

ITALY

U.S.



*The class struggle grows sharper
New crisis for revisionists*



Fourth International

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Fourth International

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Cover: top left, mass workers demonstration in Turin, September 1969; top right, Moratorium Day, New York, October 16, 1969; bottom, Rally of 10,000 youth organized by supporters of the International Committee of the Fourth International, Le Bourget, February 1, 1970.

EDITORIAL

THIS SPECIAL issue of Fourth International consists largely of documents published in the discussion around the recent world conference of the self-styled 'Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International'.

The Unified Secretariat is based on a rejection of the essential Trotskyist programme and Marxist method, originating in the revisionist ideas of Michel Pablo, Secretary of the Fourth International in the period immediately before 1953.

In that year, the Socialist Workers' Party (USA) supported by the British Trotskyists now in the Socialist Labour League, the French Trotskyists whose 'Organisation Communiste Internationaliste' was banned by the French Government in 1968, and several others in Europe and America, broke decisively from Pablo and his supporters, Germain and Frank.

The 'Open Letter' of James P. Cannon of the SWP (December 1953) denounced Pabloism as the negation of Trotskyism.

Those parties opposed to Pablo formed the International Committee of the Fourth International, with Pablo's followers retaining the title 'International Secretariat'. By 1963, the SWP, together with small groups in Canada, Switzerland and Chile, returned to the fold of Pablo's Secretariat. Thus was formed the 'Unified Secretariat', though it was almost perfectly coincident in time with considerable splits in the Pablo ranks: Juan Posadas led a walk-out of several Latin American sections, and soon Pablo himself was to lead a faction out of the newly formed 'Unified Secretariat'. When we use the term 'Pabloite' it is to characterise this whole international tendency and not simply Pablo's own line.

Six years since 1963 permit a valuable test of the opposed perspectives of the day, and that is the purpose of publishing this lengthy selection of documents. In 1963 the International Committee (IC) refused to consider any proposal to unite without a preliminary discussion on all the problems be-

fore the movement. The SWP—although of course forbidden by US law any international political affiliation, supported the 'reunification'.

The principal argument used by them was that the Cuban Revolution was a socialist revolution, that the defence and extension of it was the primary task, that it proved socialist revolutions could be achieved without the creation of independent revolutionary parties, since leadership could emerge unconsciously from middle-class nationalist tendencies like Castro's July 26 Movement.

According to Joseph Hansen of the SWP and those who supported him, this agreement on Cuba, which involved compromise with all the revisionist theories of the 'Third World', and the abandonment of the revolutionary role of the working class, marked the latest stage in a process by which the Pabloite and the Trotskyist positions had come closer together on all vital questions.

When the International Committee insisted on a full discussion, the SWP and the International Secretariat said in so many words that they would deliberately exclude discussion of the 1953 split, and encourage unity on the 'concrete questions' of the day. This whole method of effecting a unification, of course, was an abandonment of Marxism.

It was precisely this *method* which united the various groups. What the SWP lacked was any analysis of the profound methodological revisions behind Pablo's theses of 1952-1953. Cannon and the SWP did not carry further their characterisation of Pabloism, with its bureaucratic excesses and its capitulation to Stalinism, and because of this they were unable to profit from the 1953 split experience to put their own house in order.

That was exactly what was required. Trotsky had warned the SWP in the course of his battle against Burnham, Shachtman and the petty-bourgeois opposition in 1940 that the fight for dialectical materialism against the pragmatism of American bourgeois ideology was a life-and-death

matter for the party and for the future of the American working class. The very impressionism and naive reliance on 'experience' which characterised pragmatism had won out in the SWP by 1963. When the International Committee and the Socialist Labour League took up the theoretical struggle with the SWP and Pabloism in 1961, it was precisely to these methodological questions that the whole discussion was forced to turn, as the documents show.

Now, in 1969, the conference of the Unified Secretariat and the surrounding discussion show a sorry state. Everything said by the IC about the politics of the unification is proved to the hilt out of the very mouths of the 'unifiers'.

On almost every question, from Castro and Cuba, through China and the nature of Stalinism, to the revolutionary strategy for Europe and the US, there is wide disagreement. 'Suddenly' Hansen and the SWP find they have been giving 'fraternal services' to tendencies like that of Livio Maitan in Italy, who openly wants to liquidate every semblance of Trotskyism. It does not appear to strike Hansen that the essence of the SWP's policy in the US is identical.

After a lengthy report on the Conference (see below), Joseph Hansen expresses the opinion that perhaps a really thorough discussion on the international plane is in order. He does *not* explain to his listeners why the SWP *opposed* such a discussion in 1963. And yet every subject now up for discussion—the 'guerrilla warfare' strategy of Maitan and others, the role of leadership in the Cuban and Latin American revolutions, the nature of Stalinism and the struggle against it, the role of the Algerian nationalist FLN and the so-called Trotskyists who supported it—was among those which the International Committee insisted be discussed in 1961-1963.

1968-1969 has proved a fateful year for the 'Unified Secretariat'. Castro had already given a clear warning of his politics vis-a-vis Trotskyism at the Tricontinental conference in Havana in 1966.

But now he went further: he refused solidarity to the French workers, was silent on the repression in Mexico, and endorsed the Warsaw Pact suppression of political revolution in Czechoslovakia. But much more basic: the working class of the advanced capitalist countries, beginning with France in May-June 1968, burst like a bombshell into the crises of imperialism and Stalinism, shattering all the revisionist theories of the third world 'epicentre' of revolution and of non-Trotskyist revolutionary leadership.

It is these great events which have forced a considerable minority of the Unified Secretariat (on most questions about one-third), and particularly the SWP, to question the possibility of adhering to the old programme. This explains the series of critical documents here published from the Unified Secretariat and SWP discussion bulletins.

But the SWP leadership is capable only of an empirical response to these events and their formal discrepancy with previous programmatic statements. It cannot draw the necessary conclusions about its own mistaken empiricist and pragmatist method, which led it to accept these wrong policies. The real lesson of 1968 and 1969 is that principles and history cannot be cheated. 1963 decided to leave aside 1953, but by 1969, 1953 is hacking away with great vigour!

Formal criticism of the positions now taken up by Maitan, Germain, Frank and others, even though expressed in the strongest terms (e.g. Peng calls for a 'return to the road of Trotskyism' and states that the Fourth International, i.e. the Unified Secretariat, must share the responsibility for the betrayal of the Algerian Revolution) will not answer these historical questions. Indeed it conceals them.

The lessons for the Trotskyist movement of this experience are invaluable. In a number of countries the resources and cadres of the sections of the International Committee have undergone considerable growth. In Britain the SLL is now publishing a daily paper, the *Workers' Press*, which marks a qualitative step forward after the years of isolation of Trotskyism since Trotsky's death in 1940. But at the centre of all this is the development of Marxist theory. The Socialist Labour League based its struggle in Britain on the fight for Marxism against revisionism in the Fourth International. To check the political evolution of our opponents after six years is therefore invaluable.

The documents here published comprise:

1. 'The Future of the Fourth International', report presented to the 1963 Conference of the International Committee (reprinted from *Fourth International* Vol. I, No. 1). This summarises the political differences with the 'Unified Secretariat' at the time of 're-unification'.
2. Report (1969) of Joseph Hansen to the New York local of the SWP giving his political impressions of the recently concluded world conference of the Pabloites.

3. Joseph Hansen's view of the majority line of the Unified Secretariat on Latin America and the strategy of guerrilla warfare.

In this document Joseph Hansen takes up at considerable length the view of Maitan and the Secretariat majority, who subordinate the whole struggle in Latin America and internationally to guerrilla warfare. Hansen does not deal with Maitan's outright liquidationism and abandonment of the revolutionary role of the working class in a Marxist way. He ignores the question of a proletarian party with a programme to unite the toilers in the countryside, instead turning essentially to the students in the urban centres. But it is the historical pay-off for the SWP's own revisions which is instructive. Hansen may criticise Maitan's capitulation to Castroism today (and may ridicule Maitan's conclusion that the whole international struggle is posed on the actions of guerrilla activity in Bolivia!) but in 1963, in the SWP resolution upon which it based advocacy of reunification ('For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement'), Hansen himself said:

Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasants and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial or semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the Second World War. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.

and further:

... We believe the Trotskyists of Cuba should seek to enter and take their place in the soon to be formed unified revolutionary party where they can work loyally, patiently and confidently for the implementation of the fully revolutionary socialist programme which they represent. In addition to mobilizing support for the Cuban cause, as they are doing, the Trotskyists throughout Latin America should try to bring together all those forces, regardless of their specific origins, which are ready to take the Cuban experience as the point of departure for the revolutionary struggle in their own countries.

Given the fact that Peng Shu-tse collaborated 100 per cent with the SWP in 1963 in effecting 'reunification' his harsh words for the majority today have a hollow ring. Thus he now says:

'The comrades have consciously or unconsciously

discarded the Transitional Programme and have replaced it with the strategy of guerrilla warfare',

and further, on Castro:

Castroism has made no theoretical contribution to Marxism. Castro's programme is merely one of action based upon his own experiences in the Cuban revolution, i.e. guerrilla warfare. It is clear that Castro does not understand some of the basic tenets of Marxism or some of the most important lessons and experiences of the world working class movement, such as the Bolshevik Revolution, the struggle between Trotsky and Stalin, etc.

This lack of understanding is expressed practically in Castro's politics by the lack of any democratic-centralist party in Cuba itself, by the lack of any democratic government in Cuba based upon the workers' and peasants' soviets, by the support of a guerrilla war strategy in Latin America, etc.

4. Documents of the Pabloite Conference and of Conference discussion on the question of Latin America.

5. Letter from a leader of the Chilean section (May 1969) in which the guerrilla warfare line of Maitan is endorsed against Hansen. This Chilean leader supported Hansen's proposal for reunification in 1963, primarily with the argument that to oppose Castroism was 'sectarian'.

6. Documents of the Pabloite Conference discussion on China. Important here is that the China discussion raises revisions of the whole characterization of Stalinism in Trotskyist theory. In point of fact, the main resolution before the Conference, which received unanimous support, consistently uses the term 'Stalinism' to refer only to the past of the Stalinist movement, and only in a reference to France uses it for current parties and policies. Now in the discussion on China Hansen is forced to draw attention to the fact that Pierre Frank and the 'majority' are proceeding to erase the whole decisive period of Trotsky's work for the Fourth International.

They do this by using the formulation 'bureaucratic centrism' to characterise Stalinism.

This was Trotsky's expression for the Stalinist bureaucratic line in the USSR and the Comintern in the period before the 1933 German defeat. It refers to a period when the perspective remained one of a struggle for reform within the Communist International and the Soviet state.

After that, Trotsky characterised Stalinism as the principal *counter-revolutionary* force on the world arena; from this followed the strategy of *political* revolution, not reform, in the USSR; and

the formation of a new International, not reform of the old, on the world scale.

What the 'Unified Secretariat' discussion reveals is that the majority tendency is fully committed to the rejection of the theoretical and political grounds for the very existence of the Fourth International, and that this was the basis of their capitulation first to Stalinism and then to Castro. Hansen and the SWP have gone all along the line with this revisionism. Even their hesitation at the magnitude of the revisionism at this late stage is conditioned entirely by pragmatic requirements.

Hansen wants some way of explaining and justifying his opposition to the Progressive Labour (PL) and other Maoist groups. It is this, and not a theoretical analysis and revaluation of the whole experience, which brings him into opposition to Frank. Just as in 1953 and 1963, Hansen's starting-point is the pragmatic requirements of SWP policies, which are in fact opportunist in the extreme. This means that if principles are repeated and history is called in, it is purely to justify this opportunist course.

7. Draft Resolution for the Pabloite World Conference (1969) entitled 'The Algerian Revolution from 1962 to 1969' together with an amendment proposed by Charlier and Germain. This resolution constitutes additional documentation of the catastrophic results of Pablo's revisionism, leading to liquidationism. After bitterly opposing the International Committee's insistence on the construction of independent revolutionary working-class leadership, and encouraging the idea that Ben Bella would be an African Castro (i.e., in their opinion would go over from petty-bourgeois nationalism to Marxism), the revisionists *now*, after the Boumédienne coup d'état, the incarceration

of Ben Bella and the purging of all socialists, including Pablo himself, from state offices, conclude:

In this context the fundamental strategic task remains the organization of a revolutionary Marxist vanguard and the subsequent (?) formation of a party of the urban and rural workers which would struggle for the overthrow of the Boumédienne regime and the establishment of a government of the worker and peasant masses.

The collection of documents in this issue of Fourth International will enable everyone to contrast the theoretical and principled preparation of the International Committee with the shameful revisions and betrayal of the Unified Secretariat.

The International Committee considers that the study of these documents will prove a valuable education for the young cadres of the Fourth International. 'Without revolutionary theory, no revolutionary party': the essential preparation for the great class struggles now enveloping Europe was a theoretical preparation; not just a defence of existing doctrine, but the development of theory in struggle against its enemies, the revisionists, and the building of independent revolutionary parties. If the young workers now coming to the Trotskyist movement are to understand their own movement, that necessitates a thorough study of the history of struggle for the theory upon which the Fourth International is based.

In the interests of accuracy, we have not attempted to impose a consistent editorial style on the Pabloite documents, reproduced herein, which, but for necessary deletions, are presented in their original form. (Editors.)

Two pamphlets by Leon Trotsky

Class & Art

Problems of Culture under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

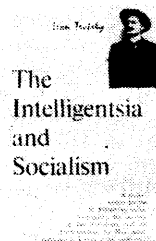
Speech by Trotsky during discussion, May 9, 1924, at a meeting called by the Press Department of the Central Committee of the RCP(B) on Party Policy in the Field of Imaginative Literature.

Price: Two shillings

The Intelligentsia and Socialism

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

Price: One shilling



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The future of the Fourth International

This article consists of the Report on the International Situation made to the International Conference of Trotskyists held in London in September 1963, and attended by national sections affiliated to the International Committee of the Fourth International

THE TASK OF THIS Conference is to mobilise the forces of the International Committee of the Fourth International for the great class struggles which lie immediately before us. Our unity is based on the fight for the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International, founded by Trotsky 25 years ago. This fight has drawn us together to struggle against those revisionists who take the name 'Trotskyism' but have abandoned its programme. We must analyse the way in which this revisionism, expressed particularly by the Socialist Workers' Party of the United States of America and the 'Pablo' group, has developed, how it reflects the pressure upon the revolutionary vanguard of the forces of imperialism. Such an analysis is part of our struggle against the bourgeoisie, a necessary step in understanding the development of imperialism itself. The revisionists have retained the phrases and formulae of 'Trotskyism', duly to adapt them to the service of non-working-class forces: in particular, to the national bourgeoisie in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and to the Stalinist and Social-Democratic bureaucracies in the workers' states and the advanced capitalist countries.

The aim of Marxist theory is to reflect accurately the reality of the class struggle as a guide to leading the working class. This can only be done through participation in the class struggle itself, armed with Marxist theory. In the modern epoch of wars and revolutions, there is no road to this scientific understanding except in the revolutionary struggle to build Leninist parties. Struggling to find a road to the working class, the party has to fight its way through the resistance of agents of the class enemy, leaderships which dominate the working class and its organizations. These leaders, Social-Democrats and Stalinists alike, have betrayed the working class into the hands of monopoly capitalism. The development and the problems of these leaderships

reflect the crisis of their social basis: the military, political and economic crisis of monopoly capitalism and the parallel crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy. A revolutionary party based on the objective class struggles produced by these contradictions can be constructed to defeat the bureaucracy. This was the meaning of the Transitional Programme and of the First Four Congresses of the Communist International: the crisis of humanity was concentrated above all in the crisis of leadership of the working class. Many say they agree with that formulation, but in the real struggle they capitulate to the bureaucracy, so that their repetition of the Transitional Programme as a slogan loses any content, and becomes a deception. The struggle against this deception, against the revisionists, is a vitally necessary part of the rebuilding of the Fourth International. In the course of such a struggle we begin to probe the full extent of their departure from Marxism. This reflects and demonstrates to us the magnitude of the crisis confronting the working class, and it is only in such a struggle that we rediscover and begin to enrich the Marxist method. That method is not something that can be learned by heart by any intelligent Communist, then 'applied' to each and every situation. It is something which has to be fought for in the real struggle to build Marxist parties.

Revolutionary Leadership and Marxist Method

The fight against revisionism in the Trotskyist movement, particularly in the Socialist Workers' Party, has revealed a basic difference in *method*. The Socialist Workers' Party leaders have abandoned Marxism for empiricism, they have abandoned that method which starts *from the point of view of changing the world*, as against interpreting or contemplating it. The far greater part of the

work in the struggle against this revisionism remains still to be done on our part. It is not enough to be able to demonstrate the descent into empiricism by the revisionists—our problem is to build around this fight against revisionism, sections of the Fourth International able to lead the advance guard of the working class. Looking at the world from the point of view of changing it, means, today, starting from the point of view of the construction of disciplined revolutionary parties able to intervene in the struggles of the working class, able to build the Fourth International out of their interventions. These parties are proletarian parties, whose work and methods correspond to the general interests of the working class. In the advanced countries, such parties are only built in implacable opposition to the petty-bourgeois circles who have dominated 'official' left politics during the comparative prosperity since 1945. Inside our movement this means a constant fight to build a cadre consciously opposed to the way of life of the centrist propaganda circles who provide a left cover for the bureaucracy. This is the direct *opposite* of the Pabloite theory and practice of support for the bureaucracy, which takes the form of supporting supposedly 'left' trends inside the Stalinist bureaucracy, believing even that they will be forced to take the power in the capitalist countries or to carry out the political revolution in the workers' states. Alternatively it leads to 'deep entry' in the Social-Democracy, justified by the hoped-for emergence of mass 'left centrist' parties.

In the backward countries, fighting to resolve the crisis of leadership means fighting for the construction of *proletarian* parties, with the aim of proletarian dictatorship. It is especially necessary to stress the proletarian character of the leadership in countries with a large petty bourgeoisie or peasantry. On this question, the revisionists take the opposite road to Lenin and Trotsky, justifying their capitulation to petty-bourgeois, nationalist leaderships by speculation about a new type of peasantry. In recent years, the Pabloites have declared that the character of the new states in Africa will be determined by the social character and decisions of the *élite* which occupies state power, rather than by the class struggle as we have understood it. More recently, Pablo and others have discovered 'the revolutionary role of the peasantry'. These are only thin disguises for capitulation to the petty-bourgeois leadership of the FLN in Algeria and of Castro in Cuba. Above all, the 'theory' that the 'epicentre of the world revolution' has shifted to the colonial and semi-

colonial countries, for all its revolutionary appearance, is used to justify this capitulation.

In relation to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the political revolution, the case is even clearer. The pronounced right turn of Khrushchev comes only a few years after Pablo's insistence that his section of the bureaucracy would lead the destruction of Stalinism. At the recent 'reunification' congress of the Pabloites, supported by the Socialist Workers' Party, Pablo's minority insisted that Khrushchev's was the 'left' tendency in Stalinism. Even though this was rejected, we must remember that as recently as April 1962, Germain, in the majority at this same Congress, spoke of the Khrushchev faction as 'the most flexible and the most intelligent wing of the bureaucracy'. What are the prospects of a revisionist tendency which thought the 'objective forces' for Socialism so strong that 'Stalinism could no longer betray', in the face of the recent understandings of Khrushchev with Kennedy and the Roman Catholic Church? Any strategy which proceeds from assumptions that sections of the Stalinist *counter-revolutionary* bureaucracy can 'move left' is a negation of Trotskyism. The construction of independent Marxist parties, the paramount need of the working class, will be absolutely opposed by the bureaucracy in the workers' states, just as it is in the capitalist countries. Not to struggle against this bureaucracy is to abandon the construction of Marxist parties. The whole theory of 'mass pressure' forcing the bureaucracy to the left is nothing more than apologetics for this abandonment of the Fourth International and its programme. Marxist parties are the conscious expression of the decisive historical role of the working class. For the revisionists, the role of the working class is reduced to that of unconscious, spontaneous 'pressure', to which the existing leaderships respond. Thus Pablo maintains that, 'although in a distorted way', Khrushchev's group in the bureaucracy represents the revolutionary strivings of the masses.

