, or even a considerable section of the leading cadre, were convinced of the depth and seriousness of the conflict. He said he had not intended his memorandum to the PC as a declaration of political neutrality—as we told him frankly we had interpreted it—but only as a means of slowing down the *organisational* side of the internal conflict.⁴⁴

As late as May 1953, just a few months before the final split, Cannon continued to express worry about 'neutralist' sentiments in his ranks:

. . . Revolutionary elements in the party—and those who want to be revolutionists—have got to quit fooling around with the irresponsible game of 'neutrality', and take sides in the fight to protect the party against this Cochranite attack on its right to live.⁴⁵

The Dobbs section of the party had been affected by much the same pressures as the Cochran section. It, too, was demoralised by the prosperity. It, too, lacked any real theoretical development. It, too, was a bit tired and would prefer to 'sit things out for a while'. But there was one main difference between the Dobbs and Cochran groups. Over the years the Dobbs people had either left industry in order to do party apparatus work; or had been screened out by the witch-hunt; or, while remaining in industry, remained there largely to earn a living while their real life was in the party branch. The Dobbs section of the party was that section of the proletarian kernel of the movement which had retreated into the party, while the Cochran section was that section of the proletarian kernel which had retreated into the trade unions and the trade

43. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

44. Cannon, James P. 'Background and Issues of the Party Crisis (Letters to Comrades)', *Internal Bulletin*, Vol. 15, No. 12 (Socialist Workers Party, May 1953). The letter was originally written on October 7, 1952.

45. Cannon, James P. 'Some Facts . . .', *op. cit.*, p. 22.

union apparatus. Thus while conservatism compelled the Cochranites to break from the party it compelled the Dobbsites to defend the party which had become their home. From the beginning they both felt quite unhappy about the whole squabble but were powerless to change it.

There were three small groupings which lined up also with the Cannon-Weiss-Dobbs majority in the final break. These groupings had no theoretical agreement with the majority but they did agree on the need to preserve the party. Two of them—the Marcyites and the Vernites—were localised personal groups with pro-Stalinist views. The third was the remnants of the Johnsonites which maintained a 'state capitalist' position. These comrades continued to bloc with Cannon for the same empirical reasons which had led Johnson to enter the SWP in 1948.

The actual written programme of the Clarke-Cochran faction was really unbelievably bad, confusing, unpolitical, and totally inadequate for the kind of factional heat that lay behind it. Only Clarke wrote clearly and he clearly presented the liquidationist views of Pablo. Pablo stood in much the same position to the 1952-53 minority as did Burnham to the 1940 minority. It was Pablo who was able to give some kind of theoretical justification to the flight from the party of the minority. It was his liquidationist theories which had done so much to encourage this flight from the movement not only in the United States but in other Trotskyist groups throughout the world. As in 1940 a good section of the minority was not particularly interested in these theories—it was only interested in flight. But despite this, Trotsky tackled Burnham head-on, knowing that in this way he was getting at the *methodological* roots of the disease which infected even those who showed no interest in theory (especially those).

In 1952 Cannon and his collaborators could not do this. In fact they proceeded in an exactly opposite way. They solidarised themselves with Pablo and the Third World Congress decisions over and over again. Cannon urged Pablo to support him over Cochran-Clarke, making it perfectly clear that if he would support him, Cannon would continue his loyal support of Pablo internationally.⁴⁶ As if in order to prove this point in 1952 Cannon fully solidarised himself with Pablo's expulsion of the majority of the French section and supported Pablo against the *political* attacks of the French comrades.⁴⁷

This approach of Cannon's—for which he is solely responsible—completely castrated the

majority politically. Unable to attack the source of the revisionism it could only attack Clarke and company for mis-applying an international line they admitted to be correct. Once again they took refuge in 'American exceptionalism'. It was all right to liquidate the movement into the Stalinist parties in Europe but not *here*. Stalinists in the United States are *different*, etc., etc. As long as the argument remained on this level no one learned much and Clarke was on the offensive.

As time passed in the struggle Cannon shifted his fire to the Cochran section of the opposition. Here he felt on stronger ground. He defended the need for a party and the party's whole past against someone who wished to escape from the party. But he was unable to go much beyond a mere repetition of orthodoxy. The party has been created by 25 years of struggle. The party is needed. The party should act like a party. But exactly what the party concretely should do either in this country or internationally Cannon did not seem to know. *Time would tell whether or not the simple assertion of the necessity of the party as an orthodox principle would be enough to maintain the party as a revolutionary instrument.*

Cannon's struggle against the Cochran section of the minority was hampered in another way. He was incapable of looking back at the history of the party and explaining how a central section of the party's cadre degenerated to the point where they could reject the revolutionary party as such, wanting only 'a mere group of progressive trade unionists'. It was Clarke and not Cannon who republished the 1940 discussion with Trotsky, and Cannon's comments on this discussion during the dispute completely evaded seeing in Trotsky's scorching assessment of the party's trade union cadre the origins of Cochranism. The reason for this failure is clearly that such an approach would soon make clear *Cannon's own responsibility* for the failure of the SWP leadership to develop its trade union cadre as Bolsheviks. In 1940 Cannon fought a section of the party to which he had never been very close, and for which he could claim to have no real responsibility. In 1952 Cannon was fighting his own creation—it was Cannon's battle against a section of Cannonites. He was forced to

46. The Cochranites reported a letter of Cannon's in March of 1952 which 'was a *quid pro quo* offer to Pablo: support in return for non-interference in the drive for a split'. See: Andrew, J. *et. al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

47. 'Letter from Cannon to Daniel Renard', *International Information Bulletin* (Socialist Workers Party, November 1952).

muster what strengths he had to battle against the creature of his own weaknesses.

At a Plenum held in May 1953 a truce was called in the factional struggle. No sooner was the truce called than the factional struggle erupted with renewed violence. In fact it was the post-plenum reports to the branches which touched things off again. So in the autumn of 1953 the entire Cochran faction, comprising perhaps a quarter of the party membership, was unceremoniously expelled from the party because the New York section of the minority had boycotted the 25th Anniversary Banquet of the party. The split in the party was of such importance and the discussion was so confused that the majority was forced to re-register the entire party membership to be sure the split was completed.

Soon thereafter the party held an emergency Plenum denouncing Pabloism as revisionism and issuing an 'Open Letter'⁴⁸ which split the Fourth International in two. The political break with Pablo was not at all prepared during the previous Clarke-Cochrane struggle, though a certain behind-the-scenes organisational struggle with Pablo had taken place. Furthermore it came as a thunderbolt to the world movement, which also was not prepared for it. The international discussion had just opened in preparation for the Fourth World Congress. Cannon in effect split the world movement before he even attempted to politically clarify its ranks in this opening international struggle. Clearly the SWP had split the world movement down the middle because of Pablo's support for the American minority—that is, for purely national reasons. The *political* motivation for the split was simply added later—almost as an afterthought.

Following the split the SWP began what was to be a short-lived political offensive against Pabloism. The emergency plenum in the autumn of 1953 issued a resolution entitled 'Against Pabloite Revisionism'⁴⁹ as well as the 'Open Letter'. Cannon wrote a searching article 'Trotsky or Deutscher' which was an attack on Deutscher as the theoretical inspirer of Pablo.⁵⁰ Breitman and Hansen wrote some material in the *Militant* and then the struggle petered out around the middle of 1954.

It is important for us to understand the nature of this all-too-brief political polemic with the Pabloites. Faced with a revisionist threat Cannon and his supporters could rely on only one thing to combat it—*orthodoxy*. Unable to really come to grips with the new problems which Pablo used as touching-off points for his revisionism, Cannon had to simply counterpose the *old Trotsky*

to the new revisionism. Thus in a sense Cannon was continuing his old bloc with Trotsky—this time with Trotsky's corpse and what he had produced in his lifetime. Thus was born '*orthodox Trotskyism*'.

Cannon explains this 'orthodox' outlook in a letter to Leslie Goonewardene of the LSSP (Ceylon) in January 1954:

This extraordinary situation consists in the fact—and there is no getting away from it, for it strikes everyone in the eye—that the personally monopolised International Secretariat of Pablo has attempted, and is attempting, to impose upon the Fourth International a line of policy and political action not sanctioned by our programme or by any congress, and against the will of the great majority of the strongest Trotskyist cadres. The attempt of Pablo and his personal circles to impose unauthorised policy, and to choke off a free discussion, by means of threats, expulsions, excommunications and other measures of Stalinist discipline, confronted the orthodox 'old Trotskyists' with the inescapable alternatives: to capitulate or to fight.

But precisely because they are 'old Trotskyists', precisely because they learned in Trotsky's school how to stand up for their 'old programme' under any and all circumstances, and to grant no one the right to proscribe it, they have decided to fight.

The first concern of Trotskyists always has been, and should be now the defence of our doctrine. That is the first principle. The second principle, giving life to the first, is the protection of the historically created cadres against any attempt to disrupt or disperse them.⁵¹

We need add only one slight change to this exposition by Cannon of what he was fighting for. In the actual struggle it was the second principle, the 'protection of the historically created cadres', which came first with Cannon. Only when Pablo was clearly involved in disrupting the SWP did Cannon turn to the first principle—the orthodox defence of doctrine.

The brief international struggle of 1953-54 with Pablo was carried out in dead earnest and as far as the SWP leadership was concerned at the time it was a definitive battle. Cannon stated:

... The split of 1940 was by no means as definitive and final as is the split today. We are

48. *Militant* (New York, November 16, 1953).

49. *Fourth International* (New York, Sept.-Oct. 1953).

50. *Fourth International* (New York, Winter, 1954), p. 9 ff.

51. 'Letter by James P. Cannon, Feb. 23, 1954', *Discussion Bulletin A-16* (Socialist Workers Party, March 1954), pp. 6, 7, 16.

finished and done with Pablo and Pabloism for ever, not only here but on the international field. And nobody is going to take up any of our time with any negotiations about compromise or any nonsense of that sort. We are at war with this new revisionism, which came to full flower in the reaction to the events after the death of Stalin in the Soviet Union, in East Germany, and in the French general strike.⁵²

But the break in 1953 did not lead to a break with the method of Pabloism, and so the split could not be permanent. Orthodoxy is not enough. New events always disorient those who rely on orthodoxy alone. That was Germain's great weakness. *Only the ability to apply the Marxist method to a changing reality can ensure the permanence of a split with revisionism in all its forms.*

Before we leave this period it is important to note that the expulsion of the Cochranites did not immediately bring internal peace to the SWP. Quite the contrary; it led almost immediately to a new internal factional situation which almost produced a second split and which showed how unstable the majority forces were.

Soon after the Cochranite split the Weiss grouping rushed into action. Emboldened by the special role they had played in the forefront of the struggle against Cochran, they expected to

receive a greater share in the party's leadership. In addition they hoped to galvanise the party with the youthful energy of the young supporters of Weiss who were sent throughout the party to build up the weaker branches.

Dobbs' reaction was immediate. He felt that he was being pushed out of party leadership. Further the tired section of the cadre which he rested upon were highly suspicious of those who expected that after the Cochranite split the party would really do something. In addition many of these older workers felt correctly that these Weissite youth had no solid working-class outlook—that they had all the characteristics of footloose adventurers. Everyone in the party was extremely tense and it was expected that a new factional struggle was soon to break out.

This time Cannon intervened—to preserve the peace. While he could have made a good case against either side in the struggle he did not do so. As long as both sides favoured the continued existence of the party he was willing to let things be. Weiss was requested to formally dissolve a faction he claimed he never had and Dobbs was requested to give Weiss a real role in the central apparatus of the party. So unity was preserved on the surface while a subterranean war continued intermittently in the party up to the present moment.

D. THE SWP TURNS AGAINST TROTSKYISTS—1954-1963

(1) Stagnation

A very sick party emerged from the Cochranite fight. The party had been saved from *organisational* liquidation but what little remained of it *politically* would soon become clear. The basic cadre of the party was tired, demoralised, devoted to leading only a routine organisational existence in the branches. The majority had fought for an orientation towards the mass movement against the Cochranites, but little if anything was really done to implement such an orientation after the Cochranites left. Routinist, internalised existence was the rule everywhere.

In 1954 and 1955 the SWP paid a good deal of attention to the American scene and most particularly to the rise of McCarthyism. Its assessment of McCarthyism was another sign of the theoretical decay and disorientation of the SWP. This decay reflected itself not simply in the SWP's misunderstanding of international matters. It also found expression whenever the SWP sought to come to grips with the reality of its own country—that field it felt it knew the best.

This is the way the SWP assessed McCarthyism in September of 1954:

As a product of the witch-hunt, McCarthyism continues to set the pace for the hysteria, but it is more than a witch-hunting excrement of the capitalist state apparatus. It is a native American fascist movement in the early stage of formation. Having stepped out on the political arena as the murderous foe of the working class, it will not be subdued or contained by the old capitalist parties, even though they take fright, or by the well-meaning liberals or by any other force except the working class itself.⁵³

This assessment of McCarthyism as a fascist movement which could not be contained by the capitalists was made *after* the famous Army-McCarthy Hearings which in actual fact were precisely the containing of McCarthy by the capitalists. But

52. Cannon, James P. 'Factional Struggle . . .', *op. cit.*, p. 116.

53. 'Draft Resolution on the Political Situation in America', *Discussion Bulletin A-20* (Socialist Workers Party, September 1954), p. 9.

this is the way the SWP assessed those hearings:

All attempts of the Democrats and Republicans to curb, crush, outflank or brush aside McCarthy have ended in fiasco. The Army-McCarthy hearings, for instance, which resulted from the need of the Eisenhower administration to draw a line on the encroachments of McCarthy's independent power, cost nothing to the fascist demagogue than the sacrifice of his Jewish Democratic attorney as a scapegoat.⁵⁴

Of course, if McCarthy really represented a fascist formation then considering the strength he had mustered, it would be understandable for the SWP to not expect the capitalist politicians to be able to contain him. It could look only to the working class. But the working class was in a far from militant, let alone revolutionary mood in 1954. Thus such an assessment of McCarthyism could not but have a deeply pessimistic impact on the SWP. This is exactly how the similar theory of the CP affected its ranks. It led to a deep inward turning of the CP combined with the increasing flight of cadres from the party.

However, McCarthy was very far from being a fascist, even a 'nascent' one. Fascist movements develop in a different kind of period, when there is a deep social crisis in a country and a massive working-class movement in motion. Only after the capitalists exhaust their reformist resources in trying to placate the masses do they resort to fascism to break up and smash workers' organisations. Fascism thus must have a social programme of its own in order to win enough petty-bourgeois and *lumpen* support to counter the working-class movement.

McCarthy had no social programme whatsoever. McCarthy rose during a period of considerable prosperity and during which the masses were relatively quiescent and reformist solutions had been far from exhausted. McCarthy was in fact a 'witch-hunting excrescence' of a very particular kind. He reflected the deep international crisis facing American imperialism and the anti-bourgeois-democratic turn he did take was a sign of the underlying instability of American 'democracy' in the present world situation. Yes, McCarthyism was an extremely virulent and reactionary development, but it was far from a fascism of a Hitler, a Mussolini, or even a Father Coughlin (properly designated a 'nascent fascist' by our movement in the 30s).

Another sign of the deep sickness that had infected the SWP was the infamous 'Cosmetics Controversy'. In 1954 the party was suddenly seized by a large scale controversy as to whether

or not one of the side effects of the proletarian revolution would be to liberate women from the use of cosmetics so as to let their 'natural beauty' flower. This not particularly burning issue of the day was taken in dead earnest by many in the party and filled a whole 67 page mimeographed internal discussion bulletin.⁵⁵ Who should be in the centre of this controversy but one 'Jack Bustelo', a *nom de plume* for Joseph Hansen, the most prominent theoretical spokesman for the party majority during the Cochran fight.

The years 1954 and 1955 were also the period when the SWP finally came to a decision as to the class nature of the Chinese state. There continued to be considerable theoretical confusion on this question even after the Cochran split. One prominent party leader, Joseph Hansen again, in fact circulated a memorandum to the National Committee suggesting a state capitalist theory of China. Because of interest in this theory the party opened the pages of its theoretical magazine to Dave Miller, a former Johnson supporter, to present the state capitalist theory of China.

By 1955 the SWP had settled on an analysis of China as a deformed workers' state. This is to be found in the resolution 'The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath' passed by the 1955 SWP Convention.⁵⁶ This resolution represented a very fine and orthodox descriptive statement as to the nature of the state in China, the existence of a bureaucratic caste, and the need for a political revolution. However, the resolution made no attempt to offer a theoretical explanation of the real challenge in the Chinese events—by what process was a workers' state established? As an empirical description of China and as a political stand in relation to that empirical picture, the 1955 resolution is excellent and represents the last attempt of the party to put forward orthodox theory in resolution form. But as the SWP did not really come to grips with the question of the process which created this deformed workers' state, it was to have more and more difficulty as the years passed in upholding its orthodox conclusions about China. To understand this process the SWP needed an understanding of the Marxist method. This it lacked.

In the latter part of this period one of the minor constituents which made up the majority

54. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

55. *Discussion Bulletin A-23* (Socialist Workers Party, October 1954).

56. *Discussion Bulletin A-31* (Socialist Workers Party, October 1955).

bloc against Cochran left the SWP—the Vernites. This small personal group in Los Angeles had maintained that wherever the Red Army went workers' states automatically sprang up. Upon leaving the party it immediately entered the Shachtmanite movement! Such was the peculiar logic of the times!

(2) Regroupment

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was the beginning of a process which was to shatter the isolation of the SWP, thrust it into the middle of important developments both internationally and within the country, and subject it to tests which simple orthodoxy would prove inadequate to cope with. As long as one remains in isolation the repetition of past positions may suffice, but when one breaks out of isolation all kinds of new developments and new pressures are brought to bear on an organisation. Then one must be able to master the Marxist method or be destroyed.

The party which entered this new period was far from healthy. The break with the Cochranites combined with the generally unfavourable objective situation largely destroyed whatever trade union fractions the party had been able to maintain up to 1953. By 1956 there were no more than one or two small fractions left in the party which functioned on any kind of regular basis. Many individual trade union cadres remained in the party, but most of these comrades did little or nothing in the unions. Their real life was in the local branch. To the extent that they functioned at all in the unions this work was seen as quite separate from branch life and very infrequently was it even reported into the branch. Above all the party had no contact on any level with young workers, Negro or white.

Some Negro work had been done in the past period but it tended to be of a sporadic campaign-type character, and in the period following 1956—during a period of increasing militancy of the Negroes—the trend was to pull more and more out of this work rather than to enter more deeply into it. A few youth recruited primarily by the Weissites were in the party, but by and large youth work as such had been neglected by the party since 1940.

The first phase of the party's reaction to the Hungarian and Polish events and the crisis these events produced in all sections of the radical movement was generally a positive one. Politically the Hungarian uprising was seen as a reaffirmation of the historic position of the Trotskyist movement on political revolution. These events gave the

tired cadres of the SWP new hope, new faith in the ability of the working class to struggle against oppression and to exert its own independent will.⁵⁷

Domestically the party turned its attention to the Communist Party and sought to intervene there around the slogan 'Back to Lenin'. Some very fruitful work was done with dissident CP formations in both Los Angeles and Seattle which had formed around this battle cry. These groups finally were expelled from the CP and joined the SWP, providing the SWP with its most sizeable recruitment from its work in and around the Stalinist movement.