Our fight against revisionism is thus identical with the fight to build parties of the Fourth International. Without this fight the working class cannot defeat the bureaucracy. Pabloite revisionism arose specifically as an adaptation to the dominant bureaucracies in the labour movement. The failure to develop Marxist theory after Trotsky's death exposed the cadres of the Fourth International to this bourgeois pressure through the bureaucracy. We can only overcome the split which this brought about by understanding this process in all its aspects. Such an understanding

can only come from the actual struggle against revisionism in all its manifestations, theoretical, political and organizational. We shall see that the revisions are so deep that they affect the whole theory and method of Marxism.

Why an International Discussion?

The International Committee has insisted, in its relations with the Socialist Workers' Party and other forces calling themselves Trotskyists, on an all-embracing discussion. Such a discussion must include all the tendencies and must deal with all disputed questions. Only in this way can we grasp consciously the present stage of development of the class struggle and of our own movement in relation to it. Our determination to get to grips in discussion with the revisionists is not at all the result of any principle of super-democracy or of a desire for 'unity' for its own sake. On the contrary, we see revisionism as the highest reflection of all the tendencies which we have to combat in the construction of parties, in the fight for the political independence of the working class. Only the sharpest fight against revisionism, therefore, can equip us politically for the class struggle. We know that inside our own movement such a fight must be carried on internally for correct methods of work against revisionist conceptions. Pabloite revisionism was a response in the Trotskyist movement to a definite stage of development of imperialism and its relation to the world revolution, reflected through the Stalinist bureaucracy. It was not just the aberration of a few individuals, but has found a response in many countries. Consequently its influence necessarily pervades the methods of our own sections until we have fought through to the end all the problems of the split with Pablo. The Socialist Workers' Party leadership, for example, reacting empirically to the actions of Pablo in 1953, actually initiated the formal split in the International, yet within a few years find themselves 're-united' with the Pabloites. The formal rejection of some of the *consequences* of Pablo's revision of Marxist theory was not enough. Because Cannon and his group did not explore the roots of this revisionism (and this would have pinpointed the theoretical responsibility of the Socialist Workers' Party itself), the same forces which produced Pablo eventually overtook the Socialist Workers' Party.

Pablo's response to the turn of world events after 1945 was to build a theory of 'centuries of deformed workers' states'. The Fourth International's perspective of a revolutionary outcome

of the world war, with the Trotskyist parties leading those revolutions, had been proven wrong, it was argued. Instead, the Stalinist parties, backed by the material strength of the Soviet state, had proven capable of overthrowing capitalist power and establishing deformed workers' states. The strategy and tactics of the Marxists must be subordinated to this new reality.

In the first months of its reaction against Pablo in 1953, the SWP leadership rejected this perspective, condemning it as only the theoretical mask for capitulation to the Stalinist bureaucracy. Now the SWP leadership supports 'reunification' without a discussion of the political causes of the original split. In any case, it is said, the differences have narrowed to almost nothing. In a way, this is true. In the last few years, both the Pabloite and the SWP leaders have found other 'new realities' which point the way to a type of socialism replacing capitalism *without the crisis of working-class leadership having been solved*. This was the essence of the theory of 'centuries of deformed workers' states'.

Our impressionists have now imposed the same historical perspective upon the national liberation struggle in colonial and semi-colonial countries. Here, petty-bourgeois, nationalist leaderships will carry through the overthrow of capitalism; the leading role will not be played by the working class; there is no need for the construction of a Trotskyist party for workers' states to be established; Trotskyists work with a perspective of 'influencing' the leadership of these revolutions, helping them along the road to training the masses in socialist construction, etc., etc.

This, then, is the meaning of the SWP leaders' claims that the struggle in Cuba and Algeria has revealed the essential 'unity' between those who split in 1953. In essence, through the mechanism of the colonial struggle, the SWP has accepted the historical perspective of Pabloism: capitulation to petty-bourgeois leaderships in the struggle against imperialism.

Internationalism and Empiricism

The Socialist Workers' Party leaders and the Pabloites have attacked the sections of the International Committee as sectarians who substitute their own limited experience, particularly in Britain and France, for the general picture of international objective forces working for Socialism. It is then argued that these 'favourable objective circumstances on a world scale' demand formal reunification of all tendencies, putting aside the discussion

of differences. But the line of the International Committee does not at all flow from narrow or national considerations. Our type of activity, our method of party building, flows from a thoroughly international view of the class struggle. We have in the past three years begun an analysis of the bureaucratic agents of these class forces in the present stage of development of world capitalism, of the class forces which defend it, and of the mass movement.

The events of the last two years, since we tried to initiate political discussion with the Socialist Workers' Party, have decisively confirmed our insistence on the basic Trotskyist position that the Stalinist bureaucracy is *counter-revolutionary*. In the Cuban missiles crisis and Sino-Indian border dispute of October-November 1962, the political consequences of our line and the line of revisionism in the Trotskyist movement were sharply contrasted. Cannon, in the Socialist Workers' Party, hailed Khrushchev's withdrawal of missiles as a contribution to peace, and in the course of it betrayed his whole descent into empiricism with the phrase: 'What else could he (Khrushchev) have done in the given circumstances?' In France, the Pablo group distributed a leaflet in the Renault factory calling on the workers to render assistance to Cuba 'equally with the aid from the workers' states'. The fact that Cannon found his way to Khrushchev via the uncritical support of the petty-bourgeois, nationalist leadership of Castro, whereas Pablo reflected the Stalinist pressure earlier and more directly, is only a matter of the particular historical situations of the two. Pablo reacted to the apparently overwhelming strength of the Stalinists in the 'two camps' period in post-war Europe, where there were mass Communist Parties. Cannon's evolution in the United States, where Stalinism was feeble, took longer, and expressed itself through the relations of the Socialist Workers' Party leaders, along with the whole 'radical milieu' in the United States of America, to the Cuban Revolution. The face of the Socialist Workers' Party had become turned to this petty-bourgeois milieu and away from the working class. Here we see clearly that Pablo's original capitulation to Stalinism was only one variety of capitulation to the petty-bourgeois bureaucracies upon which modern imperialism depends.

In India the representatives of Pablo's 'International' supported the bourgeois government of Nehru against the deformed workers' state in China. This party issued a statement condemning the Chinese method of solving the border dispute. While the delegate of the Indian section voted

with Hansen and Germain for 'reunification of the Fourth International', hundreds of Indian Communist Party members were in Nehru's prisons for opposing the Indian Communist Party leadership's capitulation to Nehru. The latter was part of the Khrushchev bureaucracy's deal with imperialism. Khrushchev supplied aircraft to Nehru, the United States supplied other weapons. Nehru's troops are with the United Nations forces policing the Congo on behalf of United States imperialism. These decisive class questions have exposed the end-result of Pabloism: it is not a temporary weakening before a wing of the Stalinists, but a full-blown revision corresponding to the latest needs of imperialism, i.e., the development of powerful bureaucracies and state personnel able to control the masses of all countries. It is the presence of such basic class questions at the root of the division which explains the magnitude of the departure from even the most basic Marxist ideas among the revisionists.

What Cannon betrayed in a phrase about 'the given circumstances', Hansen has developed into a whole case, arguing that dialectical materialism is the same thing as 'consistent empiricism'. What a contrast with Trotsky's warning to the Socialist Workers' Party! The ideas of pragmatism and empiricism have their direct and concrete expression in the domination of opportunism in the labour movement. The revisionists' attempt to assimilate empiricism to Marxism is the natural accompaniment of the capitulation to the opportunist bureaucracies. In this way is justified the characterization of the July 26th Movement leaders in Cuba as 'natural Marxists', the Pabloite faith in the Soviet bureaucracy's capacity for transforming itself, etc. In all this it is indicated that without conscious theory men will respond to 'objective forces' and arrive at the path of Marxism. This is a clear abandonment of the Transitional Programme, with its stress on the decisive question of resolving the *subjective* problems of the world revolution.

It is in this sense that the fight for dialectics is the fight to build the world party in every country. Neither can succeed without the other. Dialectical materialism will only be understood and developed in the struggle to build the party against all enemies. The party can be built only if there is a *conscious* fight for dialectical materialism against the ideas of other classes. It is on revolutionary theory that the ability of the party to win the political independence of the working class is based. Marxism is a developing theory; it develops in the practice of revolutionary parties who 'dis-

cover' reality by acting to change it. Trotsky's warning about the fight against pragmatism was seen by the Socialist Workers' Party leadership only as a suggestion that one or two comrades should interest themselves in questions of philosophy—the consequence is before us now. An explanation of the degeneration of Pablo, Cannon and the others will be incomplete if it ignores this side of the question: the neglect of theory since Trotsky's death. It was this which halted Cannon's rejection of Pablo in 1953 at the level of a few programmatic points, preventing the necessary deeper analysis.

We have a parallel for this development in the historical relationship between Marx and Lenin. Lenin made gigantic developments of Marxist theory after a historical gap during which expositions of Marxist ideas on various subjects went alongside the deepening degeneration of the Socialist movement in the Second International. The development of Marxism is not a purely theoretical development. It was the rise of imperialism, and the urgent tasks placed before the Russian working class, which laid the basis for Lenin's contribution. But these new objective conditions did not automatically produce Leninism and the Third International, much less 'transform' the Second International into a revolutionary organisation! On the contrary, the epoch of wars and revolutions brought about by imperialism had to be analysed and grasped consciously by the Marxist method. *Without* a theoretical struggle to rework the dialectic in the context of the new situation, in conflict with all other trends, the concrete meaning of the new historical stage and of the tasks flowing from it could not have been burned into the consciousness of the Bolsheviks. When we say that Marxism is 'the conscious reflection of an unconscious process' this is what we mean. Reflection is an active, struggling, contradictory process, not a passive adaptation. Marxism is the organised, practical consciousness of the revolutionary working class, not a bible used to place blessings on the accomplished fact. Today, the Socialist Workers' Party's descent into empiricism is the result of this loss of the historical thread in the development of Marxism. Once this happens, the way is open for capitulation to other tendencies.

Crisis of the Revisionists

The 'unification' with the Pablo group, supported by the SWP, is founded not upon Marxist theory and the actual development of the move-

ment, the conscious resolution of the contradictions in that development. Instead, it is a combination of centrist trends each of whose development is determined by empirical adaptation to circumstances. For such a 'unified' organisation there can be no unified development and no growth. Within it, some groups, such as Pablo and his immediate supporters, go to the right in complete capitulation to the national bourgeoisie in Algeria; others, held back by tradition and the force of inertia, resist this turn and look for face-saving formulae. Within the Socialist Workers' Party itself a large minority adopts a position to the right of the leadership in relation to China.

It is not a historical accident that the revisionists are driven together at this moment, nor is it simply a consequence of their subjective consideration of problems of their own internal development. The driving force here is the radicalization of the working class and the open manifestation of capitalist contradictions in the advanced countries in the last few years—in the US, Britain, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain—together with the accentuation of the crisis of Stalinism as the political revolution matures for the next blow after the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Close to sections of the bureaucracy and the petty bourgeoisie instead of to the working class, in the years since the war, the revisionists proceeded from impressions of the comparative social peace in the advanced countries, as contrasted with the might of Stalinism on the one hand, and the upsurge of the national-liberation struggle in the colonies on the other. Thus they looked away from the decisive sector, the proletariat of the advanced countries, and conceived theories of left tendencies in the Stalinist bureaucracy, and of the epicentre of world revolution shifting to the colonial countries. In the advanced countries, they said, the class struggle took on a muted character, expressing itself only through the existing 'mass organisations', i.e., through the labour bureaucracy.

The revisionist forces based on this perspective are driven together now in order to resolve their own crisis, because the forces upon which they immediately depend, the bureaucratic and petty-bourgeois servants of imperialism, are in crisis, a crisis caused above all by the class struggle in Europe and the US. The mechanism of adaptation, for the revisionists, was through adaptation to bureaucracy. Since the death of Stalin the development of the political revolution in Eastern Europe and the radicalization in the advanced countries have brought crisis to the bureaucracies. Pablo's organization first based itself on the per-

spective that the French Stalinists would even take state power. East Germany and Hungary in 1953 and 1956 exposed this perspective even more than the treacherous domestic policy of the French Stalinists. Pablo then turned certain of his sections into little more than errand-boys for the national-bourgeois leadership of the Algerian FLN, turning away from the industrial working class itself in Western Europe. Now the crisis of the FLN deals a final blow and causes new crises and divisions within the Pablo camp. In the Socialist Workers' Party, we have seen a similar turn to the radical, petty-bourgeois intelligentsia and away from the working class. While Hansen and Cannon concentrated on finding 'radical' allies for the 'Fair Play for Cuba' committees and made a great noise about recognising Cuba as 'the first workers' state in the Western Hemisphere', the struggle of the working class in the US itself, particularly of the Negroes, came along and took them unawares. The same Kennedy against whom they defended Castro is called upon by the Socialist Workers' Party organ *The Militant* to arm the Negroes of the South.

Crisis and Militancy

The resolution which formed the agreed basis of 'reunification' with the Pabloites, endorsed by the SWP, must be criticised in detail, in order to understand the full extent of the revisionists' departure from Marxism, even though the document is intrinsically worthless from the point of view of a scientific view of the world revolution, its strategy and tactics, and the construction of the Fourth International.*

In the introductory section, the main thesis is stated: 'As a result of the successive failure of the two major revolutionary waves of 1919-1923 and 1943-1948—and of the minor one of 1934-1937—the main centre of world revolution shifted for a time to the colonial world. The victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, following the post-war revolutionary wave in Europe, opened an uninterrupted series of colonial revolutions'. In the following paragraph the Resolution formally accepts that the lag in the advanced countries is to be placed at the door of 'the treacherous role of the official leadership', in place of which the working class must have 'a genuine Marxist revolutionary leadership'. The essence of the

* 'The Dynamics of World Revolution', Adopted by the Reunification Congress of the Fourth International June 1963, in *Fourth International*, 17, Oct.-Dec. 1963.

question is, of course, to build such a leadership to defeat the official bureaucracy. However, the Resolution concentrates upon another aspect entirely, with the 'subjective factor' entirely ignored. Thus, 'the fact that the revolution won first in backward countries and not in the advanced is not proof that the workers in the advanced countries have shown insufficient revolutionary combativity. It is evidence of the fact that the opposition which they have to overcome in these countries is immeasurably stronger than in the colonial world'. (Our emphasis—Editors.)

In a single phrase, then, the Resolution indicates the responsibility of the traitorous leaderships for defeats in the advanced countries. Similarly, it contains a pious reference to the same problem in the backward countries: 'The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries as well as in the advanced countries'. In both cases, however, this is only a question of repeating traditional formulae while rejecting their political meaning. For the advanced countries, the 'unifiers' have in fact gone over to the most reactionary revisionist viewpoint: it is the strength of the enemy, of the ruling class, which really appears to them the stumbling-block. For example, the Resolution refers to 'a very astute and supple capitalist-class leadership which has learned to transform reforms into a powerful brake upon revolution'. Here Marxism is abandoned for impressions of the will and ability of the ruling class. The basis for reformism in these countries is a historical-economic one; the actual force which puts a 'brake' on revolution is the counter-revolutionary, bureaucratic leadership of the labour movement. What the resolution refers to as external, objective 'facts' are in fact the living force with which our movement is locked in struggle. We are based on the struggle of the working class as the contradictions of capitalism intensify; the bureaucrats rest on imperialism itself.

The Resolution continues: 'The failure of a revolutionary wave in an imperialist country gives way eventually to some form of temporary relative economic stabilisation and even to fresh expansion. This inevitably postpones new revolutionary uprisings for a time, *the combination of political setback (or even demoralisation) of the working class and a rising standard of living being unfavourable for any immediate revolutionary undertaking*'. (our emphasis—Editors). In these sentences is expressed the essence of the revision of Marxist politics by the Pabloites. Their description of an

'unfavourable combination of circumstances' leaves entirely out of account the main question, i.e., the relation between the working class and its leadership, the role of consciousness in the revolutionary struggle. Because they do not start from this decisive consideration, the 'unifiers' inevitably dissolve the concrete into the abstract. In the sentences quoted, the words 'working class' are an abstraction. For political purposes we have to see the working class with its internal divisions and contradictions, the developing relation between vanguard and mass, the changing relation to its traditional leaderships, etc. Contrast the glib 'combination' of the Resolution, for example, with Trotsky's analysis of the European working class during the ebb of the revolutionary wave in the early 1920s (*The First Five Years of the Comintern*, Vol. II, pp. 74ff).

Trotsky shows that after 1914 there was a strong working-class upsurge, but that it was unorganised and poorly-led. Out of these struggles, the most dynamic sections were drawn into the new Communist Parties. Many more temporarily withdrew from the political struggle. This division in the class, resulting from a differentiation of consciousness in response to the first wave of struggle, was the basis upon which the labour bureaucracy restored its dominant position. When the crisis of 1920 broke over Europe, its effect was a series of bitter outbursts, but this was not sufficient to provoke the unity of the class necessary for revolutionary victory. For that to happen an economic revival was necessary. Here Trotsky concludes that an economic upswing is necessary for a new step forward in the class struggle. But it is not at all a question of formally opposite conclusions; under other circumstances an economic revival could, of course, have the opposite effect. But these 'circumstances' are the strategy and tactics of the leadership in relation to the economic and political struggle of the class. Because Trotsky examines the relation between leadership and class, examines the contradictions in the revolutionary camp, he is more concrete than our 'unifiers'. At the centre of his 'combination' of factors is the strategy and tactics of the class and the leadership; the 'combination' is not a collection of impressions from which contemplatively to draw conclusions. The latter approach is well suited to the 'deep entrism' of the Pabloites in the official reformist parties in Western Europe, where everything is staked on the hope of mass centrist developments, and the construction of the revolutionary party in struggle against the bureaucracy abandoned.

Leadership in the Colonial Movement

On the other hand, the expression, 'The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries as well as in the advanced countries', is intended to put at their ease those who see that Pablo's open capitulation to Ben Bella has gone too far. But a phrase is not enough! Those who have drafted the Resolution *in fact* conduct their 'defence of the Algerian Revolution' by subordinating themselves to Ben Bella, by saying and doing *nothing* about the construction of independent revolutionary parties in Algeria and the colonial countries. Indeed, the Resolution itself provides adequate 'theoretical' justification for this capitulation. This is summed up in the conclusion: 'The weakness of the enemy in the backward countries has opened the possibility of coming to power even with a blunted instrument.' In other words, workers' power can now be achieved in these countries *without* Marxist parties. The double-edged formula is masterly—and meaningless. There is a crisis in the leadership, 'of course', in the backward countries, but there is no need for it to be resolved!

If we take the argument leading to this conclusion we find exactly the same method, the same impressionism, the same dissolving of the concrete into the abstract, the same neglect of the conscious role of the class and the leadership, as in the Resolution's analysis of the advanced countries. For example:

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, on the other hand, the very weakness of capitalism, the whole peculiar socio-economic structure produced by imperialism, the permanent misery of the great majority of the population in the absence of a radical agrarian revolution, the stagnation and even reduction of living standards while industrialization nevertheless proceeds relatively rapidly [?], create situations in which the failure of one revolutionary wave does not lead automatically to relative or even temporary social or economic stabilization. A seemingly inexhaustible succession of mass struggles continues, such as Bolivia has experienced for ten years. The weakness of the enemy offers the revolution fuller means of recovery from temporary defeats than is the case in imperialist countries.