This period also brought forward a crisis within the Shachtmanite organisation. The Shachtmanites had been moving steadily to the right over the past decade. The only fruitful work they were able to do was to build up a small student youth formation. They were able to accomplish this because the SWP completely neglected any kind of work in this field. By 1957 Shachtman had come to the conclusion that independent existence was no longer meaningful and he proposed that his organisation enter the Socialist Party in essentially a capitulatory way. In fact his aim was not so much to enter the Socialist Party as to commit political suicide—to lose completely one's individual political identity. The Socialist Party was ideally suited for such a purpose.

About a quarter of the youth organisation of the Shachtmanites rebelled against this capitulation and conducted a struggle against Shachtman which ended up in a split and then fusion with the youth of the SWP. This fusion of the former Shachtmanite youth with the SWP youth, largely Weissite, created the basic cadres for a new youth organisation for the SWP, its first such national formation since 1940. Whatever growth the SWP was to experience in the next seven years, outside of the initial recruitment from the CP mentioned earlier, was to come from this youth work.

This first stage of positive 'regroupment' work did not last long. Soon the party was to become deeply disoriented and to adapt to centrist trends within the general Stalinist movement. This first stage was expressed in an extremely soft adaptationist approach to one of the two factions which struggled against each other inside the CP in 1957-58. On the one side was Foster, who maintained Stalinist orthodoxy but who also had the support of the bulk of the workers in the party and many militant youth. On the other side was Gates, who

57. See: *The 20th Congress (C.P.S.U.) and World Trotskyism* (New Park Publications, London, 1957).

expressed various 'democratic' criticisms of Stalinism, but who had an extreme right-wing orientation on the American scene. Gates was obviously seeking to break out of the CP in order to get with the 'mainstream' of American petty-bourgeois liberalism. The party sided almost uncritically with Gates, hoping that the Gates group would move to the left.⁵⁸ The Gates group soon left the CP and left radical politics, entirely dissolving into their personal lives and/or the Democratic Party. Several left groups were to later break from the Fosterites, the most recent being the Progressive Labor group, showing that militant forces did exist in the CP but that the SWP was unable to find a road to these forces.

The flirtation with Gates prepared the party for its next operation—an orientation towards the 'progressive' periphery of the CP whose spokesman was the publication *National Guardian*. This Guardianite milieu was essentially petty-bourgeois—in fact it was the identical milieu Cannon had rejected as 'second-rate' in 1952. Essentially they were the same kind of people as the Gatesites except that entry into the Democratic Party was a bit too much for them—at least at the time. They wanted to maintain a certain independent existence.

The SWP organised for them the Independent Socialist Party, which ran a slate of candidates in New York State in 1958, and similar formations elsewhere. The ISP's programme was essentially a modified Stalinist one and its major candidate was none other than Corliss Lamont, a millionaire dabbler in 'left' causes who liked to see his name appear in the paper. His major contribution to the campaign was to urge Harold Stassen, a Republican, to run as a 'peace candidate' in the next election.

This regroupment work with the 'Progressives' became a total preoccupation for the party. The 1958 election campaign was organised from beginning to end by party members, with the 'Progressives' making barely a token participation. In the end the relationship between the SWP and the 'Progressives' blew up and most of the 'Progressives' found their way back to the Democratic Party. No more than a handful of them entered the party and most of these were far from revolutionaries. Never in its history had the SWP exerted so much effort to woo a group of people with so little concrete result.

This regroupment process had very serious effects on the political and theoretical development of the SWP. It was in this period that the old orthodoxy of the SWP broke down and a new

revisionism came to the fore. For weeks on end the *Militant* took on the colouration of the 'Progressives' it was working with. The Trotskyist critique of Stalinism—that great weapon which could have won the best of the Stalinists over to Trotskyism—was blunted, and every effort was made to make the SWP seem to be nothing but a slightly more radical version of the Progressive Party.

The clearest theoretical expression of this trend can be found in an article by Joseph Hansen written in 1958, 'Proposed Roads to Soviet Democracy'. This article dealt with the critical question of political revolution. In 1953 and 1954 this question had been central in the dispute with Pablo. In 1956 the SWP had been in the forefront in seeing the Hungarian Revolution as a vindication of its orthodox position on political revolution. Now four years after the Pablo fight and only two years after Hungary, Hansen was to put forward an essentially reformist conception of political revolution almost identical with that held by Clarke in 1953:

It is much closer to reality to view the programme of political revolution as *the total series of reforms, gained through militant struggle, culminating in the transfer of power to the workers.*

No revolution comes in a single oversize dose like a horse pill. It develops in interlinked stages affecting interlinked fields. If any of the stages be viewed in isolation, or fixed as an end in itself rather than a means to a higher goal, it appears as a reform. If its connections to the demands of other stages be kept in mind, it appears as a transitional step. It is only when the process is viewed as a whole—in its origins, its fundamental aims and final results—that it appears for what it really is, a revolution: an organic qualitative change in whatever structure is involved.⁵⁹

All this sounds very dialectical. But far from being the revolutionary position of Marxism, it is in actuality the evolutionary position of Menshevism. It is important that Hansen here generalises his concept that revolution is nothing but a series of reforms to apply to all revolutions. To Hansen the October Insurrection must have been but one of a number of reforms the cumulative effect of which was a revolutionary change. In our book the destruction of the capitalist state and the

58. See: Harry Ring, 'The Struggle in the Communist Party', *International Socialist Review* (New York, Spring, 1958), p. 52 ff.

59. Hansen, Joseph, 'Proposed Roads to Soviet Democracy', *International Socialist Review* (New York, Spring, 1958), p. 50.

transfer of power to the working class organised in Soviets was quite a reform, quite a reform! Needless to say the concept of the political revolution as a series of reforms completely obliterates the division between the Trotskyist position and that of Deutscher and other revisionists who urge a reformist road in the Soviet countries. This, of course, was its purpose.

Hansen's theoretical role in the post-war history of the SWP was not a personal matter. He reflected—perhaps a bit more grotesquely than others—the empiricist method of the SWP. His theories were developed as impressionistic reactions to current development or to serve political and factional purposes. A theory once developed would be lightly discarded when either the objective situation or the factional need changed. Thus in 1949 and 1950 Hansen, together with Cochran, reacted in the same impressionistic way as did Pablo to the expansion of Stalinism. Their views were if anything cruder, more vulgar than Pablo's. In 1952 and 1953 Hansen responded to the internal factional needs of the Cannon group in the SWP and became the foremost advocate of the view that Stalinism was 'counter-revolutionary through and through'. In 1954 and 1955, in the climate of McCarthyism and reaction, Hansen experimented with state capitalism, a position about as far removed politically—if not methodologically—from his 1949 position as one could get. By 1958, when the party's tactical needs required an adaptation to the Stalinists, Hansen was to return to his earlier Pabloite views. This was to prepare him for his future role as the foremost battler against orthodoxy and for a return to the Pabloites. Only a party deeply sick with the disease of empiricism would let such a person occupy a leading position in its central leadership.

There was, as would be expected, a minor orthodox resistance to the return to revisionist views fought against earlier and to the almost total absorption of the party in a 'radical' petty-bourgeois milieu. This resistance found expression in the Cowley tendency, which opposed the extremes of regroupment and which urged a continuation of an orientation towards the mass movement.⁶⁰ It was, however, a very weak echo of orthodoxy and its base was in the same tired section of the party which was responsible for the disorientation of the party in the first place. Quite naturally a good section of these Cowley supporters, including Cowley herself, were to simply drift out of the party and out of politics in the next period. They were simply too tired to do

much else than register their protest before they left.

The Marcyites also strongly opposed regroupment. However, it would be difficult to characterise their opposition as really 'orthodox' as they combined their criticisms of regroupment with a position that the Hungarian Revolution was a fascist counter-revolution. This section was to split from the party before the 1959 convention and to drift more and more away from Trotskyism.

In the meantime, the evolution of the Cochranites fully confirmed the deeply liquidationist nature of this formation. First of all in the early stages of the regroupment process the Bartell-Clarke wing of the formation split away and played a certain role for a while as 'unity brokers'. The Cochranites proper were too involved in publishing their magazine, *American Socialist*, to bother with regroupment. Soon after regroupment came to an end, the Cochranites simply ceased publication of their magazine and announced to all and sundry that they were going out of business for good. The Bartell-Clarke formation had disintegrated a little earlier once the 'unity brokerage' business had dried up.

For the Weiss formation regroupment was a heaven-sent proposition. Murry Weiss came to the fore as the party's leading negotiator and expert on adaptation to pro-Stalinist currents. All over the country these people were in the forefront of regroupment, its ceaseless advocates, its most dedicated exponents. Regroupment was more than a tactical manoeuvre to the Weissites—it was a whole approach to the building of the party. They saw the party being built through a process of ever broader fusions with petty-bourgeois radical forces on an ever more amorphous political programme. They developed a deeply liquidationist approach towards regroupment. More and more they began to espouse the formulations and outlook of the Cochranites—their enemies of only a few short years back. At the same time that the Cochranites outside the party were dissolving, the Weissites were to evolve inside the party into essentially a Cochranite formation.

As long as regroupment was the main orientation of the party as a whole the Weiss and Dobbs forces in the party worked reasonably well together with only occasional subterranean conflicts. Weiss also put forward no line independent of the majority line. In fact, as far as regroupment was con-

⁶⁰ Cowley, Joyce. 'Resolutions', 'Regroupment Policy', *Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Socialist Workers Party, January 1959), pp. 22 ff.

cerned, he was the main formulator of the party line.⁶¹

At the 1959 party convention the SWP was to make a decisive turn away from this work in the Stalinist milieu. The impetus for the turn came from Cannon. Throughout the 1957 and 1958 period Cannon had been a firm defender of regroupment. He not only defended some of its excesses—he committed some himself. But by 1959 it became clear to Cannon that the Stalinist milieu was moving away from the party and for the party to chase after the Stalinists could lead to liquidationism. So he suddenly discovered that some comrades were mistaking regroupment for 'political togetherness'. On the eve of the 1959 Convention he sent a letter to Farrell Dobbs proposing that the political resolution already drafted for the Convention by Dobbs be redrafted to eliminate regroupment.⁶² Dobbs hurried to Los Angeles for consultation and out went regroupment. No real assessment was ever made of the party's failings in this period. The party simply turned to other work.

But regroupment was not over for Murry Weiss. On October 7, 1959, several months after the convention, Weiss issued to the National Committee a 'Memorandum on Policy Towards the Rubinstein Group' which in effect urged a continuation of the regroupment approach towards the very small remnants of petty-bourgeois 'Progressives' still willing to talk to the SWP. This was unceremoniously rejected. As late as April 26, 1961, Weiss once again urged a regroupment approach—this time towards the CP itself in the local New York elections—claiming that the Cuban Revolution was opening them up for this kind of proposal. This was also rejected. By this time Weiss liquidationism began to spread to the international question, and we will take it up in more detail later.

(3) Back to Pablo

As we have noted earlier, splits which do not lead to an understanding of the methodological causes of the split, cannot be permanent. No matter how much one may wish to turn one's back on the split and get on with other business, the split keeps hitting at you until you are forced to face up to it again one way or another. So it was with the Pabloite split. This split had been brought about by a precipitous reaction to Pablo's factional manoeuvres in various national sections—especially the SWP. Only a rudimentary opposition of orthodoxy was thrown up to counter Pablo's revisionism. No one had come anywhere near to an investigation of the underlying methodological

causes of the split.

Thus it was understandable that no sooner had this 'definitive' split taken place than unity negotiations got under way. In 1954 the International Committee, in a move hoping to win over the LSSP, initiated a unity move with a parity proposal. There was no response from the Pabloites. The whole matter was dropped at the time, in part at the urging of the SWP.⁶³ Then in 1957 the SWP itself proposed that unity with the Pabloites take place on the basis of parity between the International Committee and the International Secretariat. This time also the International Secretariat rejected the overture.⁶⁴

In neither 1954 nor in 1957 were the unity proposals seen as initiating a political discussion. Rather this stage was dispensed with and the negotiations dealt strictly with organisational proposals. More important, the SWP, which was the only party in a real position to do so, did not carry on a theoretical and political struggle after its brief flurry in early 1954. It simply dumped the new International Committee in the laps of the British and French and proceeded once again to devote its energies to its beloved American scene. It hoped that this time the International would just leave it alone. It got its wish for a while—but not for long. Neither the French nor the British had the strength at the time to give much leadership to the International Committee, so without the SWP's active role the International Committee fell into relative quiescence from 1954 until 1961.

The period from 1957 to 1961 in the SWP was to be a period of political preparation for organisational fusion with the Pabloites. We have seen how the SWP began to develop a revisionist outlook very close to that of the Pabloites in the period of 1957-59. After the 1959 convention the party was supposed to turn once again to the party's traditional major arena of work—the working class. But the SWP was unable to make such a turn—the SWP of 1959 was organically incapable of making such a turn. It was a tired party, a party which had long since withdrawn from the working class. Such a formation could not simply re-enter that from which it had slowly withdrawn

61. See: Murry Weiss. 'Regroupment and United Socialist Political Action (Majority Report to Plenum)', *Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Socialist Workers Party, January 1959). p. 1 ff.

62. 'Letter to Farrell Dobbs', June 11, 1959.

63. See: 'A Reply to Comrade Peng from the Socialist Labour League', *International Bulletin No. 5* (International Committee, London, 1961), pp. 4, 5.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

over the past decade. The SWP cadres could keep an organisation going, raise finances for the national office, modestly circulate the press, hold forums in the local areas and carry on other routine organisational and propagandistic activities. It could keep an organisation *as an organisation* but by 1959 it no longer had an organisation which could be used as *a revolutionary instrument*. To turn the party towards effective intervention in the class would have required a complete shake-up of the party from top to bottom. Such a shake-up would have meant the loss of much of the tired cadre. This no one in the leadership for a moment considered.

The organisational turn away from regroupment work did not signify a sharp break from the kind of revisionist political formulations which were being evolved in the 1957-1959 period. In fact two months *after* the 1959 convention the *Militant* ran an editorial on the then current international manoeuvres between the U.S. and USSR entitled 'A Welcome Thaw'. The opening sentence of the editorial referred to this current 'thaw' as '... a victory for the forces of peace over the warmongers' in the true non-class, pacifist spirit of the *National Guardian*.⁶⁵ In the Autumn, 1960, *International Socialist Review*, dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of Trotsky's death, Murry Weiss wrote an article called 'Trotskyism Today'. This article expressed a completely Pabloite outlook in which Trotskyism was seen flowering all over the place in the triumph of the Yugoslavs, the triumph of Mao, etc. However, the development of Trotskyism as a movement in its own right was completely ignored. Weiss stated: 'Trotskyists have never claimed a franchise on revolutionary theory and practice. On the contrary, all of our work is directed towards convincing the working class and its parties to take the revolutionary road.'⁶⁶ The Trotskyist movement is clearly seen as outside 'the working class and its parties' seeking to convince others to do what Weiss feels it is incapable of doing itself.

Thus the 1959-1960 period was essentially a period of busy work and a propagandistic election campaign. The party turned away from the Stalinist milieu only because the Stalinist milieu turned away from it. But it turned in no other direction. It just waited for something to happen. Only in the youth movement did anything really happen. There the youth organisation experienced a period of relatively peaceful growth and development, concentrating its work among the students where new radical trends were emerging.

By the middle of 1960 something new did

happen which finally gave the party something to do—the development of the Cuban Revolution. As American imperialism pushed the Cuban Revolution to the left the SWP began to pay more and more attention to Cuba. Finally the SWP declared that Cuba had become a workers' state, and the Cuban leadership was seen as offering the way out for the Trotskyist movement. Objective pressures had forced Castro to the left. Now if only the little SWP could connect up with the Cuban leadership, much as Pablo a decade earlier sought to connect up with the Stalinists, it could become once again part of the revolutionary process. Cuba was seen as a substitute, a short-cut for the long, hard struggle to build a party in the United States—a struggle which the tired old SWP cadres could make only a half-hearted effort to carry out.

The pro-Cuba forces in the United States (the Fair Play for Cuba Committee) were to become the new regroupment arena and the major area for party work. These pro-Cuban forces were essentially the same petty-bourgeois radicals the SWP had sought to reach during regroupment. Once again the *Militant* took on the coloration of the Castroites and devoted much of its space to publishing Castro's speeches. This chameleon-like ability of the *Militant* to absorb the coloration of others was an indication of its own lack of indigenous colour—that the SWP had no conscious direction in and for itself.

As time passed the pro-Cuban forces began to drift away and those remaining grew increasingly hostile to the SWP and Cuba worked closer with the USSR. Finally the Fair Play group formally dissolved itself in the wake of the Kennedy assassination. But long before this it had lost its steam. Out of all this effort the SWP did not gain more than a handful of recruits.

However, this new adaptation to Castro reinforced the old adaptation to the 'progressives' and helped to prepare the SWP for a return internationally to Pablo's camp. Modest moves were made in this direction in late 1960 as the SWP leadership took note of the concurrence of agreement on important political questions such as the Cuban Revolution. The whole question, however, was brought to a head by the January 1961 letter of the SLL to the SWP stating that:

It is time to draw to a close the period in which Pabloite revisionism was regarded as a trend within

65. *Militant* (New York, August 10, 1959).

66. Weiss, Murry. 'Trotskyism Today', *International Socialist Review* (New York, Fall, 1960), p. 110.

Trotskyism. Unless this is done we cannot prepare for the revolutionary struggle now beginning. We want the SWP to go forward with us in this spirit.⁶⁷

The ability of the SLL to take the political initiative inside the ranks of the International Committee was a tribute to its development since the days of the original split with Pablo. The period since 1953 brought about not only a quantitative development of the British Trotskyist movement but also a qualitative development. Despite the surface changes in the line of the Pabloites it insisted that the Pabloites had not changed in their method. It took this stand in 1957 with Sinclair's letter to Germain and again in an editorial in *Labour Review* in August of 1959. But it was not until 1961 that the SLL had developed to the point where it could struggle for this view despite the resistance of the SWP.

There is another aspect to the SLL's views as they unfolded in the Spring of 1961. The SLL, almost from the beginning, sought to turn the international discussion around the question of methodology. In this way the SLL began to raise the level of the discussion with the Pabloites beyond the level of the 1953 split—to go beyond orthodoxy. In this sense the SLL sought to raise the level of the international movement to the point Trotsky himself sought to bring it during his intervention in the 1940 struggle. In the 21 years since that struggle the Fourth International had slipped further and further back from the point Trotsky had developed it to in 1940. In 1961 the vast majority of Trotskyists were far below the theoretical level of the 1940 struggle. This is the fundamental meaning of the reaction on the part of the SWP and many others to the SLL's efforts.

Starting a little cautiously in early 1961, the SWP began a political process which was soon to bring it back into the Pabloite camp. Relations became tense between the SWP and the SLL. The SLL's constant insistence on discussion rather than organisational manoeuvres was too much for the SWP. To the SWP leaders this meant the SLL was becoming its enemy. They feared discussion would destroy the internal regime of the SWP—would break the party up into its constituent parts, would lead to the wholesale flight of those in the party who were already *dead* politically. The SWP, and Cannon above all, sought to preserve the unity of the 'cadre' first even if it meant breaking with its closest international collaborators for a decade and abandoning principled politics altogether. By so acting the SWP showed how *superficial* its internationalism had been for the whole previous

decade. Just as quickly as Pablo had been transformed from friend to enemy in 1953 when Cannon felt his cadre threatened, so in 1961 with the SLL and the French. The real factional fever of the SWP leadership and Jim Cannon in particular can be seen in Cannon's 'Letters to the Party Center' published on the very eve of the 1961 Convention.⁶⁸ These letters expressed a feeling of deep factional hostility towards those international sections which were the SWP's closest collaborators only six months earlier.