Now, of course, it is true that the 'specific weight' of the *national* bourgeoisie in the economic and political life of a finance country is small, since it is international finance-capital which dominates the social structure. But when Trotsky wrote of this phenomenon in Czarist Russia, developing the

theory of permanent revolution, he was especially concerned to bring out, on the other hand, the increased significance of the role of the industrial proletariat, despite its small numbers. The greater concentration and militancy of this class, its birth at an already highly developed stage of the international movement, qualitatively decided its leading role in the struggle against Czarism, and determined the necessity of the transition from bourgeois to proletarian revolution. Trotsky eventually realised that only the type of party constructed by Lenin could carry out the strategy and tactics flowing from this perspective. Such a party was founded upon Marxist theory and was quite specifically *proletarian* in character. This proletarian character of the leadership does not stand in contradiction to the overwhelming preponderance of the peasantry in the population. In point of fact, where the working class is so outnumbered and even has close ties on many sides with the peasantry, there is need for special vigilance to assure that the Party is based on proletarian methods and Marxist theory.

The revisionists draw the opposite conclusion. A 'blunted instrument' will be sufficient, because of the weakness of the enemy. Defeats and lost opportunities are not so serious, because in any case the number of mass struggles is 'seemingly inexhaustible'. This abstracted impression is substituted for any analysis of the experience of the proletariat, and of the revolutionary vanguard, in Bolivia, Algeria, Ceylon, South Africa. Of course, it appears as a 'hard fact' that 'mass struggles' continuously recur, but the actual course of these struggles and the experience of the classes in struggle is completely neglected. This is parallel to the actual politics of the revisionists, with their uncritical praise of Castro-ism, peasant guerrilla uprisings, and so on. Similarly with the phrase, 'the weakness of the enemy offers *the revolution* fuller means of recovery from temporary defeats than is the case in imperialist countries.' (our emphasis—Editors). Here the words 'the revolution' are an abstraction with no meaning, an abstraction at far too general a level for any political, *class* orientation. Like the phrase 'colonial revolution', it is however at a level of abstraction which is perfectly adapted to acceptance of the existing leadership of the national liberation struggles. Any more exact abstraction, based on the class content of the struggle and the contradictions within the fight for political independence, would be precisely against the interests of the petty-bourgeois leadership, who also prefer non-class formulations—the Algerian revolution,

the Arab revolution, Arab Socialism, etc., etc.

The Resolution proceeds to discuss the various 'sectors'—colonial revolution, political revolution in the workers' states, revolution in the advanced countries—considering each one with the same method we have outlined. As 'Marxists', of course, our 'unifiers' must insist that the struggles in these three spheres form a 'dialectical unity'—'each force influences the other'. By this is meant something quite different from the actual struggle of the class forces on a world scale. The Resolution refers, for example, to the interrelation of the USSR and the absence of successful revolutions in advanced countries in this way: 'This same delay [in the advanced countries] also retards the maturing of the political revolution in the USSR, especially inasmuch as it does not place before the Soviet workers *a convincing example* of an alternative way to build Socialism' (our emphasis—Editors).

Now, of course, the propaganda effect in the USSR of such a revolution would be enormous. But to lay the major emphasis upon this 'example', or lack of it, in one's analysis of the interrelations of the struggles of the international proletariat, is to assume that in the class struggle the mechanism is identical with that of the Pabloites' own method—the response of individuals to impressions. What is above all important here is the single task of constructing fighting links between revolutionaries in all countries through the development of the Fourth International. Only a detailed historical treatment of the history of the sections of our own Marxist movement in relation to the experience of the working class in each country can give us the basis for such an analysis. Where events occur which pose *real* problems of the interrelated, international character of all revolutionary struggles, the Resolution is silent. In the Cuban crisis of October-November 1962 the fate of the present government and of the working class in Cuba was clearly posed as an *international* problem. Only a correct orientation towards Stalinism as a counter-revolutionary force, and towards the organization of revolutionary struggles led by Marxist parties against the rulers of the imperialist countries, could guide those who wished to defend Cuba against US imperialism. It was not just a question of the weakness of the national bourgeoisie, undoubtedly true for Cuba, but of the *impossibility* of fighting for the socialist revolution in Cuba outside of a struggle against the counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy, the specific stage of whose relations to imperialism must be grasped. What is more, Khrushchev's latest ap-

proaches to the US ruling class and to the Roman Catholic Church are a defensive reaction of the Soviet bureaucracy to the mounting struggle of the working class in both Western and Eastern Europe and the USSR. Instead of this kind of class analysis of the 'interrelation' of the struggles in different parts of the world we actually found the revisionists welcoming Khrushchev's 'actions for peace'. Once again the connection between revisionist theory and opportunist practice is crystal-clear.

What is the Colonial Revolution?

In its consideration of 'the Colonial Revolution' the Resolution expresses most clearly the politics of revisionism. This 'colonial revolution' is described in the terms used by petty bourgeois and centrists everywhere:

As a development in world history, the colonial revolution signifies above all that two billion human beings—men, women and children in areas where the tradition for centuries has been to live as passive subjects, condemned to super-oppression and super-exploitation, utter humiliation and destruction of their national traditions, even their national identity when they have not been made the target of mass slaughter and extermination—suddenly acquire a voice, a language and a personality of their own. Basically, the colonial revolution is the irrepressible tendency of these two billion human beings to become at last the masters and builders of their own destiny. The fact that this is socially possible only through a workers' state provides the objective basis for the tendency of the colonial revolution to move into the tracks of the permanent revolution.

There follows a feeble attempt to answer the criticisms which have been made in recent years of the exclusive Pabloite stress on 'objective forces' making for this 'permanent revolution'. But we are left with an absolutely worthless conclusion

. . . any ideas that this process will recur automatically or inevitably within a certain time limit [?] necessarily leads to a distorted estimate of the actual relationship of forces and replaces scientific analysis by illusions and wishful thinking. It presupposes that the objective process will solve by itself a task which can only be solved in struggle through the subjective effort of the vanguard; i.e., revolutionary socialist conquest of the leadership of the mass movement. That this is possible in the very process of the revolution and in a relatively short time, has been adequately demonstrated in the case of Cuba. That it is not inevitable, and that without it the revolution is certain to suffer serious defeats or be limited at best to inconclusive

victories is demonstrated by much in the recent history of other Latin-American countries; for instance, Bolivia, Argentina and Guatemala.

It is difficult to see how this face-saving formula can be made consistent with the earlier conclusion that 'a blunted instrument' will suffice for victory of the socialist revolution in these countries. It might be argued that it is only a question of emphasis. But this is just the point: *unless* the whole concentration of Marxists is upon the construction of independent proletarian parties, then the masses will be betrayed. For the revisionists, it is quite a different matter; the existence or non-existence of such parties before a revolutionary situation *may or may not be* decisive! It is not possible to develop revolutionary strategy and tactics from such a perspective. All that follows is a passive acceptance of the existing leadership, covered up by a semblance of 'left' activity supposedly designed to encourage the likes of Ben Bella along 'the tracks of the permanent revolution'.

Wisely, the Resolution neglects a detailed analysis of the experience of the class struggle in particular countries: 'A more precise perspective for each of the great ethno-geographic zones of the colonial revolution (Latin-America, The Arab World, Black Africa, the Indian subcontinent and South-east Asia) can only be worked out on the basis of a concrete analysis of the specific social and political forces at work and of their more exact economic conditions.' The colonial revolution, already an ideological abstraction, is now subdivided into 'ethno-geographic zones'. The significance of this division is not indicated, but its relation to historical materialism is obscure, to say the least. It conforms much more readily to the ideologies of the bourgeois-nationalist leaders.

In place of analysing the experience of the class struggle and of the revolutionary vanguard in particular countries, the Resolution enumerates 'certain general social trends which apply to all or most of the colonial or semi-colonial countries'. It is almost sufficient to quote at length from this section of the Resolution to confirm the correctness of the criticisms which the sections of the International Committee have made of the Socialist Workers' Party and the Pabloites in the last two years in relation to the struggle in the backward countries.

First, then:

(a) *The numerical and economic weakness of the national bourgeoisie.* Despite the priority granted them by history, the national bourgeoisie has proved

incapable of handling the capital made available under the rubric of 'aid to the undeveloped countries' in such a way as to achieve optimum results in industrialization. This is perhaps the biggest obstacle in the way of a 'bourgeois solution' of the problem of economic underdevelopment. Everywhere we find the same phenomena: Of available surplus capital, a major part is diverted from industrial uses to investment in land or usury, hoarding, import of luxury consumer goods, even outright flight abroad. This incapacity of the national bourgeoisie is not the result of mere reflection of its moral corruption but a normal operation of the capitalist drive for profits under the given economic and social conditions. Fear of permanent revolution is not the least of the motives involved.

We are dealing here with a tendency which capitulates to the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership. Particularly in Algeria, this leadership has maintained relationships with French imperialism. Pablo has in the past 'explained' the necessity of such agreements, leaving intact as they do large French investments in Algeria. It is a matter, in fact, of managing *better* the resources made available by the imperialists; this will achieve 'optimum results in industrialization'. This paragraph from the Resolution abandons the Marxist analysis of objective relations between world finance-capital and the exploited masses of the colonial countries, with the petty-bourgeois, nationalist leaderships playing a Bonapartist role in the 'independent' states. Such a clear political characterization of the role of the petty-bourgeois nationalists is avoided by the device of having separated off 'the colonial revolution' in each country for separate consideration, ignoring the international economic and class content of the actual social relations within the country.

The second 'general social trend' indicated is 'the creation of the infrastructure of heavy industry through the state, taking the form of nationalized property'. Referring in particular to Egypt and India, the Resolution points out that these nationalizations do not in themselves alter the *capitalist* character of the state; they are carried out under the leadership of the 'urban petty bourgeoisie, especially the intellectuals, the military and state functionaries', and are indispensable for the foundation of a *bourgeois* state. What is *not* discussed in the Resolution is the actual relation of the practical politics of the revisionists to these petty-bourgeois governments. In Algeria, the revisionists, as we have seen, in fact give support to the petty-bourgeois, nationalist government. They express similar uncritical approval of Castro

in Cuba. There was even published an article by one Sadi both in the Socialist Workers' Party *International Socialist Review* and the Pabloite *Fourth International* advocating 'entry' into Nasser's national movement, and specifically disavowing any organized independent political opposition. A class characterization of nationalization is incomplete, and *turns into its opposite*, if it does not sharply define the role of the proletariat in opposing the petty-bourgeois nationalists.

The Myth of the Revolutionary Peasantry

The remaining two 'general social trends' in the colonial revolution are of special interest, insofar as they represent crude attempts, once again, to accommodate Pablo's extreme revisionist formulations while at the same time reassuring those who are not prepared to go as far as Pablo in drawing the logical conclusions from their revisionist method. It is a question here of 'the strategic role of the colonial proletariat' and 'the radical role of peasantry'. The Resolution emphasises that factory workers are an insignificant minority in colonial countries; most important are 'the miners, plantation hands, agricultural workers and largely unemployed—typical for the colonial economy'. We have here a formula to satisfy Pablo, who recently wrote approvingly of Fanon's thesis that the colonial proletariat is, in fact, a privileged stratum. From this flowed the conclusion that the rural masses, 'the revolutionary peasantry', would form the base of the socialist revolution. Many of Pablo's followers naturally could not accept this clear contradiction of Marxist writings on the peasantry as a class with no independent political role: the peasantry rebels against oppression, but the political content of this rebellion depends on the leadership coming from the bourgeoisie *or* from the proletariat. The Resolution we are considering somehow finds a halfway formulation: 'In the form of expanding guerrilla forces, the peasantry has undoubtedly played a much more radical and decisive role in the colonial revolution than was foreseen in Marxist theory. It has revealed a social nature somewhat different from that of the traditional peasantry of the advanced capitalist countries.'

But what is this 'somewhat different social nature'? The Resolution itself finds it necessary to point out that 'the existence of a large majority of small land-owning peasants has undoubtedly served as a momentary brake on the revolutionary process in several South-East Asian countries

(Malaya, Thailand, even [?] Ceylon)'. For the rest, it is no revelation that the peasantry is not a homogeneous class specific to capitalism. In every country its composition is determined by a complex history of past economic systems and their degree of dissolution. In no case is the peasantry a homogeneous class in the same sense as the proletariat tend towards homogeneity through the laws of capitalism and the necessities of the class struggle. Like other petty-bourgeois strata, the peasantry under capitalism is constantly being differentiated by the penetration of big capital into the countryside. There is no doubt of the economic breakdown and utter impoverishment of the peasantry in colonial countries in the epoch of imperialist decay, and of the consequent mass forces of revolt who become potential allies of the proletariat against imperialism. But none of this alters the central importance of proletarian leadership. Here it is necessary constantly to re-emphasise the elementary lessons of the experience of Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, who had to fight against ideas of just this kind from Russian petty-bourgeois, radical intellectuals. This is particularly true in relation to the Resolution's final point on the peasantry: as against 'the *ingrained individualism* of the classical peasantry', the Resolution contrasts 'the *predisposition towards collectivism* among rural populations still living under conditions of total or partial tribal (communal) property. This class, in contrast to the traditional peasantry, is not *per se* opposed to the introduction of socialist property relations in the countryside. It therefore remains an ally of the proletariat throughout the whole process of permanent revolution'.

It is difficult to know where to begin in criticising such patent nonsense. Where are the rural populations still living under partial or total tribal communism? Without a doubt, all known existing societies are class societies. The subsistence cultivators of Africa, Asia and South America have long ago seen their societies fragmented by the penetration first of commercial and then of industrial and finance capital. Whether the greater part of them were still tribal-communal is very doubtful in any case. But worse follows. If such societies *did* exist, how could we explain the term used in the second sentence of our quotation: 'This class . . .?! If the people concerned are in a 'totally tribal' society, they are clearly not a class; if it is only a 'partially tribal' society, then its people are by definition differentiated, and share membership of the classes of that society into which they have been incorporated. It is thus

impossible to attach any meaning whatever to this essay in a 'peasantry of a new type'. It is about as new as the Russian village community so beloved of the Narodniks. It is not, of course, necessary to comment on the Resolution's injunctions on future workers' states to imbue these primitive communists with 'the essential components of discipline, self-management and modern industrial rationality'!

Pablo's crowning formula, in his previous writings on the 'revolutionary peasantry', was the so-called 'Jacobin leadership *sui generis*', a conglomeration of petty-bourgeois intellectuals and other politically active people forced by repression to leave the urban centres and put themselves at the head of peasant uprisings. This is not even a sophisticated formula; it is only a very transparent justification of the existing domination of petty-bourgeois leaders over the mass movement in the backward countries. Those who have 'unified' on the basis of this Resolution cannot denounce and expose Pablo's role, much less make a principled break from his course, which will inevitably compromise them all. Instead, they adopt once again a formula designed to obscure the differences: 'It is an absolute necessity to educate revolutionary Marxist cadres and to build tendencies and independent parties wherever possible [?] in all colonial countries'. And finally, although it bears no relation and is emptied of all meaning by the earlier equivocations, double-edged formulae, and outright revisions, we have the pious repetition of correct phrases: 'The building of sections of the Fourth International capable of working out concrete analyses of their specific national situations and finding concrete solutions to the problems remains a central strategic task in all countries'. What will these 'sections of the Fourth International' do, since 'blunted instruments' are sufficient? What will be their role in relation to the existing parties and leaders? What will be their class basis? An answer to these questions is the absolute prerequisite of 'finding concrete solutions' to the problems of class struggle in the colonial countries.

Effects of the Colonial Revolution

We saw earlier how the 'unifiers' conceived of the interrelations of the revolution in the advanced countries and the struggle of the workers in the USSR and Eastern Europe. The 'effects' of the colonial revolution are considered in similar mechanical fashion, instead of through the struggle and consciousness of the vanguard and the working

class. We are told that the French working class received a 'breathing space' after de Gaulle's accession to power because of the struggle of the Algerian people. This is breathtaking! It was the failure of working-class leadership during the French political crisis provoked by the Algerian struggle in 1958 which brought the Bonaparte de Gaulle to power. Instead of proceeding from this *real* 'relationship of power', the Resolution proceeds from 'de Gaulle's power', 'the Algerian Revolution', and so on, as settled 'facts' to be balanced one against another. We are treated to a similar piece of mechanistic speculation with regard to Angola: 'In Portugal, the outbreak of revolution in Angola and other colonies proved decisive in undermining the stability of the Salazar dictatorship, creating the pre-revolutionary climate which has placed the overthrow of Portuguese fascism on the order of the day. The fall of Salazar would help accelerate the Spanish revolution, weaken the bonapartist regime in France and intensify the new wave of militancy in the West European labour movement'. Here is illustrated the extent to which the politics of the revisionists have become only the verdict of outside commentators on some process in which they have no part. They make some perfunctory remarks about the effect of the colonial revolution in radicalising certain elements in the labour movement but without any indication of the real content or class significance of this 'influence'. For example:

. . . it has affected vanguard elements in an immediate way, crystallising new revolts against the waiting, passive or treacherous attitude of the old leaderships towards the colonial revolution or fresh reactions against the generally low level of politics [?] in some imperialist countries. This has occurred not only in France where these new layers have been most vocal [?] but also in several other European countries, especially Spain, and in the US where the opportunity to solidarise with the Cuban Revolution has opened the door to radical politics [?] for a new generation of vanguard elements [?]. In the same way the influence of the colonial revolution, especially the African revolution, upon vanguard elements in the Negro movement has helped prepare the emergence of a new radical left wing. In all these cases, it is the task of revolutionary Marxists to seek to win the best elements of this newly emerging vanguard to Trotskyism and to fuse them into the left wing of the mass movement.

In point of fact, the SWP's method of 'solidarising with the Cuban Revolution' only served to take the Party closer to 'radical' petty-bour-

geois circles. Similarly, the effects' of the mass struggles in Africa on the Negro movement in the US are not at all straight-forward and homogenous. Insofar as they are seen simply as political struggles for 'independence' within the framework of imperialism, adequately represented by the likes of Nkrumah, then they can strengthen middle-class leadership of the Negro struggle. Only if they are understood and explained in a Marxist way can they be fused with the real class needs of the Negro workers. But the Pabloites prefer to speculate, once more, on 'general' influences rather than subjecting these to class analysis: 'In general the colonial revolution has helped to overcome lethargy and the feeling of political impotence.'

A final 'influence' of the colonial revolution considered by the Resolution is its effect on world Stalinism. Apart from the usual glorification of the existing character of the national liberation movement,* the most emphatic point made by the Resolution is that, 'The victory in Cuba marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the world revolution; for, aside from the Soviet Union, this is the first workers' state established outside the bounds of the Stalinist apparatus.' The essential consequence of this has been that, 'In fact an international Castro-ist current has appeared inside the world Communist and revolutionary-socialist movement.' If the influence of this current is still largely confined to the backward countries, 'One of the reasons for this is that the Cuban leadership has not yet reached an understanding of how it can best facilitate revolutionary rebirth in these areas.'

Here we have reached a crucial point in the role of revisionism today. Everything is staked on the initiative and consciousness of 'the Cuban leadership'. It is true that 'Castro-ism' has found much support among peasant leaders and radical intellectuals in backward countries, but this is precisely because of the failure of the working class to resolve its crisis of leadership. In such a situation, petty-bourgeois tendencies basing themselves on superficial theories about peasant rising and guerrilla warfare easily find a following. Indeed, the bitterness of exploita-

* 'The emergence of mass revolutionary forces led by parties or tendencies which have developed outside the realm of Stalinist control (Cuba, Algeria, Angola) has introduced a most powerful disintegrating element into international Stalinism, favouring the development of a revolutionary left wing.'

tion and the apparent ease of early success against rotten ruling cliques encourages many revolutionaries to go through an experience with this kind of ideology, particularly when the Stalinists offer them only class-collaboration policies. To accept as a 'fact' or 'new reality' the rise of petty-bourgeois-dominated, national revolutionary movements, instead of seeing as an essential part of their origin the opportunist betrayals of working-class leadership, is another example of the method of empiricism, of what Trotsky called 'worship of the accomplished fact'.