Politically the 1961 SWP discussion revealed that the party's leadership had gone over completely to the very views it had struggled against in 1953. For instance, at the January 1961 Plenum, Comrade Morris Stein was to state the following about Stalinism, which was 'counter-revolutionary through and through' in 1953: '... The Soviet Union is compelled today, instead of playing a counter-revolutionary role—to place itself on the side of revolution.'⁶⁹ Most significant is the fact that this statement was made by Stein, one of the most solid elements in the old Dobbs section of the party's cadre—the man who held together the party during the war when the 18 were in jail; the man chosen to report for Germain's position on Eastern Europe in February 1950; the man who played an important role in formulating the orthodox answer to Pablo in 1953; the man who was Dobbs' spokesman in the showdown with Weiss. Stein's degeneration was a sign of how deeply revisionist thinking had sunk into the most solid, orthodox sections of the party's leading cadre and rank and file.

The SWP's international resolution passed at the 1961 convention represented a retreat to Pabloite positions on all major international questions. It stands in stark contrast to the position the SWP had drawn up in late 1953 in the resolution 'Against Pabloite Revisionism'. For instance the 1961 resolution claimed that the victory of the Chinese Revolution 'definitively altered the world relation of forces in favour of socialism'.⁷⁰ However, the 1953 resolution denied that such a qualitative alteration in the world relationship of

67. 'Letter of January 2, 1961 from the NC of the Socialist Labour League to the NC of the Socialist Workers Party, February 1961), p. 21.

68. Cannon, James P. 'Letters to the Party Center', *Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 17 (Socialist Workers Party, New York, June 1961).

69. *Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Socialist Workers Party, February 1961), p. 21.

70. 'The Struggle for World Socialism', *International Socialist Review* (New York, Summer, 1961), p. 90.

class forces had taken place and this denial was central to its critique of the Pabloites. It declared:

Up to date the counter-revolutionary intervention of the bureaucracy itself in world politics has forestalled the objective conditions for such a consummation. It caused the revolution to recede in Western Europe, weakened the working class in relation to the class enemy, and facilitated the mobilisation of the world counter-revolution. The struggle between the forces of revolution and counter-revolution is still inconclusive, and far from being settled. This very inconclusiveness, which it strives to maintain, at the present works to the advantage of the Kremlin.⁷¹

This was a central difference, for the Pabloite position has always been that, since the objective weight of world events is on the side of revolution, the subjective factor, the building of the party, tends to matter less. Almost any centrist formation can be thrust forward by the objectively revolutionary conditions and bring the working class to power. This was the conclusion the SWP also had drawn from the Cuban experience.

The SWP's organisational proposals for unity with the Pabloites were obviously predicated on a political movement in the direction of the Pabloite outlook. In this sense they were of the same character as the Goldman-Morrow proposals for unity with the Shachtmanites. The SLL's insistence on a political discussion prior to unification was similar to the position the SWP took in 1946. However, as we have noted, the SLL went beyond the SWP of 1946 in probing the causes for the split.

The Pabloites themselves clearly admitted that the reunification moves of the SWP were based on the SWP's reversal of political position and not on any real change in the political outlook of the Pabloites. They state in their own resolution on reunification:

The political basis for the 1953-54 split, as we saw it, was a lack of full understanding of the correctness of the International's turn in the estimate of the world situation, made in 1950-51. . . . Starting from the 20th Congress of the CPSU, some organisations affiliated with the International Committee or in sympathy with its political views as in the case of the SWP, corrected their evaluation of the world situation and of the evolution within the Soviet Union, and arrived at an estimation of events very close to that of the Fourth International. From that time on, reunification became not only desirable but also possible.⁷²

The SWP quite naturally rejected every proposal of the SLL to discuss prior to unification and to discuss the origins of the split in 1953. Neither the SWP

of 1961 nor the Shachtmanites of 1946 could afford to look back at their history and grapple with the causes of the original split. Any group incapable of studying its own history and of explaining its own evolution, has broken totally with the method of Marxism. All groups make mistakes—those groups which are incapable of learning from mistakes or even acknowledging that they took place are making the biggest mistake of all, an irreparable mistake.

After 1961 the evolution of the SWP back to Pablo was only a matter of time. Its decision to break from the International Committee and announce its political solidarity with the Pabloite International Secretariat came as no surprise to anyone. It had been prepared politically ever since the regroupment period. In fact it had been prepared earlier than that, in 1953, by the inability of the SWP to carry forward the struggle against Pabloism from the level of orthodoxy to a defence of the Marxist method and the application of that method to new events in the world. This failure in turn was prepared by the failure of the SWP after 1940 to really learn the lessons of the 1940 struggle and to definitively break with the method of empiricism.

The SWP's return to the Pabloite camp in no sense meant a revival of an international outlook on the part of the SWP. It was motivated solely by domestic needs, the need for protection against the political attack of the SLL, for protection of the cadre from politics. It was based on an understanding that once again the SWP would offer the international a little material assistance and support if only the international would leave the SWP alone. The international this time was in no position to do anything but leave the SWP alone. A decade of Pabloism had decimated its ranks.

The move of the SWP back into the camp of Pabloism did not protect the party from disintegration. Rather it created conditions which were to hasten the disintegrative process and to hinder any attempt to progressively resolve the party's problems. The evolution of the Weiss group is particularly instructive in this respect. Murry Weiss emerged as the most extreme advocate of reunification of the Fourth International, seeing this as but a small step in a much broader 'revolutionary regroupment' with Castro, Mao, etc. In fact, he

71. 'Against Pabloite Revisionism', *op. cit.*, p. 100.

72. 'Declaration of Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement' passed by the 23rd Plenum of the IEC, June 23, 24, 1962.

announced on the Political Committee in 1961 that the SWP's international resolution did not go far enough in its liquidationism: 'Murry said that this draft as it stands is inadequate and therefore erroneous on a couple of points. Although it made a flying start, it stopped on the subject of what he would term revolutionary regroupment in the revolutionary world process.'⁷³

Weiss's closest political collaborators saw workers' states popping up all over the place. Bert Deck emerged with a 'special position' on Cuba, seeing it transformed into a workers' state some six months earlier than the rest of the majority because of the presence of an armed militia.⁷⁴ Frances James, another Weiss supporter, supported the Deck line and further suggested that Guinea also was fast becoming a workers' state.⁷⁵ Weiss's youth supporters suddenly saw thousands of young people radicalised by Cuba with whom we could fuse if only we would get out of our own way.

In the 1961-1963 period the Weiss supporters deepened their liquidationist methods though they conducted no open struggle for their views. One by one the leading figures of the Weiss formation in the SWP left the party. Bert Deck with his 'special position', Nora Roberts and James Lambrecht with their feverish images of thousands of revolutionary youth, more recently Frances James with her workers' state in Guinea. Murry Weiss himself left the party in spirit if not formally. He simply pulled out of all party work and informed anyone who bothered to ask that he now had come to the conclusion that the Cochranites in 1953 had been basically right and that the SWP would play no special role in the great regroupment that was to come. Some of the Weiss supporters remained in the party to fight the 'Dobbs regime' and to urge that the party intervene in petty-bourgeois movements rather than the working class.

The 1961-1963 period was the period of the serious growth of an openly Maoist group in the SWP. The Swabeck tendency had evolved to a point where they repudiated the whole history of the Trotskyist movement in China and sided with Mao from 1927 on. They, of course, completely abandoned the political revolution in China and didn't even seem much interested in reform. They became an almost crystal-pure Stalinist formation within the SWP with support of perhaps as much as 15 per cent of the party.

A minority opposition in support of the SLL position also rose up in the party. This opposition's main base was among the younger comrades relatively new to the movement. Significantly the few older Dobbs cadres who joined this opposition

on the same general grounds that they had fought Cochran and Pablo soon deserted it and the party. They were too tired to do more than register a protest before they retired from active political struggle.

The Dobbs section of the party has always prided itself on its proletarian composition and its concrete orientation towards the American working class. Whatever theoretical weaknesses it had, it felt its concrete working-class work helped to compensate for these weaknesses. In this period the Dobbs section of the party emerged as the central element in the resistance to a turn by the party towards work in the mass movement. Its approach to the developing Negro struggle and the beginning of restiveness in the class as a whole has been one of abstentionism.

At the 1963 Convention Dobbs took the lead in rejecting minority proposals to turn the party towards the working class and the Negro movement. As a cover for their very real abstentionism in the class the SWP majority leadership as a whole projected a deeply adaptationist line toward the petty-bourgeois leadership of the black nationalist section of the Negro movement. The chameleon-like *Militant* took on the coloration of the Black Muslims and Malcolm X's speeches replaced those of Castro. But concrete work in the Negro movement on the basis of a class line was rejected.

The one great virtue of the Dobbs group it no longer possessed. The evolution of the Dobbs forces in the SWP shows concretely that a perspective of struggle in the mass movement cannot be maintained for long without a theoretical understanding. In 1961-63 the Dobbs forces completely capitulated to the Pabloites on every theoretical issue and at the same time turned their backs on the concrete struggle of the working people in the United States. The Dobbs group, like the Cochran group, always was a more aristocratic section of the working class and never did reach the young workers and Negroes. Now this aristocratic section had receded into the party itself, thus isolating itself further from the class.

The role of Cannon in this whole process must be mentioned. In 1953 it was Cannon who threw himself into the struggle against a liquidationist trend in the organisation. Later, though reluc-

73. Minutes of Political Committee, No. 12, May 10, 1961 (Socialist Workers Party), p. 4.

74. *Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Socialist Workers Party, February 1961), pp. 4-6. P. 1.

75. James, Frances. 'The Question of Criteria and the Cuban Revolution', *Discussion Bulletin* (Socialist Workers Party, May 1961), pp. 4-6.

tantly, he tackled the Pabloite revisionists. Today Cannon's role was very, very different. Right through this whole period Cannon, above all, pursued a policy of compromise with the liquidationist Weiss section of the party—the current Cochranites. As late as the 1963 Convention Cannon intervened strongly in defence of the Weiss group. Thus the Cannon of 1961-63 played the role of the Dobbs of 1952-53. Cannon played the same role on the international arena. This great 'protector of the historically constituted cadres' did not blink an eye in writing off the entire British and French sections early in 1961 and throwing his weight on the side of the Pabloite destroyers

and liquidators of the cadres.

Cannon's political role was of the same character. In December 1962 it was Cannon who jumped to the defence of the Kremlin in the Cuban Missiles Crisis and criticised the *Militant* for being a bit too critical of Khrushchev. After all, what else could Khrushchev do in the interests of 'world peace'? He actually commended the positions of Bertrand Russell and Nehru on the question.⁷⁶ In this respect he did not differ from Dobbs, who a year later was to send his condolences to Mrs. Kennedy after the Kennedy assassination and to lecture the American workers on the importance of 'orderly processes'.

E. FORTY YEARS OF AMERICAN MARXISM

In the late 1950s Jim Cannon was to devote a good deal of his time to compiling his recollections of his past history as a participant in the American radical movement since the days of Debs and the IWW. Summarising his whole history as an American revolutionist Cannon had this to say:

My decision to support Trotsky and the Left Opposition in 1928, and to break with all the factions in the Communist Party over that issue, was not a sudden 'conversion' on my part; and neither was my earlier decision in 1917 to support the Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks and to leave the IWW behind.

Each time I remained what I had started out to be in my youth—a revolutionist against capitalism. The Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks in the first instance, and the heroic struggle of the Left Opposition in the second, taught me some things I hadn't known before and hadn't been able to figure out for myself. They made me a better and more effective fighter for my own cause. But they did not basically change me into something I hadn't been before. They did not 'convert' me to the revolution; I was a revolutionist to start with.⁷⁷

Precisely because neither the Communist International nor Trotsky and the Fourth International changed Cannon 'into something I hadn't been before', Jim Cannon, the American revolutionist personified, was by 1963 no longer a 'revolutionist against capitalism'. This was not a matter of the evolution of an individual—Cannon's evolution was the evolution of a whole trend of American Marxism, the *only* Marxist trend to emerge from the American Communist Party.

American radicalism did not really survive World War I. The elementary syndicalism of the IWW was totally inadequate in the United States which emerged from World War I. The United

States was not only a part of the world; it emerged in the pre-eminent position in the ranks of world imperialism. An American radical trend which could not even try to cope with this new world situation could not survive in the United States. So following the war the IWW disappeared from the scene as an effective radical force.

Populism failed to survive the war as a serious national movement. The petty-bourgeoisie of the countryside and small towns—the real base of populist strength—were by the 1920s a relatively minor factor in American society. The new outbursts of populism during the thirties were restricted to such backwater areas as the Dakotas. The real questions facing the United States were not to be solved on the wheat farms of the Dakotas.

The Socialist Party never recovered its pre-war strength. This cannot be blamed simply on the split of the left wing and the formation of the CP, for the CP took only a small fraction of the English-speaking membership of the SP. The predominantly English-speaking American-through-and-through Socialist Party of the 1920s was reduced to only a minor role in American radical politics while the 'Russian' CP remained the major factor in American radicalism until the post-World War II period.

In order for any kind of socialist working-class movement to survive in the United States it was forced to go to the Russians for a programme—for a programme which would enable it to deal with the United States, which was now playing a central

76. 'Letter from J. Cannon to New York, October 1962', *International Information Bulletin* (Socialist Workers Party, July 1963).

77. Cannon, James P. 'First Ten Years . . .', *op. cit.*, p. 28.

role in the whole world situation. Thus the very growth of the Communist Party itself showed the deep need for American workers to go beyond their own narrow provincial experience and their own narrow empirical method. The basic programme of the early American Communist Party was not 'made in America', nor was it the product of the American empirical method. It had been developed on an international scale through the use of the dialectical method. The early American Communist Party sought to empirically apply a programme that was developed dialectically.

Jim Cannon in particular personified this process. His mind was compartmentalised. One part of his mind held a programme developed elsewhere by a method which remained a mystery to Cannon, the dialectical method. In another part of his mind Cannon had his impressions of the United States, his famous 'feel' for American workers in their revolutionary potential. This 'feel' was arrived at empirically and thus vulnerable to change depending on changing conditions in the United States.

The Jim Cannon of the 1930s approached politics in the same way as the Jim Cannon of the 1920s. The American Trotskyists had a programme deeply relevant to world-wide developments of capitalism, the degeneration of the workers' state, and the deep ramifications of these related processes for the American scene. But this programme also was not made in America by the American method. It was developed by Trotsky, the the continuator of the Marxist traditions of the Russian Revolution. It was produced by the dialectical method, a method deeply alien to American empiricism. Cannon carried with him from the CP his neatly compartmentalised mind, deftly filed the new programme in the place where the old programme had been, and devoted himself once again to his 'feel' of the American scene and to building an organisation.

The net result was a deep crisis in the movement which almost destroyed it. Trotsky was forced to come to the rescue, for only someone who understood the Marxist method was capable of combating the revisionist threat of Burnham-Shachtman-Abern. During his last days Trotsky sought to bring about a further development of the Cannon section of the movement. He warned them of the deep danger of adapting to their situation in the American trade union movement unless they began to function as Bolsheviks first and American syndicalists second.

With Trotsky dead, Cannon was suddenly left with a void in that compartment of his mind reserved for programme. He filled it as best he

could with the programme Trotsky had produced in the past period and turned his attention once again to the American scene. This time his 'feel' for the American workers weakened—he saw largely their conservative surface appearance rather than their deeper revolutionary potential. Left to his own resources and with an American working class of which he was somewhat sceptical, he retreated into the refuge of broad socialist propaganda rather than asserting his rightful position as the leading spokesman of the international movement which represented the working class as it would become rather than simply as it was at the moment.

Past positions, only empirically understood, are not enough to fill the programme section of even a compartmentalised mind. A new programme, developed this time with an empirical method, was furnished to Cannon by his international collaborators. There is no doubt Cannon did not feel overly comfortable with this new programme. He could empirically feel it was different from the old one. But into his mind it went, for without a development on his part theoretically he could put nothing else there to cope with new international developments. More and more Cannon had difficulties keeping the compartments of his mind separated. Comrades in the party with greater concern for theoretical consistency began insisting that the new programme actually be applied to the American scene.

Faced with the very liquidation of the movement he had devoted such effort to constructing, Cannon broke empirically with the new programme, countering it only with the old orthodoxy. But this did not work. Events kept banging and banging away at Cannon and his supporters. Finally, the new revisionist programme began creeping back into the cosy compartment, this time to settle down to stay. By this time the other compartment was not faring so well either. Despite all the rhetoric about the American Revolution, the Cannon of the late '50s and early '60s began to see the American working class like the Cannon of 1941, but now multiplied many times over. This Cannon began to look elsewhere for a revolutionary force. First it was adaptationist, get-rich-quick schemes with petty-bourgeois Stalinists. Then it was Cuba—Castro's empiricism seemed heaven-sent to the empirical SWP. Someone with their method had come to power. Never mind that the Castro formation was not a working-class formation. Never mind its lack of theory—this was seen in fact as its appeal. So what if the workers had no say in anything and Trotskyists were suppressed,

Castro had power and he got it empirically—that was enough.

Cannon's whole history is the story of American Marxists facing a new situation which made it impossible for them to simply maintain a revolutionary perspective on American soil. They were forced to turn elsewhere for their programme. But they took over this programme without understanding the method which produced it and sought to survive by simply applying it to the American scene empirically—with a method hostile to the method which produced the programme. Trotsky's role and Trotsky's intervention made it possible for the SWP to survive as long as it did. All other tendencies had long since broken from the revolutionary road. But in the end the SWP turned on Trotskyism itself and repudiated a revolutionary

perspective in the United States.

The American Marxists of the future must begin their work with an understanding of the history of this 40-year struggle for Marxism in the United States. The main lesson of this history is the need for American Marxists, no matter how few in number, to begin their qualitative theoretical development through an understanding of the Marxist method. Only such a qualitative development will prepare them to reach the new generation of working-class militants now clearly coming on the scene in the United States. Any formation which continues to neglect this task will simply be by-passed by revolutionary developments in the United States, regardless of size or the amount of 'busy work' they do.

Gratitude

Some Americans are burning
 Vietcong humans with bombs of petrol jelly.
 I haven't felt that. But the pictures show
 The burned flesh raised above the other flesh
 In shapes and weals
 That signify the flesh is sensitive.
 If the flesh was sensitive
 These people must have felt pain.
 How much pain, and what
 Does it feel like to be burned?
 And is the pain made worse
 If the burned know that some
 Were intent to inflict pain?
 To suffer for
 To be compassionate
 On account of
 To have the burned flesh in
 One's mind is not

Having that flesh's pain.
 The witness is pained
 The pain is different.
 Because it is different
 There isn't the sharing, that particular
 Part of agony when the flesh
 Feels it would prefer to die.
 I am still eating
 Beans with a black oval eye
 On them, the centre of that eye
 Blind and dry. And bread
 And an onion.
 My tongue isn't burned short,
 My hands are not
 My back isn't.
 And I am glad my body
 Is not burned. To have one's flesh
 Whole is a human privilege.

Jon Silkin.

Imprisonment of ABRAM FISCHER



THE International Committee of the Fourth International condemns as an attack on the workers of South Africa and the whole world, the vicious sentence of life imprisonment pronounced on May 9, 1966, against Abram Fischer, 59-year-old Johannesburg lawyer and member of the Communist Party.

This sentence is part of the ceaseless repression of the Verwoerd government, which oppresses the South African workers on behalf of big capital both native and international.

The Suppression of Communism Act, under which Fischer was convicted, is a tyrannical measure, part of a whole programme of political dictatorship to enslave the workers and peasants.

Verwoerd's government, like Ian Smith's in Rhodesia, and the Portuguese imperialists in Angola and Mozambique, is the hired thug of the international monopolists and finance capitalists in Europe, America and South Africa.