In case anyone should think that the revisionists have thereby abandoned the role of the Fourth International, we have what is really a very clear depiction of the perspectives of the Pabloites and SWP.

The appearance of more workers' states through further development of the colonial revolution, particularly in countries like Algeria, could help strengthen and enrich the international current of Castro-ism, give it longer-range perspectives and help bring it closer to understanding the necessity for a new revolutionary Marxist international of mass parties. Fulfilment of this historic possibility depends *in part* on the role which the FI plays in the colonial revolution and the capacity of the FI to help win fresh victories.

This paragraph does not need lengthy analysis. The role of the Fourth International, in fact absolutely necessary to *lead* the proletariat in every country, is here reduced to 'helping' in the winning of fresh victories. This 'help' will have a 'part' in determining whether or not the 'Castro-ist currents' come closer to understanding the need for a Fourth International. By this subtle influence our 'Trotskyists' will also influence the revolution in Eastern Europe and Russia. Thus: 'The infusion of Trotskyist concepts in this new Castro-ist current will also influence the development of a conscious revolutionary leadership particularly in the workers' states, will help prevent "Titoist" deviations and better assure the evolution of mass pressure and direct action into the cleansing force of the political revolution. The development of the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions, historically possible in a short period [?], can also give rise to new tendencies of the Castro-ist type which could help the Cubans and related currents to achieve a fuller understanding of world revolution in its entirety.' So much for the *phrase*, 'The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semi-colonial coun-

tries as well as in the advanced countries.' For Trotsky and the founders of the Fourth International the *content* of the insistence on resolving the crisis of working-class leadership was the urgent task of constructing parties of the Fourth International. The 'Reunification' of the Pabloites, with SWP support, is based on the exact opposite, reducing the 'International' to the role of ideological apologists for the existing leaderships of the mass movement, with appropriate formulae to suit the particular conditions of each country.

Russia, Eastern Europe and China

In considering the workers' states, the Resolution offers only a collection of impressions and speculations, There is no analysis of the contradictions within these countries and consequently no basis for any consideration of the tasks of building sections of the Fourth International against the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy. Phrases can be found which 'accept' the necessity of political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy, but exactly opposite formulations represent accurately the actual method and theory of the Resolution. Pabloism's first direct political expression was the theory that the Soviet bureaucracy, in the conditions following the establishment of workers' states in Eastern Europe and China, would be forced to itself express the revolutionary pressure of the masses. Within the SWP leadership, which at first opposed this orientation, there soon appeared formulations which equated reforms and revolution in the USSR. The 'reunification' document preserves a solid base for this type of policy and leaves the way open for the most right-wing elements in their support of Khrushchev, e.g., 'The evolution of the workers' states as a whole since the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 and especially after Stalin's death in 1953 has therefore steadily removed the causes that fostered political passivity among the masses and their vanguard', and 'Certain sectors of the bureaucracy have indicated awareness of the objective need to loosen the Stalinist stranglehold on the productive forces the better to meet the threatening military and technological advances of US imperialism.' Once again we have a picture of 'the evolution of the workers' states as a whole', objectively removing the basis of the bureaucracy's role, together with the supposition that these objective trends will be expressed through the bureaucracy itself. The essence here

is the same as it was in considering the backward countries: the working class must have a conscious *leadership*, forged in struggle against the class forces who cling to their power and domination in face of the changing objective situation. Starting from this point of view, the reactions of the bureaucracy or of factions within it will be seen as tactical defences of the reactionary forces, not as relatively progressive or 'left' tendencies.

For all the talk about political revolution, the consequence of the Pabloites' method is to accept the perspective of Soviet technical progress and 'peaceful coexistence' upon which Khrushchev and the Soviet bureaucracy themselves insist. Thus:

However entrancing the picture of the worldwide consequences of an *early* victory of the political revolution in the Soviet Union may be, the process may prove to be longer drawn out than we desire. It would therefore be disastrous for Marxist revolutionary forces to stake everything on this one card, meantime overlooking the very real opportunities for breakthrough in the colonial and imperialist countries before the political revolution in the USSR succeeds. Consequently it is advisable to take into account the effect which continuous technological and economic progress of the USSR and the other workers' states can have on the world revolutionary process in the absence of an early revolutionary victory.

True, the Resolution rejects 'the view that the economic and technological advances of the workers' states can in themselves decisively modify the relationship of forces between the classes in the imperialist countries, or contribute decisively to the overthrow of capitalism', but its conclusion is finally:

The main contribution to the development of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries remains therefore the effect in the labour movement of the crisis of Stalinism and the technological and economic gains of the USSR.

The Advanced Countries—The Key

We have already indicated the basically false method and revisionist conclusion of the Pabloites and the SWP leaders on the class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries. In its final section the 'reunification' Resolution returns to the theme of the relation between militancy and changes in living standards.

In an attempt to justify their own concentration on work within the bureaucracy and inability to turn to the struggles of the most op-

pressed sections of the working class, the Pabloites have discovered that in fact the highly-paid workers, once their standards are disturbed, are most likely to set going the 'revolutionary process', e.g.:

What both theory and experience do prove is that the most revolutionary consequences follow not so much from the *absolute level* of real wage and living standard as from their *relative short-term fluctuations*. Attempts to lower even slightly a hard-won high level, or the widespread fear that such an attempt is in preparation, can under certain conditions touch off great class actions that tend to pass rapidly from the defensive to the offensive stage and put on the agenda struggles of an objectively pre-revolutionary significance around transitional slogans. Such struggles may even lead to revolutionary situations. Recent strike waves in Belgium, Spain and Italy—spearheaded by the *best-paid workers*—again prove that it is quite false to hold that the highest-paid workers are automatically 'corrupted' by 'capitalist prosperity'.

It is necessary to be very clear about the role of this abstract speculating. The sharp swing to the right by Khrushchev is definitely a response to the revival of the class struggle in the advanced countries and in Eastern Europe. In the US and Europe the most oppressed sections of the working class, particularly the youth, are being drawn into the struggle. This is especially true in Britain and in the Negro struggle in America. Trotskyists will win the leadership of the working class only if they can build the revolutionary party out of these sections. At this point the struggle against the conservative organs of the labour bureaucracy becomes extremely sharp. In this sharp battle older workers and trade unionists who have gone through the prolonged 'boom' can be won from industrial 'militancy' to revolutionary politics. Because the Pabloite analysis, as we saw earlier, is an analysis by commentators and not participants, it neglects entirely the factor of consciousness and leadership. This is why it ends with grandiose and abstract conclusions with no import for the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary party. Thus:

If some of the obviously fine qualities of the undernourished proletariat of yesterday seem to have disappeared among Western workers, other good new qualities have appeared, precisely as a result of the higher standing of living and culture gained by the proletariat in the West. The gap between the knowledge of the skilled worker and the bourgeois technician has virtually disappeared or been greatly reduced. Technologically the

Western worker is much more capable of socialist self-management today than was his father or grandfather; and he feels more strongly the need to play a conscious, leading role in the process of production.

It is also easier for today's worker to grasp the overall economic interaction among all the factors, the intertwining of all economic problems and the needs and practical purposes of socialist planning. Increased leisure also means the increased possibility to participate on a mass scale in political administration [?], something that never existed in the past. It is not for Marxists to deny the basic Marxist truth that capitalism is the great educator of the workers for socialism, at least on the economic field.

All this 'objective' consideration of the working class as a collection of individuals sensitive to the economic climate, rather than as a fighting force, is a prelude to the Resolution's justification of 'deep entry'. After explaining the pressure of the falling rate of profit on the employers, which will lead to big wages struggles, the Resolution predicts even revolutionary situations:

... provided that the working class, or at least its broad vanguard [?], has sufficient self-confidence to advance the socialist alternative to the capitalist way of running the economy and the country. This in turn hinges essentially on the activity and influence of a broad left wing in the labour movement that educates the vanguard in the necessity of struggling for this socialist alternative and that builds up self-confidence and an apparatus capable of revolutionary struggles through a series of partial struggles,

and further:

The objective is to stimulate and broaden mass struggles to the utmost and to move as much as possible towards playing a leading role in such struggles, beginning with the most elementary demands and seeking to develop them in the direction of transitional slogans on the level of governmental power and the creation of bodies of dual power.

The advanced countries are the fundamental key to the world revolution. It is here above all that the resolution of the crisis of leadership of the working class, the constructing of Leninist parties, will strike at the heart of imperialism. But here, too, the revisionists have found a formula for trailing behind the official leadership.

At the centre of the actual reconstruction of the Fourth International will be the building of Trotskyist parties who make a relationship with the strength of the working class in the advanced countries, a struggle which requires a

bitter fight against the opportunists and centrists of all kinds. Those who excuse the betrayals of the bureaucracies, even dressing them up as reflections of mass pressure, stand in the way of this vital task.

The Fourth International

The revisionist ideas we have analysed here are the basis for the 'reunified Fourth International' of the Pabloites, supported by the Socialist Workers' Party (USA). Denouncing the Trotskyists of the International Committee as 'sectarians' and 'ultra-lefts', deliberately confusing our position with that of an adventurist group (the 'Posadas' group) which split from their own ranks only two years ago, they unite on the basis of liquidating the independent Marxist party, which necessitates the abandonment of Marxism. Instead, all manner of demagoguery and spurious nonsense talked by petty-bourgeois bureaucratic and nationalist leaders is welcomed by them as approaching Marxism.

For example, in its section, 'The Fourth International', the Resolution says:

The validity of the Trotskyist explanation of the character of the bureaucracy as a *social force* has become accepted by all serious students of the Soviet Union. It is even reflected in the theoretical basis and justification offered by the Yugoslav government in its experimentation with workers' councils and self-management.

Not only Tito, but also Castro is welcomed as a convert to Trotsky's views on bureaucracy and the role of the working class, even to the extent of extravagant claims such as this:

The attack Fidel Castro launched against the Anibal-Escalante of Cuba sounded like a repetition of Leninist and Trotskyist speeches heard in the Soviet Union almost forty years ago.

In point of fact, Castro's speech* was a defence of the independence of the State officialdom, not only against one wing inside Cuban Stalinism, but also against *any* political control from outside the State apparatus itself. We thus have the spectacle of 'Trotskyists' not only justifying the manoeuvres of petty-bourgeois state bureaucracies, but even welcoming them as expressions of the creeping victory of Trotskyism.

Theory is no longer seen by these 'Trotskyists' as a guide to action, but as a series of

* For a more detailed analysis of this speech, see 'Revisionism and the Fourth International' in *Labour Review*, Vol. VII, No. 5, pp. 179-180.

formal, abstract writings to be checked and 'confirmed' in the heads of their possessors. Our 'theoreticians' have the function only of casting around for 'examples' in the course of events or in the speeches and writings of politicians, examples which they then abstract from the context and list as 'confirmations'. By contrast, Marxist theory is *in fact* confirmed and developed only by the active penetration of reality by the Marxists and the working class. The very expressions used in the document illustrate the difference: 'In the same way the theory of permanent revolution, kept alive by the Fourth International as a precious heritage received from Trotsky . . .' With this approach theory becomes an ikon with the possibility of perhaps a few quantitative additions, rather than a qualitative development through revolutionary practice. The Resolution indeed describes this explicitly :

The cadres of the Fourth International carried out their revolutionary duty in keeping alive the programme of Trotskyism and adding to it as world events dictated.

This part of the Resolution concerned with 'The Fourth International', which should be concerned with the struggle to establish and develop the theory and practice of independent revolutionary parties on the programme of the Fourth International, is in fact something quite different. After pointing out that small organizations are in greater danger from sectarianism than from opportunism, which is 'generally easier to recognize' (this passes for serious argument!), this section is devoted to a collection of formulae to excuse the virtual liquidation of independent revolutionary parties. 'Entrism' is necessary, says the Resolution, because the masses are still dominated by opportunist leaders: under these conditions, 'the masses, when they display readiness to take the road of revolutionary action, do not begin with a fully developed Marxist consciousness but with an outlook which is closer to left centrism.

'In addition to this, the bureaucratic leaderships do not facilitate bringing Marxist educational material to the ranks. They operate as ruthless permanent factions, completely hostile to the ideas of Trotskyism and prepared to engage in witch-hunting and the use of most undemocratic measures against those who advance fresh or challenging views.'

We have seen how, both in the advanced and the backward countries, the revisionists in fact capitulate to leaders of a petty-bourgeois type. The theoretical justification for this is that,

through a tactic of 'entrism', the Fourth International encourages the rapid evolution of 'left centrist' mass movements: 'The revolutionary nuclei actively participate in building left-wing tendencies *capable of leading broader sections of the masses in action*. Through the experiences built up in these actions, they assist in transforming the best forces of these centrist or left-centrist tendencies into genuine revolutionary Marxists.' For all the disclaimers that entrism does not mean forming only 'pressure groups', this formulation makes it very clear that the leadership of the decisive mass struggles will be centrist in character, and that the 'Fourth International' will not organize for the political defeat of these leaders, preferring instead to 'transform' them into Trotskyists. All the talk about transitional demands resolves itself into the assumption of a purely educational role within the centrist apparatus rather than revolutionary leadership of the masses. The history of the Belgian General Strike and the Pabloite capitulation to the FLN are the most striking examples.

Two Types of Leadership

The decisive test of a Marxist party's orientation towards the mass movement is the degree of success in building a revolutionary cadre, whose links with the working class are forged in struggle against the opportunists and bureaucrats. In their concern over the past ten or 15 years to 'get closer to the new reality', the revisionists have produced a circle of 'leaders' and a method of work diametrically opposed to this revolutionary preparation. For the colonial and semi-colonial countries, it is clear that the so-called 'sections' of the Fourth International which follow Pablo have become mere apologists for the national leaderships. Their abandonment of an independent orientation to the working class is explicit. Such a method produces only a soft group of professional advisers who are not averse to becoming petty functionaries, as we see in Algeria. From these positions of 'influence' they help along the 'objective' process whereby the petty-bourgeois leaders are pushed towards Marxism.

In the advanced countries, these errors take similar form. The grandiose 'World Congresses' of Pablo's International, with their claims of innumerable represented sections, discuss everything under the sun except the actual construction of the revolutionary leadership. What is the balance-sheet of 'entrism *sui generis*'? The tactic of entry into the mass labour organizations must build up

a body of experience about trade union work and the methods of politically preparing an alternative leadership in battle against the opportunists and centrists; that is the purpose of entry. But at no Pabloite Congresses is there any discussion of this experience. Marxism develops as a science, by consciously working over the experience of the movement in struggle. But for the Pabloites such questions do not arise: 'entry' work consists of steadily entrenching themselves in positions within the apparatus, from which they will 'help' or 'encourage' the 'left centrist' tendencies who are in any case historically next in line for the mantle of leadership.

Such orientation produces a particular type of national section and a particular type of leadership within the Pabloite International. Around the publications of this group there gather numbers of petty-bourgeois intellectuals who very easily accept a standpoint of 'principled' but quite abstract avowals of Marxism, divorced from any struggle to construct a leadership against the enemies of Marxism and of the working class. Such groups seek constantly for 'alliances' with all kinds of centrist trends, cultivating the most naive illusions about the 'leftward' tendencies of these 'allies' in parliamentary and trade union circles, as in Britain and Belgium. The real task of Marxists, to 'go deeper and deeper into the working class' to build a power which will smash the bureaucracy, is anathema to these circles. To such a political way of life, the message that it is most important to encourage the 'left centrists' is a gift from heaven. The leaders of this International are, more and more, men of 'influence', men with 'reputations' in petty-bourgeois circles, and not working-class leaders, not leaders familiar with the intimate and detailed problems of the working class and the revolutionary party.

The sections of the 'International' led by this type of 'leader' are surrounded not by the most militant sections of the working class (in particular, today, the youth), but by their flimsy and deliberately unclarified relationships with the centrist and bureaucratic tendencies. In this environment, all the tendencies towards extreme revisionism which we have indicated are assured of a rapid growth; and are now strangling to death whatever remains of the cadres of the Pabloite International. In the United States, as we have pointed out in an earlier section of this report, the same result has been achieved by the SWP without benefit of the 'entrism' tactic. The well-known theories of 'regroupment' of the Left after the Stalinist crisis of 1956 and of joint electoral

activity independent of the Democrats and Republicans, both of which are part of a general orientation of the Party's work towards the 'radical' milieu in the United States, were the substitute for 'entrism', which was not a possibility. There is consequently a situation in the SWP where Trade Union work is at its lowest ebb and has produced no new cadres. The old leadership survives at the core of the Party, more and more concerned with creating a good impression in petty-bourgeois circles, from Castro to the *National Guardian*. While this orientation has matured over the period since the war, a profound process of radicalization has surged through the most oppressed sections of the working class. In the struggles now taking place in the USA, part of the overall radicalization in the advanced capitalist countries, the SWP is utterly incapable of leadership. It tails along behind the petty-bourgeois leaders of the Negro struggle, rejecting them only when their sway over the masses is coming to an end. The type of party into which the SWP has been turning is like the Pabloite sections, adapted to radical circles of petty-bourgeois, powerless to intervene in the real struggle of the class.

Leaders of this type are, not unnaturally, hostile to the International Committee, and particularly to the Socialist Labour League. Hansen advises the SLL to stop criticizing the centrists and instead, 'advance to meet the leftward-moving stream' in Britain. He is really advising an abandonment of the SLL's orientation towards the working class in struggle against the bureaucracy. But it is the work of the SLL and the other sections of the IC which is the real guarantee of the defeat of the revisionists in the international movement. In contrast to the Pabloites and the SWP, it has been possible to develop the basis of a new working-class leadership, to train in struggle a force which knows how to lead workers and to fight the opportunists. On this fundamental, principled basis, the SLL in fact has a tactical relationship on limited issues with centrist tendencies in the trade unions which is far more stable and successful than that of any of the revisionists, who merely submit themselves as errand-boys to the centrists.

The Resolution eventually tries to justify liquidationism by accepting a formulation which the SWP leadership has been toying with for the last two-and-a-half years:

An acute problem in relation to the construction of revolutionary-socialist parties in many countries is lack of time to organize and to gain adequate

experience before the revolution breaks out. In previous decades this would signify certain defeat for the revolution. Because of a series of new factors, however, this is no longer *necessarily* the case. The example of the Soviet Union, the existence of workers' states from whom material aid can be obtained, and the relative weakening of world capitalism, have made it possible for revolutions in some instances to achieve partial successes, to reach certain plateaux (where they may rest in unstable equilibrium as in the case of Bolivia) and even to go as far as the establishment of a workers' state. Revolutionary Marxists in such countries face extremely difficult questions, from an inadequate level of socialist consciousness among the masses to a dearth of seasoned or experienced cadres to carry out a myriad pressing tasks. No choice is open to them in such situations but to participate completely and wholeheartedly in the revolution and to build the party in the very process of the revolution itself.

This passage is a fitting end to our long series of quotations. It contains the conclusion which excuses everything: *because of 'new factors' working-class power can be obtained without there having been constructed Marxist parties.* In practice, this means that the primary *emphasis* in the work of the Pabloite national sections will be to encourage the 'left centrist' leaderships, for this will be seen as the quickest way of making sure the working class is not 'overtaken' by revolution. In reality *the crisis of leadership has passed*; new factors mean that humanity can emerge from capitalism *without* the formation of conscious leaderships based on Marxism.