The struggle against Verwoerd's imperialist dictatorship is likewise a struggle against all those who stand behind him.

Fischer will be freed, and the people of South Africa with him, only on the basis of an international struggle of the force which can challenge monopoly capitalism, the international proletariat.

Fischer's 'crimes' were entirely political. The capitalist government decreed that certain political affiliations, such as membership of the Communist Party, themselves made a person liable to life imprisonment.

Fischer could not renounce his politics. Since he was not permitted to carry his political actions out legally, he was compelled to conceal his identity and equip himself with forged documents.

Such actions are the elementary duty of any socialist struggling against the repressive regime. To convict Fischer on these grounds is not the 'preservation of law and order' on behalf of the people, as Verwoerd's government claims, but the brutal and direct suppression of elementary personal liberties.

Fischer and the South African Communist Party conceived of the struggle in their country as one directed towards a national democratic revolution.

The Fourth International has always considered that the national democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution, in the epoch of imperialism, can be carried on only with the methods of the proletarian revolution, by the leadership of the working class and its own Marxist Party.

Only when this course is taken will the struggle be successful. Further, the struggle requires a strategy of united campaigns by workers in the metropolitan countries, in this case particularly

Britain, against the bankers of the imperialist regime.

We know, however, that such leadership and such campaigns must be built in and through the struggle against police repressions like those of Fischer.

The methods of working-class revolution must be used for this defence also.

The International Committee calls upon the workers of South Africa to stand firm in their resistance to the imperialist government, to strengthen their organisation in every area, to rouse the maximum support against the sentence on Fischer, to continue the preparation of armed resistance to the regime, alongside the workers and peasants of Rhodesia and the rest of Southern Africa.

It is the independent organisation and politics of the proletariat which will drive out the imperialists.

Particularly in Britain the campaign must be waged. Behind the smokescreen of a Labour government, thousands of millions of pounds are invested in South Africa by British capitalists protected by Verwoerd and providing the basic support for the Smith regime.

The struggle against these imperialists in Britain is impeded above all by their lackeys in the Labour government.

When we call upon the Wilson government to intervene against the vicious sentence on Fischer, we do it as part of a campaign to expose the social democrats as servants of imperialism, and to build the independent leadership to lead the working class to the smashing of the imperialists at their centre.

It is through this struggle that we fight most effectively on behalf of Fischer and all those detained in the South African police state.

All sections of the Fourth International, and revolutionary workers everywhere, must expose by every means the sentence on Fischer and what lies behind it.

Public campaigns and demonstrations to South African legations, all as part of building the anti-imperialist revolution in every country; this is our answer to the Verwoerd regime.

The armed struggle of the African workers, supported by the international proletariat, will bring the freedom of Fischer and the destruction of Verwoerd and his like.

Every publicity, every pressure, every action, by the workers' movement and its allies all over the world, for the release of Abram Fischer.

International Committee, London, May 5, 1966

Declaration of the International Committee of the Fourth International on the imprisonment of Polish Trotskyists and other members of the Polish Communist Party, and of Hungarian militants who participated in the revolution of 1956.

THE class struggle is international. The working class in struggle against the imperialists is joined by the workers of Russia, Eastern Europe and China, who must fight the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy inside their own countries in order to defend the gains of their past revolutionary struggles, and to play their part in the building of a new international working-class leadership.

The recent repressions in Eastern Europe and the USSR are part of the response of the Stalinist bureaucracy to strike terror into the proletariat of these countries, and, above all, to prevent the formation of a revolutionary leadership.

Of great significance are the recent imprisonments of Polish communists, and of workers and militants in Hungary who had participated in the Revolution of 1956.

A number of those arrested in Poland had worked as communists in the Trotskyist movement both in Western Europe and in Poland itself. Their political work in fighting for the defence of the nationalized property foundations of the Polish state, but at the same time criticising and opposing the Stalinist bureaucracy, expresses the highest aims and interests of the Polish working class, and demonstrates the internationalist character of the programme and leadership which is required for the fulfilment of those interests.

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 is equally an inevitable target for the bureaucracy, for it symbolised and inaugurated the political revolution of the working class against the Stalinist regime for the whole of Eastern Europe, the USSR and China. Through their workers' councils, the proletarian fighters of Budapest and the whole of Hungary initiated the struggle for the overthrow of the Stalinist police dictatorship, for the building of a socialist economy under the political rule of the working class itself.

Inside the USSR, the sentences on Daniel and Sinyavsky, like all manifestations of opposition and criticism among the intelligentsia and students, reflect and at the same time impel forward the struggle of the workers themselves. When the Stalinist bureaucracy unleashes the new wave of repression against all opposition inside the countries under its control, it carries out functions complementary to its service to the imperialists on an international scale, wherever the struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry threatens the stability of imperialist rule.

In Vietnam, and in consequence throughout Asia, imperialism is able to stem the tide of revolutionary war only through the collaboration of the Kremlin bureaucracy, which is willing to threaten the foundations of the Chinese workers' state, and which gives its services to strengthen the ruling classes of India and Pakistan against the mounting social and political unrest.

Inside the advanced capitalist countries, the Stalinist parties are to the fore in breaking the resistance of the proletariat to the integration of their trade unions into the bourgeois state; there is no

road to the defeat of this integration except by the defeat of the Stalinists.

In all these cases, and in the USSR and Eastern Europe too, it is the very existence of the proletariat as a class which is at stake. The bureaucracy, basing itself on the experience of the Moscow Trials and of the suppression of the uprisings in Eastern Europe in 1953-56, strives above all in the very first place to politically behead the working class, to deprive it of independent and conscious existence.

IN THE PRESENT stage of the class struggle, the international nature of this struggle is ever more clearly marked.

When the Stalinist bureaucracy attempts today to prevent the formation of a working-class leadership, it does so, and must do so, at an international level. The bureaucrats themselves understand that they would never have been able to suppress the movement of 1953-56 as they did if there had existed an effective international proletarian leadership, able to mobilise solidarity actions in the capitalist world and in the USSR, and able to provide the Hungarian and Polish revolutionaries with a Marxist, internationalist programme.

Knowing that critical struggles are on the way, the Stalinists strive to protect themselves through their repressions against every possibility of the growth of a revolutionary leadership.

In these future struggles, whose magnitude will far outweigh those of 1956, the existence of a Marxist leadership, part of the Fourth International, showing the workers the programme of the united revolutionary interests of the workers of Western Europe and America against imperialism, and those of Eastern Europe and the USSR against the bureaucracy, would make impossible the suppressions of 1956, achieved only on the basis of those Stalinist betrayals which had divided the workers of Eastern and Western Europe.

The Stalinist bureaucracy was able through the 1935-38 repressions to exterminate physically almost all the vital forces of the proletarian vanguard. In contrast with that period of international working-class defeats, the present situation produces a constant striving by a militant working class for a new, revolutionary leadership, despite the betrayals of the Stalinists and social-democrats. At every turn the militant workers are thrown into conflict with the bureaucrats as well as with the capitalists.

In the past it was possible for the bureaucracy, usurping the revolutionary prestige of October, to successfully hold back the revolutionary movement with a wall of lies, slanders and eventually assassinations. It is part of the severe crisis of Stalinism today, however, that the bureaucracy can no longer carry out such acts with the same 'justification'. Their right to do so is no longer acknowledged by the advanced workers, including many inside the Communist Parties themselves. Some other way must be

found to initiate a campaign of slanders to once again prepare the way for political assassinations.

Fidel Castro has taken on the mantle of Stalin for this purpose, being uniquely qualified for such a role. Castro, the 'respected and great revolutionary', replaces Stalin the 'old Bolshevik'. To Castro falls the task of repeating the lying phrases of Stalin about 'Trotskyite agents of imperialism'—all with the purpose of justifying imprisonment and liquidation of proletarian revolutionaries.

'Castro-ism' has reached a dead end. It was never any more than the extreme left of petty-bourgeois 'socialism'. Finding itself bankrupt, like all petty-bourgeois formations in the imperialist world, it capitulates for the time being to the Kremlin bureaucracy, serving its urgent need to attack the Fourth International.

On every front—against China, and above all against all those elements in Latin America who are rejecting the Stalinists' line of collaboration and subordination to the bourgeoisie and seeking the path of proletarian revolution—Castro serves his Kremlin paymasters.

When Castro attacks the Fourth International in the same terms used by Stalin, he takes his place in a single campaign of calumnies and repressions by the bureaucrats and petty bourgeois everywhere, whether it be in Latin America or Eastern Europe.

The contradiction between the interests of the class in struggle and the bureaucrats and petty-bourgeois who dominate the mass movement is an international phenomenon. The different forms taken in different countries by this contradiction must be understood as parts of a single process, forcing the bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeois leaderships to fight to prevent at all costs the crystallisation in these struggles of the advanced forces of the proletariat around the programme and organisation of the Fourth International.

THE STRUGGLE WAGED by Leon Trotsky against the Moscow Trials, against the exterminations and slanders carried out by Stalin and the bureaucracy, was an indispensable contribution to the whole life and development of the workers' movement. Without this fight, not only the political and theoretical continuity of the movement but even the human resources of the vanguard stood in danger of liquidation.

Only because this fight was waged as a necessary part of the building of the foundations of the Fourth International could the programme of Bolshevism and the banner of proletarian revolution be carried forward for future generations of working-class fighters. There is no continuity of the movement purely in the abstract. This continuity is carried through by real, living men and their experience in fighting for the programme and for their own existence against every attack of the class enemy and its agents.

In the last two decades, there developed within the Fourth International itself revisionist tendencies which attempted to destroy this essential continuity in struggle. In the years 1953-56 these Pabloite revisionists betrayed the struggles of the revolutionary workers of Eastern Europe. They abandoned the revolutionary programme of building Trotskyist parties in every country, instead trying to liquidate the organisation of Trotskyists on the grounds that social democrats, Stalinists and petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders

would, under present conditions, carry out the historic tasks of the proletariat. Today they are found utterly incapable of anything but sorrowful dirges and pleas to the bureaucratic and petty-bourgeois enemies of the working class, having for years hailed these enemies—Castro, the 'liberal' Stalinist bureaucrats—as 'progressive'.