When these revolutions occur, Marxists have no alternative but to participate in them 'wholeheartedly', i.e., they must not appear as opponents of the petty-bourgeois leaderships. In Cuba, for example, they must enter Castro's party and work loyally within it. In Algeria, they must work for Ben Bella, and join with him in denouncing and imprisoning any opposition movements, Right or Left. The 'dearth of seasoned or experienced cadres to carry out a myriad pressing tasks' is a direct reference to the Pabloites' role with regard to Algeria, where they have made themselves recruiting sergeants for technicians to strengthen the Ben Bella government. As for 'building revolutionary parties in the process of the revolution itself', this is only the most extreme of the hypocritical formulae in which the Resolution abounds. It is precisely in the revolutionary situations of Algeria and Cuba that the building of the independent party has been most blatantly aban-

doned, on the assumption that the petty-bourgeois leaders themselves will become revolutionary Marxists. Even if the formulation were taken seriously as a contribution to theory, it would have to be immediately rejected as false. The task of revolutionaries is never to speculate about whether there is 'time' for the party to be constructed, but to work in all the stages of development of the class struggle, guided by the long-term, revolutionary interests of the working class, to steel the revolutionary party in struggle against every arm of the capitalist class and its state, to develop a Bolshevik cadre with bonds of steel uniting it with every section of the proletariat. This constant struggle, through periods of black reaction as well as in times of revolutionary upsurge, is the only guarantee of preparedness in the struggle for power. Even such a party, when the revolution occurs, will find it necessary to overcome internal conflict, hesitations, even desertions, as Lenin found in 1917. Such a perspective is absolutely alien to the facile notion of 'building parties in the process of revolution itself'.

Such are the political bases of the 'reunification' of revisionists which took place in Rome in 1963. The sections of our International Committee in Europe, in Latin America, in Africa, in Japan, and in the deformed workers' states of Eastern Europe, are united in their complete opposition to the revisionists. We are confident that in the course of action and of discussion, many of the followers of Pablo and Cannon will be compelled to change their views, and to recognize the need to return to the founding Programme of the Fourth International. Above all, the resurgence of the working class of the USA and of Western and Eastern Europe is the foundation for the great leap forward which is now possible in the Fourth International. This rising militancy of the revolutionary class is the ground of all our activity, and it is also the ground upon which the opportunists and centrists of all kinds will be defeated, because their room for manoeuvre with the imperialists grows smaller and smaller. The great international crisis of Stalinism is the most important proof of this process. Our fight against revisionism in the Fourth International is a vitally necessary part of our revolutionary political work in the working class. It is the revolutionary practice which will surely enable the Fourth International to provide the leadership of all those communists who come to take their place in the coming final battles of the working class to overthrow the power of world capital.

Report on the Third World Congress of the Fourth International since re-unification

Given at New York branch meeting June 4, 1969

By Joseph Hansen

I'M GOING TO REPORT on the Third Congress since the Reunification Congress was held in 1963. Or, if you figure from 1938, the Ninth Congress since the Fourth International was founded.

The size of the congress has been indicated in the public report published in *Intercontinental Press*—around a hundred delegates and observers, representing about 30 different countries. It was fairly representative, therefore, of the status of the Trotskyist movement at this stage in quite a few areas. Some places were not represented for reasons that we do not know—maybe a breakdown in travel arrangements, or for other reasons of that kind.

The congress lasted for about a week, and still did not complete its agenda. Several important points had to be held over because there simply was not time in that brief period of one week to discuss all the points that needed to be taken up.

The subjects included the general resolution, which the delegates referred to as 'the Theses', which covered the political situation in the world since the last congress—bringing things up to date; a special resolution on Latin America which proposed an orientation, and another document, in fact, two documents, which made an estimate of the Cultural Revolution in China. Then a very important resolution and discussion on the youth movement as it has developed in the past few years throughout the world; and finally, a report on the activities of the Fourth International.

In comparison with the previous two congresses; that is, the Reunification Congress and the congress in 1965, there was one notable difference. At the Reunification Congress there was complete agreement so far as the principled basis of the reunification was concerned. I should explain that just before the Reunification Congress, a Seventh World Congress had been held which was marked by an extremely sharp fight between Pablo on the one hand, and those who supported his position—he was the former secretary of the Fourth International—and those who disagreed with his positions as they had developed up to that point—who were led by Livio Maitan, Pierre Frank, and Ernest Mandel. The Seventh Congress ended and then the Reunification Congress opened.

Following the Reunification Congress, Pablo split from the Fourth International. I won't go into the issues on which that occurred, but simply record the fact that a split did occur, after the Reunification Congress, a rather small one. Then came the Second Congress after the reunification (or Eighth Congress), the main task of which was to consolidate the re-

unification, as it had existed over a period of two years, and in the face of the split by Pablo. So there were no major differences recorded at that congress.

Now the present congress was different. We had some differences. I'll go into these in a moment, their nature and what they might mean.

First, I should like to just indicate something of our general attitude towards the Fourth International, which we unfortunately cannot be legally members of, and say something about the role we have played in building the Fourth International. We were instrumental—that is, our leaders of that time, 1938 and earlier, were instrumental—together with Leon Trotsky, in creating and founding the Fourth International. And ever since that time, we have done our utmost to build the Fourth International, to help it in every possible way. Since the beginning of the Trotskyist movement, our leaders have consciously opposed any tendency to fall into any kind of narrow isolationist attitude. And because of this long tradition in our movement, the Socialist Workers' Party has always had an attitude toward the problems of building an international that could be said to be among the very best.

One of the things we have always held to—very consciously—was not to try to assume leadership of the International. We viewed our position, and our role, and our function, even though we were the most powerful sector of the movement for many years, as that of offering support—helping and supporting the key leaders but not substituting for them and not trying to assume the leadership.

Over that long period, there was only one big split with serious consequences, if we leave aside the split in the SWP in 1939-1940. In 1953, a split occurred which lasted for ten years. In our opinion, this was not our responsibility. It was due to a series of very bad errors that were committed at that time by the leadership of the International under Pablo. It was aggravated by the fact that McCarthyism, which raged at that time in the United States, prevented us from being able to give a clear picture to the International of our position on certain items; and a series of misunderstandings arose as a result of that. These were finally overcome, and we had the reunification of 1963.

Two points should be noted in this reunification, because we felt them in the present congress. One was that at the Reunification Congress we reached an agreement to leave the assessment of the differences of 1953 to a time in the future when we could discuss them in an educational way without any heat. We did

not think it advisable at the time to undertake an assessment of who was right and who was wrong in 1953 and the following years. We thought it best to leave that discussion to a period when it could be viewed in the proper, historic perspective, and with the balance sheet drawn in a way that would eliminate any factional heat due to factional hangovers. All of us agreed on that.

The other thing was that in 1963, certain differences on the question of China had to be considered. We had reached agreement on all the other major questions in the world as we saw them at that time, with the exception of China. Here it turned out that during the years of the split the comrades who were under the International Secretariat had not taken the same position as we had in the Socialist Workers' Party, and in the International Committee, with which we had fraternal relations, on the question of China. They did not believe in the necessity of a political revolution. That was the key point, so we had some discussion on that question, and we reached an agreement that what we would do was to use a formula that included the substance of calling for a political revolution in China, but without naming it as such. That was the agreement that we reached in 1963.

Since then, that is, during the Cultural Revolution, the comrades who were formerly with the International Secretariat, came to the conclusion that it was correct to call for a political revolution. They came to this conclusion after Mao had come out for a political revolution in China. We thought that this was a progressive step on their part, and that it might lead to a still closer approximation of the positions that had existed before the Reunification Congress. And that's the way things stood as the congress was being prepared.

Now, as to the documents and the discussion that occurred on them at the congress. First on the Theses, the general political resolution, which is called 'The New Rise of the World Revolution'. I won't go into this very much, because it will be published, as finally edited, in a coming issue of *Intercontinental Press*. Briefly, what it did was to bring up to date all the major happenings in the three sectors of the world revolution, pointing to the importance of Vietnam, and what Vietnam had done in re-arousing the colonial world and contributing to a new upsurge in the other sectors. The Theses dealt with the events in Czechoslovakia, indicating the deep-going tendency in the deformed or degenerated workers' states towards a political revolution. It took up what has been happening in the advanced countries, particularly in France with the explosion of May-June 1968, and how this has accelerated the revolutionary process in Europe, with repercussions all over the entire world. The United States was included, the Theses dealing with the black liberation struggle and the political explosion on the campuses, and how this has contributed to a completely new mood in the United States and opened up great new possibilities for the revolutionary movement. The general conclusion of the Theses, put briefly, was that what has been happening in the past period, that is, since 1965, is an overcoming of the defeats of the previous period, the big ones in places like Brazil and Indonesia. A shift is occurring towards the classical revolutionary norms, and since the word 'classical' may not be the best in this instance, let me explain what is meant by this.

It means that the pattern of revolution as we have seen it in China or Cuba or other places in the colonial world where the peasantry have played a very big role, where the cities, and the city masses seems to have been rather quiescent, or able to play only a secondary role, has now changed, or is changing. What we are witnessing is the resumption of the key role of cities; that is, the key role of the urban masses, and in particular the working class. This signifies that there are greater possibilities now of revolutions occurring somewhat on the pattern of the Russian Revolution in which a party is required of the Leninist type. This now becomes more and more the probability. This was the general conclusion of the Theses.

There were contributions in the discussion from various areas, some of which were of particular interest—one from Pakistan, for example, which pointed out what had been happening there in the weeks just before the congress, where for the first time a student rebellion, spreading over the country, had succeeded in bringing down a government administration, and ousting one dictator even though he was replaced probably by one not much different. This was symptomatic of the times.

And there were some interesting contributions from India, on the problems that they face there, and particularly on the role of Maoism, not as a revolutionary force, but as an obstacle towards the building of a revolutionary movement. Other significant contributions were made from a number of areas. There was general agreement on this resolution, although, of course, not all the formulations met with unanimous approval. There were differences on some of these.

I come to the question of Latin America—the resolution around which the sharpest differences appeared at the congress. I'll go into that at greater length, one reason being that I was more directly involved in that than in some of the other discussions.

There was general agreement on the first part of the resolution which describes the conditions in Latin America as being pre-revolutionary, almost revolutionary, or at least of explosive proportions over the entire continent. This situation has existed, in my opinion, in Latin America for about ten years or more, so that there was really nothing new in this, beyond recording how difficult it is becoming for the oligarchies in Latin America and their American backers to keep the lid on the situation.

The differences arose over what conclusions should be drawn from this general situation in the way of advancing the revolution. Thus the differences concerned the question of strategy in the revolutionary struggle. Our view on this question was that what was proposed, namely, guerrilla war, can be taken as either a tactical or strategic question. If it is taken as a tactical question, then the use of guerrilla warfare ought to be decided by each section and fitted into a broader strategy. For example, if the Peruvian Trotskyists think it would advance the revolutionary process in Peru to engage in guerrilla warfare this is a tactical problem for them to decide in relation with their overall problem of constructing a combat party capable of leading a revolution to success. But if guerrilla warfare is not viewed that way, but is viewed as a strategy, that is, a new way of carrying out a revolution, then the Leninist concept of constructing a combat party as the main strategic task is put into question and we disagree with that. This, then, ought

to become the axis of this discussion—the question of whether or not guerrilla warfare could be accepted as a strategy. Our view on this was shared by other comrades there, India for example.

The opposing thesis, that of the comrades who maintain that rural guerrilla warfare should be adopted as a continental strategy for a prolonged period, is linked with a certain view of where the Fourth International stands, and what the possibilities are facing the Fourth International. The view is something like this: the Fourth International has great prestige because of its political and theoretical capacities, but it remains small organizationally. At the same time it is confronted with tremendous revolutionary possibilities, particularly in a place like Latin America, and everything now hinges on the possibility of these small forces engaging in the struggle in such a way as to make a breakthrough.

This view was expressed most eloquently by Livio Maitan in a letter which was published in the internal bulletin. Everything hinges, according to this view, on whether or not the Fourth International can make a breakthrough, particularly in Latin America, but also anywhere it may be possible. Once such a breakthrough is made—the Trotskyists coming to power in a country like Peru or Bolivia or Ecuador, or a place like that, or becoming a major party in a place like France—then everything else will follow; because the old charge that the Trotskyists can talk, and theorize, and argue well about politics and all that sort of thing, but can't organize—that will fall to the ground.

Our position was that the situation is certainly ripe enough. This has been shown over and over again—the ripeness of the situation in country after country, throughout the world, and it would take a very long list to name all the places—but what is needed for the Fourth International to forge ahead in a big way is more forces. You cannot leap over yourself, more forces are required, even in those areas where the opportunities are greatest. As a matter of fact, that is where you need them the most. This boils down then to the old question of party building, building a combat party. That's what we tried to maintain and to present at the congress as observers.

We forecast, in our arguments, that in Latin America the revolutionary struggle would tend to shift to the urban centres, and we cited as one of the first examples of that trend what happened in Santo Domingo. And then, of course, the way the United States responded to that.

The contention of the comrades of the opposing view was that the struggle will continue to be mainly in the rural areas, not because there's anything better about the rural areas, but simply that it is easier for guerrillas to survive in a rural area than it is in a city area.

We posed against the orientation concentrating on the preparation of guerrilla war, an orientation towards the youth, that is, toward those sectors of the population which have shown by their own actions that they are drawing revolutionary conclusions and tending to move into action. We maintained that this orientation was valid for Latin America as well as for other parts of the world.

The opposite position was that we should orient towards engaging in military preparations for rural guerrilla war on a continental scale, no matter how small the forces might be in any given country.

Our conclusion was what this line of argumentation implied was an adaptation to the limitations of the Cuban leadership. And I'll go into this to indicate precisely what we meant by that, so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding.

They, of course, denied that they were adapting at all to the Cubans. Instead, they held that if any conclusion was to be drawn it was that we were under the influence of the peace movement in the United States and that we were continuing in the tradition of 'commentary' politics; that we comment and do not engage in action.

I got the impression that some of the comrades who took this view tended to divide the European Trotskyist movement as it was and as it stands now along the following lines: That there was a bad past in which the Trotskyists were engaged in entryism—that was in Europe—and there was a bad past in the United States, in which the Trotskyists engaged in commentary politics. Fortunately at the present time, in France they have overcome the stage of entryism, but it appears that in the United States we have not yet overcome the stage of commentary politics. Only one or two comrades expressed it that clearly on the floor. These comrades had the position that the Fourth International should stop living in the shadow of Stalinism and on its mistakes, and strike out boldly, with new tactics and vigorous actions.

In considering the limitations of the Cuban leaders, some points were brought out at the congress which have not been discussed before. Our view on the Cubans as we presented it at the congress was that the Cubans made an enormous breakthrough in their revolution. They succeeded in gaining a victory due to the default of the Communist Party, and the fact that they, as a young generation of revolutionaries, refused to follow the Communist Party, and struck out on their own. Under the peculiarities of the situation in Cuba at that time, they succeeded, through guerrilla warfare and its development, in gaining power. This was their great positive achievement. But this very achievement, in the peculiar form in which it occurred, also tended to set the subsequent course of this leadership along lines which they have not yet transcended.

First of all, in Cuba they utilized the Communist Party. They dismantled it, tried to put it together and make something new out of it. It was like using old bricks in a new building. They found the Cuban CP useful in this respect.

Then, in extending the Cuban revolution, thereby defending Cuba in the most effective way, they sought to repeat the Cuban pattern, that is, the pattern of the Cuban revolution. They sought to utilize the Communist parties in other parts of Latin America.

After a time, this effort to utilize the Communist parties in Latin America ended up in a real faction fight. Because the Cubans, in utilizing the Communist parties, did not try to build a combat party in any of these countries; instead they tried to utilize the Communist parties to build guerrilla forces. This proved not to be successful. So they ended up in a factional struggle with the CP's, in which the key issue became armed struggle versus peaceful co-existence.

On that issue, of course, all of us were on the Cuban side—against the concept of peaceful co-existence.

The faction struggle ended in a split with the

important Venezuelan CP, and this was codified more or less at the OLAS conference in 1967. Here, one of the limitations of the Cubans showed up, that in splitting with the Venezuelan CP, they did not make any political accounting. No political accounting over what the role of Stalinism was, and they sort of buried the whole thing and ended up in a very small minority. Because of their incorrect political course, the Cubans ended up with a small minority not only in Venezuela but elsewhere in Latin America. Nowhere did they succeed in building, or putting together, forces of a size and quality capable of carrying out a revolution in the pattern of the Cuban revolution, or any other pattern.

At the OLAS conference, they projected a new course—that they would work with anybody. We interpreted that to mean, well, 'anybody', that includes Trotskyists. How else would you designate Trotskyists from the Cuban viewpoint?

The defeat of Che Guevara followed that. It had a dampening effect on the whole Cuban line, and its implementation. At the OLAS conference the OLAS had a definite structure, had a definite set of rules, and was projected as a definite organization. And if you'll recall what was said at the time, it was projected that the OLAS might even constitute the core of a new international. This appeared in different newspapers and magazines written by people who had very close contact with the Cuban leadership. Such an article appeared in *Ramparts*, for example. But Che's defeat had a dampening effect, and the OLAS began to wither. It eventually became more and more reduced, until at the congress, the comrades who were closest to the situation in Latin America said, 'OLAS does not exist. What does exist is a number of currents, or tendencies, who more or less agree on the necessity of armed struggle, or guerrilla warfare, who come under the general designation of OLAS, and that's all that remains'.

Despite these bitter experiences, the line of the Cuban leaders—and this is primarily at the present time the course and the line of Fidel Castro—remains rural guerrilla warfare on a continental scale over a prolonged period. That's their line. But our assessment of it—we're talking now of the assessment we made at the congress in presenting a minority view—is that it is more difficult today to repeat that pattern than it was in 1958 and 1959. The enemy, that is, the imperialist enemy, has learned a bit, and there has been a series of defeats which have had their effect in Latin America.

In presenting these views, we asked, or rather called for, a drawing of a balance sheet on the whole experience of guerrilla warfare, as to what conclusions could be drawn from it, its weaknesses, whatever positive qualities it has, how far it should be included in the programme of the Fourth International, just what assessment should be made of it.

In the process of this discussion, we brought up the question of Che Guevara and the lessons to be learned from the defeat of his undertaking in Bolivia. We drew some rather sharp political conclusions concerning Che Guevara's course in Bolivia.

First of all, we talked about Che Guevara as a symbol. He really is a very admirable figure. He is an admirable figure to all youth who are inclined in a revolutionary direction. He caught their imagination. For one thing, he was a man of action. That's a type of revolutionist coming into increasing prominence—

revolutionists of action. Che Guevara's dedication is particularly impressive. He was second or third in the leadership of Cuba, had enormous prestige, an assured government career. He gave that up. He gave up his wife, his children—everything. He gave up all this in order to dedicate himself to a struggle that was very hazardous, a difficult, hard struggle. No wonder he caught the admiration of the youth everywhere. We share it very deeply, because to us, he's our kind. We're the kind who dedicate ourselves in the same way, really dedicate our lives to the revolution.

At the same time, we have to make an estimate of him politically, of what he did politically, and what happened politically.

First of all, on the points where we agree with Che Guevara.

We agree with Che Guevara on his overall goal of revolutionary socialism. But we disagree with him that this can be precipitated at any given moment by the will of a revolutionary.

We agree with him on the concept that the best aid that can be given to the Vietnamese revolution would be to create one, two, many Vietnams. But we disagree with him on its being possible to do this through the action of a small group that decides in a selected country that it will precipitate a Vietnam there.

We agree with Che Guevara on his internationalism, and particularly with his concept that the best way to defend Cuba is by extending the revolution. Here we disagree with him on one simple thing. We disagree with his concept that a revolution can be exported. In saying this we are taking into consideration more what he tried to do than what he may have said on this point. That's what he actually tried to do in Bolivia—export a revolution.

We agree with him on his opposition to Stalinism. What we disagree with him on is how to oppose Stalinism. Our concept is that in opposing Stalinism, we must work this out through political confrontation with Stalinism, through the elaboration of differences with Stalinism, through the assessment of the historical experience with Stalinism, so that the whole development of Stalinism and its meaning becomes understood to the core. It's not enough simply to be anti-Stalinist. Much more is required.

We agree with him in his opposition to the politics of peaceful coexistence. Our alternative to that policy is to construct a combat party in the Leninist tradition, and what we stress is the importance of political leadership.

We did not take up the technical side of Che Guevara's operation in Bolivia, simply indicating that on this very little has been said by the experts. Fidel Castro only went so far as to say that Che Guevara had a tendency sometimes to be much too bold in these operations; but he might have meant that in the sense of throwing himself personally into sectors of the battle where he could easily have been killed.

What we were concerned about was Che's political errors. And these we listed as follows:

First, he assumed that a particular situation in Bolivia followed directly from a general situation on a continental scale. If all of Latin America is in an explosive condition and if the whole situation is pre-revolutionary, then if you look at Bolivia, you must say that Bolivia is the weakest link in Latin America. And you can list all the reasons why it should be the weakest link. But what Che left out in making this

estimate was that there are also ups and downs within a particular country, and that it becomes very, very important in a revolutionary struggle to know when the movement is actually rising among the masses, and when it is declining. This involves the question of timing—when to throw yourself into action, how to conduct yourself, what slogans to raise, what actions to engage in. This takes us to the next point.

Second, Che Guevara left out the timing in relation to the Bolivian class struggle. Timing is a crucial question in an important revolutionary action. I should say that it's also a very difficult question for even a revolutionary party to determine. We know that from the Bolshevik experience, it is very difficult for even a revolutionary party to determine precisely the moods of the masses, the exact extent that they're moving forward, and to be able from this knowledge to undertake the correct action at the correct moment. It does not follow directly from a general situation and it requires a party in order to determine it. Che had no party. His timing was conceived in the light of a general continental situation and on the objective need to help the Cuban revolution, not on a direct and immediate appreciation of Bolivian realities.

To be noted in this connection was his belief that a revolution can be precipitated through the action of a small force, even from the outside, because most of the people who he brought into Bolivia in the beginning were from the outside. This whole approach of Che Guevara in this situation resembled a sectarian approach. Preconceived ideas. The general situation is explosive, you've got to help the Vietnamese, and the revolution can be precipitated by a small force. He proceeded almost dogmatically. He formed his concept of the situation in Bolivia in much the way sectarians do.

His third political mistake was that in place of relying on a combat party, in place of constructing that, or having it available to him in Bolivia, he depended on a very treacherous ally. In the first place, you shouldn't depend on an ally, any ally at all; you should have your own forces. But he didn't have his own forces—political forces—and he had to depend on an ally. And the ally was a very treacherous one—it was the Bolivian CP. Even with the Bolivian CP, his political preparations were inadequate. He did not work out his alliance with the Bolivian CP carefully. What he should have done, since they were treacherous, was to have a showdown with them in advance, before the operation was even engaged in. He had to have this showdown with them in order to determine how reliable they might be when the fighting began. It was absolutely essential for the success of his guerrilla operation in Bolivia to have good connections with the miners, and to have good connections with the masses in the cities, particularly in La Paz. The fact that he did not undertake this showdown, but simply engaged in the action, made it much easier for the Bolivian Stalinists to shift their differences with Che Guevara from a political level—that is, the difference between the line of peaceful co-existence or armed struggle—to shift from the political level to organizational questions, which happens nearly always in a factional fight with an unprincipled group. They raised the organizational question against him. They were all for what he did, but they had organizational differences with him. First of all, they accused him of a lack of consultation. And, of course, they

had a point there. He did not consult them about the operation. Next, they raised the question of who should have command. That's not a very good question to debate because it involves personal qualifications and the whole thing gets lowered to a very vulgar level. The Stalinists did this very deliberately to avoid the main political question. It was an error to permit this kind of situation to develop.

Che Guevara's fourth error, which I have already referred to, was to begin an armed action without a political party or even a nucleus of a party either in the countryside or the city. He did not even have any ties with the Trotskyists, who had a certain connection with the masses both in La Paz and in the mines, and he did not have any connections with the peasants, or any organized political forces in the countryside, so that when he began his action, he was faced with a situation in which if the peasants did not rally immediately to his cause, then he would have to substitute for them. So he fell into a position where a small force substitutes for the masses, or tries to substitute for them. I'm quite sure that in the writings of Che Guevara you can find statements against this, against any substitution for the masses, statements that certain preconditions are required for guerrilla warfare; but the fact is that this is what he fell into in Bolivia.

His fifth error was that he made no advance political preparation among the peasants of any kind. Not the slightest of any kind whatsoever. Party or no party, simply no kind of preparation whatsoever with the peasants. So they were taken completely by surprise. All of a sudden, here are these guerrilla fighters, and it takes them some time to estimate this, and to judge what it may mean. Precious time was lost by that while the enemy mobilized.

Then, his sixth mistake was to underestimate the will, the readiness, and the technical capacities of the CIA and the Pentagon to initiate counter-measures against him. This he badly underestimated. They, on the other hand, did not underestimate him at all. When they learned about his action, we now know, they held a top-level meeting in Washington, involving all the forces around Johnson—the Pentagon, the CIA, the State Department, all their top men were involved with all their connections in Bolivia, their vast resources, technical apparatus, and we don't know how many millions of dollars were spent. They estimated Che Guevara as being a very serious person, one who required their special attention. In other words, they had a better appreciation of him than he had of them. That's a bad mistake for a political person to make. You've got to estimate the enemy very, very carefully.

His seventh error was to choose a position—and this involves a technical side, too—where it was difficult to break out or to receive aid. It may have been a very good area to practise the technique of guerrilla warfare, but it wasn't very good to receive aid, or to break out of. And he was actually caught when he tried to break out of that place. So this choice made it easier for the counterforces to isolate him when the peasants did not rally immediately, as he had hoped they would.

If we summarize all these errors, we come to the following general conclusion about them, that Che Guevara put guerrilla technique—armed-struggle technique—above politics. He put military action above party building. And I think that this is incontrovert-

ible, that this is what he actually did.

The conclusion to be drawn from this, remembering that Che Guevara is a very important advocate and practitioner of guerrilla warfare, is that first of all, guerrilla warfare does not stand up as a general strategy however well it may fit in as a tactic in certain situations when it is used by a well-constructed combat party.

A second conclusion to be drawn from this experience is that it presented fresh proof that the struggle in Latin America has become more difficult and requires a better instrument than previously—it requires the construction of a combat party to a much greater degree than, say, in 1958 or 1959.

Here's how the comrades of the opposing position answered these arguments. They agreed with the criticisms of Che! A few seemed doubtful or hesitant, but the key comrades on the other side agreed with all these criticisms of Che, and even said that they had made the same criticisms themselves, as long as a year and a half ago, in a meeting of the International Executive Committee. They only disagreed on one point—they disagreed that it was an outside enterprise for Che to come to Bolivia. They didn't agree with that. Perhaps this flows from the concept that Latin America is one country, with the same main language, facing the same general problems. On that basis they would be right in saying that it was not an outside enterprise.

But they did not elaborate. They maintained that despite the errors of Che, the concept of guerrilla warfare still remains valid. And, of course, anyone who practises it now, will profit from this experience and won't make those kinds of errors. The concept still remains valid. They drew the same conclusion for the defeats of the guerrilla struggles in Peru, for example, under Luis de la Puente, and Guillermo Lobatón. The same for Venezuela, and the same for Guatemala. Wherever there has been a defeat for the guerrilla struggle, it was a misapplication of the concept. The concept still remains valid. Also, they agreed on the need for a party. They maintained that the only way you can build a party in Latin America today is through practising or preparing for guerrilla warfare.

The vote on this resolution was 2-1 in favour of the comrades who favoured the guerrilla war strategy. One-third of the delegates were against it. We had to ask ourselves what this represented. Our conclusion was that this represented a feeling, or a mood, or a conclusion on the part of the Latin-American Trotskyists, in combination with a similar attitude among a goodly sector of the French youth. The French youth are emerging from the experience of entryism, which they are much against; they do not have a long experience in party building and they are heavily influenced by the whole general aura surrounding Guevara, the deep sympathy for Guevara, and the attempts to practise Guevarism in the advanced countries as well as in the more backward countries. They are heavily under this influence. So it was this combination or the agreement between them and the Latin American comrades that was registered at the congress.

I should add that not all the Latin-American comrades agree with this perspective. Some of the comrades in Argentina were opposed to putting the strategy of guerrilla warfare above the strategy of party building. The Argentines split about a year and a half ago, almost down the middle, and this appears

to have been one of the key issues, although it was unstated. And the comrades who were rather opposed to adopting guerrilla warfare along these lines engaged in a split in which it was very difficult for anyone outside Argentina to determine who was in the majority. So these comrades, seemingly in a minority, according to the report of the United Secretariat representative, did not carry full weight at the congress. There may be other comrades in Latin America, too, whose analysis of guerrilla warfare is more or less the same as ours.

But I should say that it's a very real problem, and a difficult one to handle, because of the stand of the Cubans on this question, and because of the fact that it has become a key issue in the differences between Stalinism and the revolutionary current, being posed as armed struggle versus peaceful co-existence. In this conflict guerrilla war was identified with armed struggle, although it is only a specific form of armed struggle. This complicated things since a critical attitude toward the strategy of guerrilla warfare was easily misinterpreted as being identical to the position of the Stalinists.

The next point is the Cultural Revolution. Here we were faced with a strange situation. We had two documents, which originated from one document. The original draft was one we prepared at the request of the comrades on the United Secretariat. Despite the great amount of work we have here, we agreed to do this. The document was sent to the United Secretariat. The majority of the comrades there agreed on a number of changes. This, of course, was their right since what they wanted from us was a first draft. When the changed document came back, we were rather surprised at the extent of the changes, and the nature of the changes. Looking them over very carefully, bearing in mind our entire experience of analysing the Chinese revolution, and recalling the differences that had existed before 1963, it appeared to us that the document now reflected a differing way of looking at the Cultural Revolution and at China, and that back of the changes loomed some rather large questions: How do you estimate Maoism? What kind of danger is it? To what degree is Maoism the same as Stalinism? A whole series of questions like that appeared to be involved although they showed up only in the form of changes and amendments.

We put the two documents column by column, and ran off copies of the two documents that way, so that the changes could be studied more easily. But our delegation forgot them, and we only had a dozen or so. Thus the comrades at the congress did not have the benefit of seeing them side by side.

This confronted us with a considerable difficulty in bringing out precisely what these differences were, and what they signified. One of the delegates there made a wisecrack that all that was involved was a 'marital dispute between the Europeans and the Americans'. Everybody laughed at that. Who wanted to get involved in a marital dispute? Naturally there was a tendency on the part of many comrades to say, 'Well, this is just hair splitting; let's not get involved in it'.

The report for the majority was given by Livio Maitan. My impression of his report was that it was rather general and intended primarily for publication. I could not follow all the details of it as he gave it, but I see from the document itself that it has 36 footnotes. I can't remember any previous report so

well supplied with footnotes. I mention this because in my opinion the report appeared to avoid the differences that faced the congress. This made it especially difficult for the reporter for the minority to try to bring out the meaning of the differences. He had to start from scratch, take the two documents, and try to show what was involved by singling out instances which by themselves might not really mean much, such as whether to say 'Stalinized Chinese Communist Party' or just 'Chinese Communist Party'. That was not easy.

We had two other minority reports. One was made by Comrade Peng, who made a very good presentation of his viewpoint. The gist of it was that he considered the minority document to be all right so far as the record was concerned, but that it missed the main problem, which was how to intervene actively in the dispute between the Liu Shao-chi wing and the Maoist wing of the bureaucracy. His position was for intervention on the side of Liu Shao-chi, whom he considered to be a kind of Khrushchevist. Khrushchevism should be regarded as having two aspects, Comrade Peng explained. On the one hand it is more crassly opportunistic than Stalin would ever indicate in language. On the other hand it stands for de-Stalinization. What we ought to support, critically, is the trend towards de-Stalinization. This was the reason Comrade Peng gave for intervening on the side of Liu Shao-chi.

Then we had a report by Comrade Capa of Argentina, who was also for an active policy of intervention in China, but he tended to be for intervention on the side of Mao. His difficulty was that there's a real problem of Maoism among guerrilla fighters in certain parts of Latin America, and he's against Maoism. Thus it was not easy for him to draw a line of separation.

One of the most interesting positions was the one advanced by Ernest Germain. He tried to bring out that the area of agreement between the two documents was much more fundamental than the disagreements; that actually the two documents were almost the same so far as the points of agreement were concerned. He listed these as follows:

First of all, both sides agreed that what we have before us is a deformed workers' state in China.

Secondly, that a political revolution is required.

Thirdly, both sides agree that the Cultural Revolution was a consequence of an intrabureaucratic struggle. A split occurred over differences within the bureaucracy.

But in the process of this struggle the masses were mobilized. This was No. 4 in the points of agreement, that there was a mass mobilization in China. And this mass mobilization had the effect, No. 5, of weakening the bureaucracy.

Finally, the sixth point, Maoism is alien to Marxism.

On all these points we have substantial agreement and we really should not have two documents before us, in the opinion of Comrade Germain.

The changes that they made in the original document, according to him, were either editorial changes, small changes, which we would probably agree to; and, No. 2, they added certain points to explain the objective reasons for the Cultural Revolution.

If you look at the two documents, you'll see a series of points listing a number of contradictions to be seen in Chinese society. These contradictions led

to the explosion known as the Cultural Revolution.

Comrade Peng made a good point on one of these—the contradiction between the population explosion and the limitation of resources available for this exploding population. He said that this could have been said for the last 100 years in China. And the same for many other countries in the colonial world, and this didn't explain the particular reasons for the Cultural Revolution in particular.

The third point that Ernest made was changes in statements of fact. He had the impression that the first draft of the resolution implied that there had been a military takeover and they had rectified this to indicate that there had not been a military takeover even though the military had grown stronger.

The fourth change was to repeat formulas which were used at the Reunification Congress to the effect that Peking comes closer to revolutionary positions than Moscow does. This point was discussed by some of the comrades at the congress, and there was considerable criticism by some of them as to the validity of this point.

Comrade Pierre Frank explained the insertion of 'bureaucratic centrism' to characterize the Maoist regime. I won't go into this now.

One of the points to be noted was Livio's impression that much of this discussion was scholastic. He told a story about reading a description in one of Solzhenitsyn's novels of Stalin writing on linguistics; and Solzhenitsyn says at one point, 'And at his shoulder stood the angel of scholasticism'. Then Livio added, 'I thought that angel was in this congress a good deal of the time'.

The vote on this resolution was three to one.

I should mention that on both the Latin-American resolution and the one on the Cultural Revolution, the International is going to continue the discussion. In many places, the documents had barely arrived on the eve of the congress, and in some places they had not, due to delays in translation and similar difficulties. It was agreed to continue the discussion on the Cultural Revolution immediately after the congress, and to re-open discussion on the Latin-American resolution within a reasonable time, six months or so.

We come to the resolution on the youth. We had expected that this would meet with rather general approval at the congress, because it dealt with an explosion on the campuses throughout the world. The role of youth was highlighted at the congress itself by a report from Pakistan, telling what the students had accomplished there. And while we were at the congress a number of items appeared in the papers telling about new student actions.

The report at the congress dealt with these questions, how the revolt of the youth had swept many countries, and how we as Trotskyists had become engaged in this movement in many countries, with special emphasis on what this had led to in France, and what had been accomplished there. From this, we had drawn the conclusion that the main task facing the world Trotskyist movement in the immediate period following the congress was to turn all its resources, insofar as they are available, for our main task, towards becoming preoccupied with this field of work, that is, among the radicalizing youth.

The document itself explained the reason for this on a world scale, the importance of this politically, and it proposed a series of transitional slogans for

work in this field. This is the first time that the Trotskyist movement has proposed a series of transitional slogans for this field.

Somewhat to our surprise, we discovered that there was a good deal of resistance to the document. This was led mostly by the young comrades from France. In their opinion—and this is listed in the order of their differences—first of all, the document was superficial. It didn't fit France. It was not worked out so they could utilize it in France as a guide for their actions. The answer of the comrades favouring the document was that what we were proposing here was a document indicating a line.

Perhaps I should mention that I got the impression that a different concept may be involved as to what should be aimed for in a resolution. Our convention documents are worked out to indicate a line to follow; then we write articles to provide the supporting material and to explain in detail all the developments. If you were to put all this together in a single document you would have quite a manuscript. But in a resolution we prefer leanness, just the main indications. The comrades in Europe have a tendency to make a huge document, filled with all kinds of explanations, points of fact, quotations, arguments. If someone asks where our movement stands on a particular question, a big document can be handed to him, and you can say, 'Here it is'.

This is very useful for a small organization with few members, that does not have its own press, that has only irregular or limited publications. A big document is very handy to have in such circumstances. So when they come to a congress, this is one of the things they expect from it. If they don't get it, they're disappointed and think the document must be superficial or abstract. It doesn't include everything they would like it to include. We noticed at the conference this tendency of comrades from certain countries to ask that specific points be included concerning their country that were of almost a tactical nature. They want such points in so their country is better represented. Then from their standpoint the document is less superficial, more concrete, and of a higher level.

Another argument against the document was that it was non-interventionist, that it was sort of propagandistic, and didn't propose direct intervention in struggles, how to intervene precisely. This was raised by some of the French comrades and was really part of their position that the document was not thoroughly enough worked out.

But I also think that their argument that the document wasn't interventionist was probably related to their feeling that the main axis of work in the immediate period should be preparation for guerrilla war and engagement in it where possible.

Then there was some criticism of the slogans. There are two types in the resolution, democratic and transitional. These comrades felt that the democratic slogans have been superseded. Either they belong to a stage long past or they are on too low a level to appeal to the vanguard that we want to reach.

One of our comrades made the observation that they did not seem to have passed the democratic stage in France, otherwise they would not have had the trouble they did in holding their congress. The right to hold a congress freely is a democratic demand. In the last issue of *Intercontinental Press* you can read a report on how some of the people who came to participate in the presidential campaign for Alain

Krivine were thrown out of the country by the police. This was a violation of democracy. Fighting for democratic rights in France still seems to be very much on the agenda.

On the question of transitional slogans, they raised the point that these really concern the working class, so that in relation to students the only slogan you could raise would be that workers control education. In the case of France, that would mean putting control of education under the CP. Do you want that?

We could see from this that their concept of a transitional programme was different from ours. We conceive of it primarily as a method, an approach, a way to engage in politics; whereas they appear to view it as a completed programme, a piece of literature. In any case, it was clear to us that more discussion is required on this particular point, to resolve any differences we may have over the nature of the transitional programme.

But after all this discussion, with these differences being posed sharply in some instances, and argued rather hotly, everybody agreed that the main area of our work in the coming period is the youth. Everybody agreed on this; there was no disagreement on that at all. And a motion was passed that this document should become the basis for a continuing discussion. No vote was taken on this resolution.

On activities. This report dealt mainly with the international campaigns that the Fourth International has been conducting—the big campaign around Hugo Blanco, for example, the big demonstrations around the struggle against the war in Vietnam, and so on. This included such campaigns as the one launched last year to help the French comrades during the May-June events. One of the encouraging figures, showing the growth of the Trotskyist movement, was the weekly circulation of the Trotskyist press on a world scale—about 100,000 copies. On recruiting, the success of the French comrades in this field was reported as a star example. From a very small grouping, they expanded to a rather sizeable formation. Now with the election campaign they have just been engaging in, they will probably be able to double the forces they had previously.

On the negative side, the reporter dealt with the perennial weakness of the centre, and the necessity of strengthening the centre. This, of course, had a familiar ring to our ears, since we have had a similar problem over the years. More personnel, more finances, better conditions of work—these, it was hoped, would solve the problem. They do have very difficult conditions considering the legal status of the Fourth International in most countries—it's not easy to remedy the situation.