Unable to analyse in their class meaning the new wave of repressions and slanders, the revisionists are reduced to weeping and moaning, having in effect helped prepare the way for the repressions themselves.

Only the Trotskyists of the International Committee can carry out the necessary task of political and physical defence of the vanguard forces of the proletariat in the countries ruled by the Stalinist bureaucracy and in the capitalist countries.

In taking upon its shoulders the task of fighting for the continuity of the programme and organisation of the Fourth International, the International Committee and its sections have the inescapable duty of combatting every manifestation of the new wave of repressions and slanders perpetrated by the Stalinists against the most advanced elements of the working class.

This is an international duty in every respect, a task which can be carried out only on the basis of the record and traditions of the Fourth International. In this period our main task of rebuilding the Fourth International will be successfully carried out only in and through the acceptance of responsibility for the defence of all those who fall victim to the Stalinist repressions.

When we fight on the programme of the Fourth International this means nothing more nor less than an unceasing campaign against the bureaucracy, to resist and turn back every attempt made by them to break the revolutionary vanguard. In this way, by taking up all our responsibilities of struggle on every front against the class enemy and its bureaucratic agents, we carry out in practice the fight for the programme and reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The International Committee fights always for its independent political line: when it takes up the defence of the victims of Stalinist repression it does so without making it a condition that these victims fight on the same programme as the International Committee, nor does it take responsibility for every political stand taken on every question by these victims.

Our programme, to organise the revolutionary vanguard for the leadership of the proletariat in the struggle for power, for the political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy as an indispensable part of this international struggle, is clear. To this end we defend all those whom the bureaucracy persecute as part of their campaign to politically behead the proletariat.

In the same way the International Committee accepts enthusiastically its responsibility to defend the conquests and organisations of the working class against every attack of the imperialists, and consequently defends every member of the working-class movement who falls victim to the imperialist attack on these conquests and organisations.

However, the best defence, and in our epoch the only effective defence of these conquests and of the workers and militants who come under attack, is the

rebuilding of the Fourth International as the leadership of the international struggle of the working class. The duty of revolutionaries, of communists, is always to represent the long-term, revolutionary interests of the proletariat as a whole in every partial and immediate struggle.

It is in the conduct of every phase of the international class struggle within the strategy of the struggle for power that the fight against the Stalinists' repressions and slanders achieves its full force.

The sections of the International Committee will fight to demand the immediate release of Modzelewski, Smiech, Badowski, Haas, Kuron and others imprisoned in Poland, and of the revolutionaries of 1956 arrested in Hungary, as part of their fight to win the leadership of the working class in each country and defeat the

opportunists and Stalinists.

They will mobilise on the broadest possible front a campaign to publicise the arbitrary and repressive character of the arrests, carried out with no other justification than that the accused published their criticisms of the regime, which is the elementary duty of any Communist.

A determined and militant struggle can secure the release of those imprisoned and a defeat for their persecutors. The International Committee will work together with all those who will genuinely fight for the defence of these political prisoners in Hungary and Poland against the Stalinists. We are convinced that every blow struck in this campaign will be an indispensable contribution to the strengthening of the revolutionary vanguard in the USSR and Eastern Europe as in every country in the world.

May 28, 1966, International Committee.



Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists demonstrate outside the Polish Embassy against the arrests in Poland.

The City Within

'The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.'—Karl Marx.

Cars glitter past like beads of will.
When light has stripped the sky of stars
and minds more intricate than locks
close out the continents of need and war
and time is tangible as clocks
such consummations as The Stones' guitars
conceal the massacre by stocks.

Remembering is painfully human:—
'Personally, I think that these war scares provide ideal buying opportunities—providing all the usual investment factors are right.'—*Evening Standard* financial advice.

There is a leashed anger in the faces around me.
Civilisation.
Is it some need of order that sends me to the library with notes about *The Labyrinth in Edwin Muir?*

What is this habit I've picked up?
Perhaps I could be calm and scholarly and nice like those who praise the taste of Keats' plums, the decorous vitality of Yeats' swans. 'Literature,' they say.

But here, today, Blake's angels puke upon the acid leaves of Baudelaire and rip his rented girls.

Mere feelings swirl
like oil in the gutter
where streaking clouds
glow brighter than Brazilian butterflies—
until they darken
and turn filthy grey.

O, I've sweat the feelings and I know the books, the buildings of the Lie where scholars raise symbolic spooks—
(the States, the gods, the Dukes)
persuading men to die,

or dream, of scorn, or cry,
to keep the balding owners in their gold peruques.

II

'Let them vote until they pop off.'—General Schleicher, Germany 1932.

Above the din a van loudhails a noisy name;
Metallic echoes hook the ears of fame.
We're told to be responsible, to win,
By dropping secret papers in a tin:
(We near that day of choice. And promises
Of mortgages evoke suburban bliss.)
The Governors will tipple with financiers
To prove the £'s much better than appears,
While Secretaries, ruling without noise,
Run our Democracy with charm and poise.

The anger from the lie
is warmed by curls of air from Boots
smelling of cheap soaps and medicines.
Among the trinkets, 'The Wild Elephants'
offers jungle to the dispossessed
like Hemingway.

III

'We are after the cheapest way to prevent something terrible—the loss of our ability to get what we want from the riches of the Indo-Chinese territory.'—Eisenhower 1953.

A Ford jerks at the crossing. The sweet bottles ring.
Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola.

A warehouse of magenta brick
with slitted gaps for light
explains the mask of profit
which sells sweetness that comes out of pain
like peaches from South Africa.

Vietnam is thirsting for Democracy.
The victims' tears are brine
that feeds the thirst
that sickens in the merchant's gut.

IV

A flowerbed beside the bank is not enough.
 My eyes feel cold as glass, as,
 stiff inside its trap of air
 I see a London Plane
 stretched out
 upon a bomber's trail.
 I feel like a lover
 who has felt a kiss
 contract to skin.
 Hair, elaborate as diplomatic communiques,
 or flat as declarations of fresh war.
 Skirts this year
 are high enough
 to watch the thighs erupt
 towards desire
 where love is broken
 like an ornament.
 The girls click by.

V

Two children, hand in hand,
 are crossing the avenue
 like fish
 shadowed in a wreck.
 And I am sorry for the meek
 in whose rooms despair gathers
 like used handkerchiefs—
 even those who wave at royalty
 and those who are scared at the edge of
 the sea
 without knowing why:
 the prisoners of power
 and the prisoners of themselves.

'All a poet can do today is warn. That is why true

poets must be truthful.'—Wilfred Owen.

'Poland's existence is intolerable, incompatible with
 the essential conditions of Germany's life. Poland
 must go and will go.—Von Seeckt 1922.

My eyes sting
 as I remember him
 whose agonies were close as skin
 of comrades killed and torn upon the wire.
 My eyes sting
 as I remember him
 whose agonies were close as skin
 of comrades killed and torn upon the wire.
 The poetry is in the pity.
 His poems were ignored in Germany—
 Von Seeckt was not impressed.
 The Bachsteins played another tune.
 The Nazis heard another voice.
 Tragedy became, again, as cheap as guns,
 and the high rhetoric of armoured trucks
 range from the walls of Brittany to Stalingrad.
 The Krupp who built the armaments
 with slaves
 were, afterwards,
 too rich to keep in jail.
 It seems too late when pity starts.
 Or pity is not strong enough.
 I cannot reach out my hand and bless.
 I am not a god.
 There is work to do.

'Previous poets have attempted to describe the
 world; our task is to create it. So, we can change
 ourselves.'—Adapted from Wallace Stevens and
 Karl Marx.

Terry Brindley, Bristol, 19-3-66.

The New Course By Leon Trotsky

A collection of articles written in 1923 during the lull before the great storm of persecution which was later to overwhelm Russian Bolshevism. Here Trotsky, analyses the incipient stages of the degeneration of the Communist Party, uncovers its causes and proposes measures for combating its further decline. He here analyses the party in a historical, that is dialectical way, the relationships between generations, social strata, groups, factional formations, tradition and the multitude of factors that go to make a revolutionary party. 111 pages, 3/6

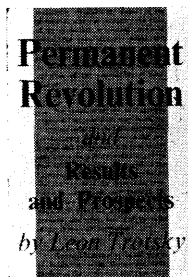


This document is a landmark in the development of 20th century Marxism. It sums up the experience of an entire period of struggle against the Soviet bureaucracy. This Platform also represents the highest point in the fortunes of the Joint Opposition (Trotskyist-Zinovievite) to Stalin. It is the programme of the last of the Bolshevik-Leninists who insisted that they remained communists despite all the persecution, jailings, violence and slander inflicted on them. But this document also represents a watershed—the end of one phase and the beginning of another—in the evolution of Trotskyist politics. 112 pages, 5/-

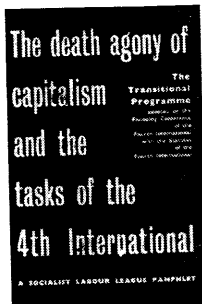
The Draft Programme of the Communist International by Leon Trotsky

This is part of the author's criticism of the draft programme submitted by the Executive Committee of the Third (Communist) International to the 6th Congress of the Comintern which was held in July 1928. The manuscript of that criticism was written by Trotsky during his exile in Alma-Ata (Central Asia). It was sent to the Congress in Moscow together with an appeal for reinstatement into the party from which he had been expelled a few months before by the Stalinist faction in 1927. Stalin and his supporters had invented the theory of 'Socialism in one country', which was made party policy in 1925 and converted into an article of faith to be defended by the world institutions of Stalinism. It is this theory which Trotsky criticises in these pages. 64 pages, 1/-

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