Now let me summarize as to where we stand on the nature of the differences and what may happen. I think we will have to see how the discussion will develop before drawing any conclusions about this. The differences over orientation on guerrilla warfare should very shortly be put to the practical test, and I think it won't be too long before we'll be able to have better evidence on the particular question, one way or the other. We will see to what degree the coming social explosions involve the urban masses. Maybe the comrades who put great store in the strategy of guerrilla war will be able to gain a breakthrough, putting a Trotskyist government in power in some country in the immediate future. I am afraid that the odds are against this. The experience up to

now has not proved promising, including the experience of Che Guevara's attempt. But it remains to be seen. And maybe some of the comrades have learned much more than we would give them credit for.

On the question of China. This discussion should, I think, prove quite interesting. It may involve basic concepts and our basic analysis of the Chinese revolution; but it remains to be seen how deep the differences are, and how firm different comrades will stand on their positions as the discussion develops and arguments are advanced.

We should add that there's another area in which differences may come up—the estimate of 1953. One of the points that was left off the agenda was a resolution on the question of entryism as it was practised in Europe. The resolution ends the application of entryism, but also includes a historic estimate of it, so if you vote for the resolution you not only have to vote for the change in tactics, but also for the historic estimate included in the package. And this rather compels those who disagreed with this tactic, or considered it a dangerous one that may have at times cost more than it was worth—it requires them to say something about the historic estimate in the resolution. As to what that will lead to, it's hard to say; I don't imagine the differences being of such grave nature as to lead to any hot discussion.

But it could turn out that the discussion on China and on the question of guerrilla warfare as it develops, the question of party building as it is associated with the problem of entryism, that all of this could turn

out to be one of the richest and most educational discussions that the Fourth International and the world Trotskyist movement has had up to this point. That remains to be seen. My feeling is rather optimistic.

I should state that in my opinion, the discussion on these points is not at all doctrinaire; it's not a question of hair-splitting, dogma, or anything like that. In each of these instances, we're dealing with very real problems in which Trotskyists are deeply involved in their countries, problems which they meet every day, and try to handle for good or for bad, but real problems. In the case of guerrilla warfare, there's not a country in Latin America where this is not advocated by key sectors of the vanguard.

The question of the Cultural Revolution is of top concern because of the Maoist groupings. Relations with them vary from country to country or grouping to grouping. In some cases Maoists are involved in common actions with our comrades and this necessitates a certain tone in talking with them. In other places relations with the Maoists are quite different.

Our way of solving differences of this kind in the movement is through free and democratic discussion. That's the tradition in the Trotskyist movement. I think that in the coming period we'll demonstrate once again the contrast between the monolithism of bureaucratic parties like the CP and the Social Democracy, and a living movement like ours, that recruits and assimilates through discussion and debate related to actions in which we are engaged.

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LATIN AMERICA

Draft Resolution on Latin America

I

[A short introductory section on the economic background is here omitted.]

* * *

II

Dynamics and Role of the Social Classes

(3) The economic and social processes, more especially in the past 15 years, have culminated in important changes in the relative composition of the ruling classes. The most striking element has been the decline in the economic and political weight of the traditional layers of the big landlord, especially those less directly linked with the commercial and financial bourgeois layers. The more specifically urban ruling strata, linked to the new industrial sectors, to big business and to financial capital, have increasingly played the fundamental role, seeking to translate this economic and social reality into new formulas of political rule (for example, the Frei experiment in Chile, to a lesser extent that of Belaúnde in Peru).

However, the relative reinforcement of the industrial bourgeoisie in nowise means that a vigorous social class has developed able to play an effective leading role and to act independently. The economic consolidation of this class, its existence, is tightly bound up with the operations and interests of Yankee imperialism; or, in far fewer cases, to European imperialism. In the best of cases, it is more precisely joint ventures of foreign and native capital that is involved in which the native capitalists most often play a completely subordinate role and have no possibility of acting on their own. Thus, it would be absolutely incorrect to project the perspective of an increased role for the national bourgeoisie as a historical class capable of any kind of consistent struggle to free itself from imperialist tutelage (the bankruptcy of the Belaúnde experiment is significant in this regard, since Peru is one of the countries where there has unquestionably been a certain amount of industrial development).

(4) As a result of the well-known phenomena of the last 15 to 20 years, and especially with the growing urbanization, the new petty-bourgeois strata—white-collar workers in various government bureaus, trade, and the services, the liberal professions, etc.—have gained strength. These are the strata where the ideological influence of imperialism is the strongest (relative success of propaganda for the model of the consumer society, for the American Way of Life, etc.), where it is most difficult to mobilize against imperialism, and where the government parties recruit their electoral clientele (for example, part of Frei's support in Chile, of Leoni's in Venezuela, of the old coalition parties in Peru). However, the position of these strata is quite precarious, either because they live off risky

enterprises or get their incomes (at least in part) more from assorted expedients skirting the law than from the 'normal' functioning of the economic machine. They are at the mercy of this or that clique or group in power, being the first in any case to pay the price for recessions, attacks of inflation, and changes in the ruling cliques. They have no perspective for any real security or substantial social advancement for their children (who swell the ranks of the students engaging in 'confrontations'). This new petty bourgeoisie, then, can temporarily aid the political operations of the ruling classes and imperialism; but, in the last analysis, it is no social cement for the system; and, in critical situations, it can be swept by sudden flames of revolt.

(5) The peasantry represents a decreasing percentage of the total population and its specific economic weight is declining more markedly and more rapidly than its quantitative weight. Nevertheless, in absolute terms it still constitutes the majority and often the overwhelming majority of the population. It is still the social class which suffers the worst exploitation and oppression and which, in the existing economic and social context, has the least perspective.

The causes of the peasants' discontent and anger are manifold—the traditional land hunger, the choking off of subsistence agriculture, conflict with the state administration which extorts taxes and appears most often as an instrument of repression in the service of the exploiters, disillusionment arising from the fraudulent nature of the official 'agrarian reforms', fear of a comeback by the landlords in the countries where they have had to renounce certain privileges, difficulties arising from price and market problems especially for small independent farmers, unfavourable repercussions from prices on the world market, etc. But the outcome is always the same. Far from improving, the lot of the peasants remains tragic and is even getting worse. Hence the persistent impetus to struggle and revolt. This is all the more true because the peasants are less and less isolated from the international political and ideological currents; have assimilated the lessons of the Cuban revolution, whose fortunes they continually follow; have learned a great deal from the guerrilla experience and are not cut off from the student revolutionary movements, whose influence reaches them through a thousand different channels.

(6) The working class has not undergone any quantitative growth, despite the development of industrial production in certain countries. This is due to the fact that certain industrial advances have gone hand in hand with a crisis in the traditional sectors and have been based on technological innovations and rationalizations which involve a contraction rather than an expansion in manpower employed. Aside from completely exceptional cases, the tendency is by no means for the standard of living to rise but rather to stagnate and most often decline (in some cases, for example, Uruguay, to a dramatic degree). For both objective reasons (unemployment, underemployment,

etc.) and subjective reasons (their subordination to the government, their bureaucratization, the control of pro-Soviet Communist parties, etc.), the trade union organizations are increasingly incapable of meeting this situation, even of exercising effective pressure within the framework of the system. Most often it is primarily the mechanism of inflation that depresses the workers' standard of living, cancelling out the wage gains that are occasionally made. Furthermore, from the social standpoint, the workers are usually the ones who often suffer the effects of the rural exodus, inasmuch as their very modest wages must provide the subsistence for groups of relatives and friends swollen by newcomers from the countryside (in exceptional cases, as for example in Bolivia during the crisis in the mines, the inverse phenomenon develops, namely, a partial return of workers to their villages of origin). Finally, the proletarian populace has not experienced any improvement in housing, living conditions, medical care, transportation, etc., or the possibility to assure a normal education for their children.

For all these reasons, the working class is absolutely not, and has no consciousness of being, even a relatively privileged layer—as superficial theoreticians claim. Exploited and oppressed in manifold forms by the capitalist and imperialist system, they have not ceased in reality to be an explosive force, a motor force of the revolution. Powerful strikes in defiance of military dictatorships (for example, in Brazil), mobilizations accompanied by clashes with the repressive forces (Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, etc.), link-ups between nuclei of workers and the student movement (Mexico, Brazil) constitute, moreover, significant symptoms of a proletarian resurgence at the present time. If the broadest layers of the working class are still immobilized or neutralized and if the workers have not been able to play a substantial role in the revolutionary actions of recent years in certain countries, this is by no means a result of any degeneration or intrinsic weakness of the proletariat as a revolutionary force. It is the result of well-defined concrete factors, such as the momentary prostration resulting from severe defeats and repressions; the pernicious role of the trade union bureaucracies which are more and more integrated into the government structure, especially in certain important countries, the no less negative role of opportunist political leaderships enjoying prestige sometimes rubbed off from an international Communist tradition, the weight of unemployment which has continued to increase in recent years, and the danger of reprisals in the event of struggles or strikes—which is a danger the workers are ready to face only if they see a real perspective for political change.

(7) As a result of the persistence, or even accentuation of the rural exodus, the concentrations of plebian masses on the periphery of the big cities are still growing. These masses can find no real openings in the basic economic structure and remain condemned to a poverty-stricken and precarious existence (sometimes a meagre wage must suffice for a whole group, sometimes they live literally from hand to mouth, most often they apply their 'initiative' in the most diverse ways, from peddling and occasional services to theft and prostitution) . . . This potential, moreover, has already partially expressed itself several times in the course of the last ten years and in abrupt and violent mobilizations (for example, in Caracas, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago de Chile). More par-

ticularly, because of its essentially peasant origin and proletarian composition, this plebian element offers precious opportunities for concrete link-ups between the working class and the peasantry and for the circulation of revolutionary ideas.

(8) The revolutionary student movement shook several Latin American countries simultaneously with the student upsurge sweeping Western Europe and the United States. Common objective causes and subjective factors are unquestionably at the root of this upsurge which fits into the more general framework of the international revolt of the young generation. The common feature uniting all these struggles is the irresistible impulse generated by the ever deeper and more dramatic crisis shaking imperialism as a world system (which is concretized most specifically in Latin America in the influence of the Cuban revolution). It would be an error, however, to make too close an identification or analogy, forgetting in particular that:

(a) Students in the colonial and semicolonial countries have traditionally played a progressive and even revolutionary role since the beginning of the anti-imperialist struggles and they also played this role in powerful mobilizations for university reform in the 1920s.

(b) The phenomenon of the population explosion in the universities and schools which is at the base of the crisis in the European countries has not assumed the same proportions. In certain cases, the university population has even diminished.

This does not imply any underestimation of the revolutionary role the student strata can play on a continental scale in Latin America. In any case, the role of the students will be much more substantial than in the past and must no longer be conceived as simply a supporting force or source of cadres for the revolutionary organizations. The student movement must be understood as a political and social force capable of stimulating or deepening revolutionary crises by its intervention. This is true for the following reasons:

(a) The dynamics of the student mass movement is assuming an entirely different character than in the past because it no longer expresses the demands of strata of the national bourgeoisie for independence and autonomy. The student movement, whatever its point of departure, is becoming a consistently anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist movement (reflecting, among other things, a change in the social composition of the student population with the access to education of broad petty bourgeois and even popular strata).

(b) The international and continental context has radically altered, opening new perspectives with regard to the radicalization and mobilization of petty-bourgeois forces.

(c) The cadres and activists of the student movement have not suffered all the demoralization from the bad experiences of the old organizations and their leaderships and are not tied by any umbilical cord to the traditions of the workers' movement or the traditional national-revolutionary movement.

III

Political Situation and Perspectives

(9) The essential features of the political development can be summed up schematically as follows:

(a) Bankruptcy or profound crisis of the regimes which were presented as pilot models of the 'democratic reformism' boosted with the propaganda send-off of the so-called Alliance for Progress (the fall of the Belaúnde regime in Peru following the bankruptcy of the most 'progressive' wing of the national bourgeoisie, impasse of the Frei regime in Chile, deep erosion of the Venezuelan regime, which is incapable even of performing its repressive functions effectively).

(b) The collapse of the political equilibrium in those countries which for both historical and conjunctural reasons have known rather long periods of relative stability, and which represent exceptions with regard to the conditions prevailing on the continent as a whole (Uruguay and Mexico).

(c) A universal tendency toward the establishment of open or hypocritically camouflaged military regimes.

(d) A crisis of the military regimes themselves which are proving incapable of offering any solutions of the least durability to the crucial problems and as a result can maintain themselves only by the harshest repression (Bolivia, Brazil, etc.).

These conditions and tendencies as a whole, which in the last analysis reflect the economic and social tendencies mentioned above, create not only a continent-wide structural instability but more precisely a pre-revolutionary situation which is taking the form of both a more or less rapid ripening of profound social and political explosions (Brazil, Mexico, Chile), the outbreak of real revolutionary crises (Uruguay), and the emergence of a state of civil war in certain countries (Guatemala and partially Bolivia). The year 1968, in particular, was marked by a new revolutionary upsurge expressed in the mass mobilizations in Mexico and Brazil, the July-August crisis in Uruguay, the break-up of the regime and renewal of struggle in Bolivia a few months after the grave defeat of the guerrilla group led by Che, and the first symptoms of a revival of working-class nuclei in countries which have undergone years of stagnation (for example, Argentina).

(10) In view also of the international context (involving primarily the Cuban revolution's continuing to play its historic role¹), the general perspective must be one of increasing and mounting social and political tensions tending toward the outbreak of revolutionary situations.

In the economic sphere, a major improvement and hence a reversal of the trend would only be possible, for example, under the following conditions: a substantial rise in agricultural production, industrial development capable of absorbing large masses of the unemployed or underemployed population; the

1. It is not the purpose of this document to analyze the inner development of the Cuban revolution. However, it is obvious that the survival of the Cuban revolution and its maintaining its present role are dependent in the long run on an extension of the revolution in Latin America. The threat of imperialist military action against Cuba still exists and the crushing of the revolutionary regime would have very grave repercussions throughout Latin America. The danger of bureaucratization is not excluded. Objective factors favour such a development despite the conscious anti-bureaucratic campaign by a leadership which over a decade has given many proofs of its capacity.

creation of new jobs for the youths leaving the universities and schools generally; a favourable trend in the prices of certain products on the world market; the defence and expansion of outlets compromised or threatened, among other things, by the Common Market and the arrangements between the Common Market and certain African countries; and the development, if only very incompletely, of Latin American common markets. These are clearly unrealizable conditions in the present context, and thus the situation is hopeless for any economic solution, with all the inevitable implications this entails in the political field. In this context, then, the ruling classes will have no chance of forming coalitions or blocs on any even relatively stable base. In particular, this is so because none of the strata of these classes—including the 'new' national bourgeoisie—can get any real popular support either in the cities or in the countryside; because, as difficulties mount, internecine struggles within these classes will inevitably multiply; and because American imperialism's margin for manoeuvre—most of all in the economic sphere but also in the political—is tending to shrink constantly.

This does not exclude possible oscillations in the most disparate leaderships, including new ephemeral pseudo-reformist attempts, political gambles, and even variants within the framework of military regimes (groups of officers are continually playing at 'Nasserism' in several countries and the immediate import of military coups is not always the same in every given situation). But this will change nothing in the general, deep-seated tendency: in a situation of chronic crisis and pre-revolutionary tensions, the ruling classes will inevitably be impelled to adopt brutal repressive measures and utilize despotic and terrorist political regimes. Since these classes often are not very solid as social forces and cannot realistically contemplate solving their problems with popularly-based reactionary regimes on the fascist model, military regimes remain by far the most likely recourse . . .

IV

Criteria and Lines of a Revolutionary Strategy

(11) The fundamental dynamics of the Latin-American revolution is the dynamics of permanent revolution, in the sense that the revolution is developing into a socialist revolution without intermediary stages or dividing lines. This does not mean that the revolution could not begin as a democratic anti-imperialist revolution in regard to its objectives and the consciousness of the masses participating in it. But such a possibility does not affect the inherent logic of the process with all its inevitable implications for the line-up and role of the social classes. Because a workers' state already exists in Latin America, in an eminently revolutionary world context; because the broadest masses are constantly impelled by powerful objective factors to struggle against the capitalist system as such and have made great advances in their social and political consciousness; and because the imperialists, after the Cuban experience, have clearly recognized the dynamics of the confrontation that is developing, the perspective of the permanent revolution is no longer only a historical tendency but a reality in this stage of the class struggle. The age of permanent revolution, in a direct and immediate sense, has already begun in Latin America. The fact that this conclusion is shared by the leadership of the first Latin American socialist revolution is a historic

step forward. This leadership by its attitudes, its actions and generalizations has contributed in a decisive way to the maturing of a new vanguard.

(12) The first conclusion that follows from this analysis is that any perspective of collaborating with the 'national' bourgeoisie or certain of its so-called progressive sectors must be rejected. Parallel to this, all equivocal conceptions or formulas on the nature of the revolution such as 'national democracy', 'people's democracy', or 'anti-imperialist and anti-feudal' revolution, which have been irretrievably refuted both positively and negatively by vital revolutionary experiences, must be rejected. In this area, too, what was true in general in the past is assuming a more concrete and immediate importance when, faced with the Cuban workers' state, the bourgeoisie cannot help but align itself on the side of imperialism (leaving aside possible temporary diplomatic manoeuvres) and is proving itself absolutely incapable of achieving a programme of even the most modest democratic reforms. New or relatively new tendencies in industrial development (see points 2 and 3) do not justify any change in the basic evaluation. The national bourgeoisie strata linked to modern industry arise or develop by intertwining themselves completely within the imperialist structures and in strictest dependence on them. They are intrinsically incapable of the least independent action in either the economic or political fields.

(13) In a revolution proceeding according to the logic of the permanent revolution and in a worldwide and Latin American context, which necessarily forces a split between the fundamental classes from the outset, the leading role in achieving revolutionary democratic objectives belongs to the working class, which, by its place in the process of production, is the basic force antagonistic not only to imperialist but to native capital. This does not imply any underestimation of the role of the peasantry, especially of the poorest peasant strata and radicalized petty-bourgeois layers. In fact, in most of the countries the most probable variant is that for a rather long period the peasants will have to bear the main weight of the struggle and the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie in considerable measure will provide the cadres of the movement. This means that the leading role of the proletariat can be exercised under diverse forms: either by the wage workers (industrial workers, miners or agricultural workers) participating at the head of revolutionary struggles, which will doubtless be the case in only a minority of Latin-American countries; or indirectly, the leadership of these struggles being in the hands of organizations, tendencies, or cadres issuing from the workers' movement; or in the historic sense of the term, by means of the programme and theories issues from Marxism. The completion of the revolution into a socialist revolution is in any case inconceivable without the mobilization and very broad participation of the proletariat.

(14) The problem now posed in Latin America is not primarily that of determining which are the driving forces of the revolution, a problem which for revolutionary Marxists has been resolved at the theoretical level. The working class, still representing a small percentage of the population in most of these countries, obviously cannot play its role without the fundamental and irreplaceable support of the peasant revolt. The events of 1968, moreover, have further

clarified the role which radicalized petty-bourgeois strata and the masses of student youth can play (among other things, they can serve as a medium for concrete interaction between the cities and the countryside, between the urban vanguard and the vanguard forming in the villages). Gigantic forces composed of millions of men and women in fact exist and can be mobilized in revolutionary struggle now or in the next stage. The real problem is to determine and to apply a strategy based on premises of general scope while being at the same time adjusted to specific and conjunctural needs, which could take advantage of all the existing potential, co-ordinate the different sectors, and strike the adversary effectively without running the danger of the movement being crushed. In the immediate future, the revolutionary vanguard must be aware of the grave danger inherent in the present situation, characterized, particularly in several countries, by a crying contradiction between the objective potential and the subjective will to struggle of broad strata on the one hand and on the other by the persistent weakness of the organized vanguard, even sectors which have played an effective role in major episodes of the most recent years. The danger lies more precisely in the possibility either of spontaneous explosions without a leadership and without clear perspectives, or premature and adventuristic moves by nuclei of courageous militants. In both cases, the result would be a quick and murderous repression which would decimate the vanguard and throw the movement back.

(15) The rich experiences in guerrilla warfare—with its successes, its vital role in upsetting the political equilibrium, and even its grave defeats—as well as the experiences with great mass movements, especially in 1968, which have revalidated urban struggles, against the generalizations of superficial theoreticians, but which have at the same time confirmed their limitations and their blind alleys, make it possible now to delineate more clearly an overall strategy, avoiding the sterile antithesis between conceptions based on the absolute primacy of mass work, which consider guerrilla warfare to be only a completely secondary point of support, and simplistic conceptions, according to which guerrilla warfare alone can unfailingly unleash a revolutionary process and assure its victorious development.

There is no universally valid formula which can be applied to surmount difficulties and contradictions which have real objective roots; even the adoption of correct basic guidelines offers no automatic guarantee against making mistakes in applying them. In other words, no generalization is sufficient to resolve the problems facing the revolutionary movement unless it is constantly tested and enriched by concrete analyses. The failure of certain guerrilla experiments (in Peru, for example) came about, in large measure, more from errors in assessing the situation, the trends, and the relationship of forces among the masses than from errors in conception.

In Latin America, the polemic between the advocates of the 'democratic' and 'peaceful' road and the advocates of the revolutionary road has been entirely outmoded; the first hypothesis does not have the least objective justification and can be defended only by naive and unrepentant Utopians or by ossified bureaucrats who have lost all revolutionary perspective and inspiration and whose sole concern is to

cover up their conservative, routinist practices with theoretical obfuscation. The problem which is posed is that of the concrete forms of the revolutionary road; it is necessary to guard against simplistic schemas on the one hand, but on the other, no concession whatsoever must be made to ideas according to which the armed confrontation, conceived as the culmination of a progressive rise and broadening of the mass movement, can in principle be reduced to a minimum.

The fundamental perspective, the only realistic perspective for Latin America is that of an armed struggle which may last for long years. This is why the technical preparation cannot be conceived merely as one of the aspects of the revolutionary work, but as the fundamental aspect on a continental scale, and one of the fundamental aspects in countries where the minimum conditions have not yet been met. It must not be forgotten that the armed struggle itself cannot succeed, in the last analysis, except on the basis of a correct political line, and that the application of such a revolutionary strategy requires first assembling a minimum of organized and politically homogeneous forces.

(16) The great mass mobilizations of 1968 were extraordinarily important because they expressed the depth and explosive nature of the contradictions of Latin-American society and its structures; because they swept away with one blow all the 'theorizing' on the inherent corruption of the urban milieu and *a fortiori* all the lucubrations on the incapacity of the worker masses and the urban masses in general to play a dynamic revolutionary role; because they gave a powerful stimulus to the maturing of thousands of new cadres who will be instrumental in the victory of the revolutionary struggles which are being prepared. Nonetheless, revolutionary Marxists cannot conclude from this that the 'classical' variant calling for a progressive rise and broadening of the mass movement and its structuring and re-enforcement through traditional organizational forms before it reaches the armed struggle has been revalidated. In the international context, after all the experiences of the last decade and in face of an increasingly brutal repression by the native ruling classes and imperialism, such a variant is not the most probable. In reality, the adversary is in nowise ready to allow a mass revolutionary movement to organize more or less legally or normally, not only because in the given economic and social conditions a general mobilization even for economic goals would threaten disastrous consequences for the system, but also and above all because the men in power no longer underestimate the dynamics of mass movements, even when they start off with limited objectives. The experience of Bolivia, where all forms of normal organizational activity are continually stamped out, as well as the experience of Peru, where repression continues rampant, especially in the countryside, are absolutely clear. The same holds for Mexico where the ruling class, reverting to its most barbaric traditions, did not hesitate to stage a full-fledged massacre of the students (the Brazilian regime's official and 'semi-official' counter-attack followed the same logic).

The exceptional variant of an explosive crisis involving the breaking up or paralysis of the state apparatus and a mass mobilization so impetuous that it could prevent or neutralize recourse to repression as a decisive measure, cannot be categorically excluded, but a strategy on a continental scale cannot

be based on exceptional phenomena, and in such a case imperialism would very likely intervene militarily (as happened already in the case of Santo Domingo).

(17) Even in the case of countries where large mobilizations and class conflicts in the cities may occur first, civil war will take manifold forms of armed struggle, in which the principal axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare, the term having primarily a geographical-military meaning and not necessarily implying an exclusively peasant composition of the fighting detachments (or even necessarily preponderantly peasant composition). In this sense, armed struggle in Latin America means fundamentally guerrilla warfare.

The strict selection of this central axis must be complemented by a very precise understanding that there will inevitably be a whole gamut of variants and that the different factors at work will combine in different forms according to the different countries and conjunctural situations. The two extreme possibilities can be indicated almost symbolically by taking on the one hand the case of a country like Uruguay where the armed struggle will be essentially urban and where the regime could have already been overthrown on the basis of a powerful urban mass movement if it had been technically and politically armed with such a perspective, and on the other hand by taking the case of a country of overwhelmingly peasant composition, without large urban concentrations, where the guerrilla war will be almost exclusively rural and peasant until the very eve of the enemy's final defeat. A variant that merits particular study is that of very large countries where armed struggle could result in the occupation of whole regions, geographically and socially favourable to this, for a prolonged period without bringing on the disintegration of the central power. In such cases the conception of mobile columns would not necessarily be contradictory to that of liberated zones.

(18) Under the perspective of a prolonged civil war with rural guerrilla warfare as its principal axis, even in the most difficult phases of severe repression and temporary prostration, the problem of liaison between the guerrillas and the masses will be a vital one.

In a situation of pre-revolutionary crisis such as Latin America is now experiencing on a continental scale, guerrilla warfare can in fact stimulate a revolutionary dynamic, even if at the start the attempt may seem to have come from abroad or to be unilateral (which was the case with Che's Bolivian guerrilla movement). But in any case it must be realized that without the active sympathy, the protection, and the solidarity of certain sectors of the masses, the chance for consolidating and strengthening the guerrilla nuclei diminish to the extreme and the political repercussions which the armed action is striving to provoke dwindle. Secondly, a major problem which no clear-sighted revolutionary leadership can sidestep is how to utilize all the explosive social potential (which for structural reasons cannot be channelled into the framework of the actions and initiatives proper to revolutionary minorities) during the whole struggle and not just at the culminating moment of the overthrow of the system.

Hence the necessity to :

(a) Take advantage of every opportunity not only to increase the number of rural guerrilla nuclei but

also to promote forms of armed struggle specially adapted to certain zones (for example, the mining zones in Bolivia) and to undertake actions in the big cities aimed both at striking the nerve centres (key points in the economy and transport, etc.) and at punishing the hangmen of the regime as well as achieving propagandistic and psychological successes (the experience of the European resistance to Nazism would be helpful in this regard).

(b) Advance a programme not just of immediate economic and political demands but also transitional demands able to mobilize and raise the political consciousness of the worker, petty bourgeois, and plebian masses as well as the student masses and thus create growing tensions threatening the system (this would also make it more difficult for the governments to concentrate their repressive forces exclusively in the zones of armed struggle). An orientation and mobilization based on a transitional programme conceived in accordance with the logic of an anti-capitalist struggle would, moreover, help certain revolutionary organizations to overcome the difficulties arising from the fact that while having been formed for revolutionary combat and armed struggle, these organizations have been unable for conjunctural reasons to put their ideas into practice. They thus run the risk in practice of combining abstract revolutionary propaganda with mobilizations for immediate goals which do not involve a revolutionary dynamic, even if pursued by extraparliamentary and extralegal means. The determination of the themes of a transitional programme for each given stage is clearly the task of revolutionists in the various countries.

(19) Such a conception of the revolutionary strategy of armed struggle and guerrilla war refutes not only the simplistic 'guerrillist' idealizations (which reflect a lack of patience with regard to organized action and a hope of substituting improvisations for the whole, often onerous, labour of preparation and organization), but also the spontaneist theses which challenge the role of the party (most often on the basis of an arbitrary interpretation of and generalization on the Cuban revolution). Spontaneism, substituting abstract notions for concrete historical analysis, draws the conclusion, from the absolutely necessary critique of specific parties which bear a heavy responsibility for the manifold failures and prolonged prostration of the workers' movement, that parties in general must be rejected as instruments of revolutionary struggle. From their very nature, such conceptions are incapable of providing an answer to the essential problem of the liaisons between the guerrillas, the armed struggle and the mass movement and the political development of the latter. Unfortunate experiences have been, in the last analysis, brought about or facilitated either by false or illusory solutions to this problem or a mystical confidence in the automatic nature of certain processes.

While it is necessary to reject the schematic and paralyzing conception according to which everything hinges on the preliminary existence of a genuine party with all its traditional structures (and the Cuban experience has unquestionably shown that under certain conditions it is possible for the political organization to develop and reinforce itself as the armed struggle unfolds), the two following fundamental facts must, however, never be lost sight of :

(a) The existence and functioning of a revolutionary party, far from being an outworn schema of outmoded Marxists, corresponds to the concrete and ineluctable needs of the development of the armed struggle itself (this, among other things, is the lesson of Hugo Blanco's experience in Peru).

(b) The revolutionists must struggle for the most favourable variant: acting in such a way that when the armed struggle begins, if there is not already a genuine party, completely structured, with a large mass influence (a very unrealistic perspective in almost all of the Latin American countries) in existence, there are at least solid nuclei of a political organization, co-ordinated on a national scale. This means more particularly in the countries where the armed struggle is not on the agenda at present, not to choose the road of spontaneist or putschist temptations inexorably doomed to failure, but to take advantage of the breathing space.

V

Situation of the Revolutionary Workers' Movement and the General Lines of Orientation

(20) The Cuban revolution, the conflicts in the international Communist movement, particularly the Chinese polemics, and the experiences of the struggle in recent years have produced profound upsets, new relationships of forces, splits, and multiple realignments in the Latin American revolutionary workers' movement. The overall picture can be outlined as follows :

(a) The Cuban revolution continues to represent the fundamental pole of attraction, and on the level of ideological and political influence the Castroist current remains by far the strongest. However, this tendency has not developed an important degree of organization and in fact the OLAS likewise has not succeeded either in finding a solution to the problem of crystallizing and consolidating organized new vanguards.

(b) The traditional workers' organizations have been undergoing an irreversible erosion and are being ceaselessly shaken by grave crises. In certain socialist parties (Chile, Uruguay), the Castroist influence is very strong. And this is true also for most of the Communist Parties, especially those which have not yet suffered left splits and are compelled to engage in centrist manoeuvres in order to capitalize, if only partially, on the prestige of the Cuban revolution (e.g., the attitude of the current represented by Arismendi and certain attitudes even of the Chilean CP).

(c) The revolutionary nationalist movements which played a key role for a whole period have definitely exhausted themselves; and where they retain a measure of influence (APRA in Peru, AD in Venezuela), this goes hand in hand with an outright reactionary policy. This does not exclude the possibility that tendencies or groups issuing from these movements can survive and still play a certain role, on condition, however, that they break completely with the old organizational structures and integrate themselves into the revolutionary left on the basis primarily of defence of the Cuban revolution (this possibility exists, for example, for left Peronist nuclei, Brazilian left nationalist currents, and groups in the PRIN and even in the left MNR in Bolivia). The

problem of relations of the revolutionary organizations with such groups, moreover, is an aspect of the more general problem of the relations between the revolutionary vanguards and petty-bourgeois sectors capable of being drawn into the struggle against imperialism and national capitalism.

(d) The revolt of the Catholic vanguard has now assumed considerable scope (Camillo Torres has become the symbol of a continentwide current). The importance of this rests fundamentally in the fact that it is an additional expression of the way the social and political crisis is tearing the ideological fabric of the system, driving towards the revolutionary pole plebian and petty-bourgeois strata who have been tied essentially by ideological bonds.

(e) The revolutionary left is going through a feverish phase of splits and restructuration with a whole gamut of results, going from the important advances in vanguard regroupment in Brazil (especially the formation of the POC) to the still very difficult situation of the Peruvian revolutionary organizations (where the Vanguardia Revolucionaria, which was hit much less hard by repression than the FIR, the MIR, and the ELN, has gained strength relatively), from new experiments on a centrist or left centrist basis (for example, the Argentinian student organization which came out of a split from the CP) to other experiences following a much more revolutionary direction (the Chilean MIR in particular). The birth and development of revolutionary groups and organizations have been stimulated by the example of the Cuban revolution, the continentwide pre-revolutionary situation, the anti-imperialist struggle in Asia and more particularly Vietnam, and, recently, by the repercussions of the international wave of student revolt. The temporary difficulties, the lack of experience, the inevitable failures, and the contradictory impulses coming from the international workers' movement are causing a fragmentation which reflects in part the historic divisions in the working-class movement and results in new variants and combinations which in certain cases represent a new level in the re-organization of the revolutionary movement (for example, the experiences of the POC and PCR in Brazil, the Castroist and pro-Chinese movements in Santo Domingo, the united Guatemalan guerrilla front).

While the revolutionary left starts off from a common acceptance of the general conception of armed struggle, a basic division repeatedly recurs over the characterization of the Latin-American revolution, with certain tendencies still questioning its outright anti-capitalist character, advancing the old formulas of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, people's revolution, etc., and thus leaving open the perspective of collaboration with layers of the 'national' bourgeoisie (see in this regard the theses of the orthodox pro-Chinese organizations and the formulations of Douglas Bravo, etc.). A second cleavage emerges around conceptions advanced under the opposing form of a people's war (most often based on the Asian experiences). Finally, differences arise continually over the analysis and assessment of gains and setbacks as well as over determining the tempos and forms of actions in preparation.

In conclusion, the problems of re-grouping the revolutionary forces and giving structure to the new vanguards is far from resolved despite powerful

objective stimuli, enormous advances in subjective revolutionary development, and the massive eruption on to the scene of the young generation. The necessary solutions can be envisaged, in the last analysis, only on a continental scale, but without leaving aside the manifold particularities and without any consoling illusions such as the automatic nature of the processes or the possibility that audacious subjective actions are sufficient by themselves (repeated experiences have shown that even the formation of a guerrilla nucleus is not automatically a positive solution, moreover the painful ups and downs of the Venezuelan guerrilla movement prove how many difficulties arise in the course of the armed struggle).

(21) The work of revolutionary Marxists in re-grouping and organizing the vanguard must bear in mind the following very general criteria :

(a) Integration into the historic revolutionary current represented by the Cuban revolution and the OLAS, which involves, regardless of the forms, working as an integral part of the OLAS.

(b) Rejection of any *a priori* exclusionary attitude toward any revolutionary tendency, which, while not excluding criticism and polemics, implies the possibility of common revolutionary fronts making it possible to re-group forces and to collaborate in both the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle and the struggle against the conservative and bureaucratic tendencies of the workers' and peasants' movement.

(c) Elaboration of a revolutionary strategy, based on the continental experience and the general principles outlined elsewhere in this document, corresponding to the concrete needs and potential of each country or group of countries at a given stage. This also implies the need for a political programme under which broad social layers can be mobilized with the aim of continually deepening the contradictions of the existing regimes at all levels; in other words, a programme which, without ignoring immediate economic and political demands (the importance of which was confirmed, for example, by the events of the summer of 1968 in Mexico), would stress objectives and slogans of a transitional nature, able to mobilize the masses at their present level of consciousness in a struggle, the dynamics of which would necessarily collide with the system as a whole.

It is the job of the various national revolutionary Marxist organizations to translate this general orientation into concrete formulas and guidelines. They must, in any case, understand that they cannot measure up to the height of their tasks in the dramatic stage which is opening, if they prove incapable of building more solid organizational structures on the basis of substantial political homogeneity, of adopting methods of work corresponding to the necessities of a struggle conducted under conditions of repression and strict clandestinity, of combining detailed empirical analyses and tactical flexibility with firmness in criteria and general conceptions (the prerequisite for avoiding any impressionism and hasty generalizations), of assuring much more than in past years international and continental co-ordination by more genuine integration in the International, including the level of its centres of leadership and theoretical work.

November 1968

'Assessment of the Draft Resolution on Latin America'

This consists of Joseph Hansen's views on the Pabloite conference's resolution on Latin America

THE DRAFT RESOLUTION on Latin America submitted by the United Secretariat for the consideration of the delegates at the next world congress of the Fourth International falls broadly into two parts. About one half of the document consists of a summary of the economic, social, and political conditions in Latin America that point to the perspective of socialist revolution. The second half or so proposes a general tactic applicable on a continental scale to assure success in the struggle for this perspective; namely, the technical preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period. Included in the second part, in passing, are polemics in support of the proposed continent wide tactic.

Nothing essentially new is advanced in the economic summary. The economic tendencies 'remain pretty much as in the past'. Under capitalism only stagnation and further decline lie ahead, with the imperialist grip becoming ever tighter and costlier.

Similarly in the role of the social classes, the processes of 'the past fifteen years' have seen a decline in the weight of the landlords, while the increased weight of the urban ruling strata has been offset by the crippling operations of US imperialism. The national bourgeoisie is incapable of offering any historical perspective.

As for the 'new petty-bourgeois strata' that have appeared in the 'last fifteen to twenty years', these constitute the strongest ideological base for imperialism, although they are subject to being swept into the vortex of revolution.

The peasantry is declining in relative size but still remains the majority, has the least perspective, and is charged with discontent and anger. The peasants display a persistent inclination to engage in struggle and revolt: have learned revolutionary lessons; and have ties with the revolutionary students in the cities.

The working class is not a relatively privileged layer. The workers do not view themselves as being privileged, and 'have not ceased in reality to be an explosive force, a motor force of the revolution'. They, like the peasants, have ties with the revolutionary students. They have engaged in powerful strikes 'in defiance of the military dictatorships' and there are 'significant symptoms of a proletarian resurgence at the present time'.

The plebian masses in the cities, who have immigrated from the rural areas, represent another 'explosive potential' which has already partially expressed itself several times in 'the last ten years'.

The revolutionary student movement has turned out to be so powerful that it has already shaken several Latin-American countries. Despite its limitations, the student movement is capable of 'stimulating or deepening revolutionary crises'.

In the political arena, the 'democratic' regimes have ended in bankruptcy. The relative political

stability of countries like Uruguay and Mexico is gone. Military regimes are on the rise; but they, too, are in continual crisis.

Thus Latin America is characterized by 'structural instability' on a continental scale, by 'more precisely a pre-revolutionary situation which is taking the form of both a more or less rapid ripening of profound social and political explosions . . . the outbreak of real revolutionary crises . . . and the emergence of a state of civil war in certain countries . . .'

Hence the general conclusion to be drawn, in the light of the international context and the continued existence of Cuba, is that the perspective is one of 'mounting social and political tensions tending toward the outbreak of revolutionary situations.'

The document emphasizes that there is no way out economically for the ruling classes and imperialism in Latin America; 'the situation is hopeless for any economic solution, with all the inevitable implications this entails in the political field.'

This means internecine struggles within the ruling class as the difficulties mount while the margin for manoeuvre left open to American imperialism constantly shrinks.

From this it must be concluded that not only in a broad historical sense, 'but in a more direct and immediate one,' Latin America has entered a period of 'revolutionary explosions and conflicts.'

Allowing for a possible degree of exaggeration as, for example, in the estimate of the general political level of the peasantry on a continental scale ('the peasants . . . have assimilated the lesson of the Cuban revolution'), the general conclusions outlined in the resolution are shared by probably all of the revolutionary tendencies and even by the more objective specialists in the imperialist camp. From the viewpoint of the Trotskyist movement there is every reason for the greatest optimism about the perspectives in Latin America.

* * *

But it is precisely here that a disappointing note is struck. The document indicates considerable reservations as to the possibility of a major victory anywhere in Latin America in the near future. These reservations are not developed. They are merely indicated in arguing for the general tactic of technical preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period.

Thus the following assertion appears in point 16: 'The exceptional variant of an explosive crisis involving the breaking up or paralysis of the state apparatus and a mass mobilization so impetuous that it could prevent or neutralize recourse to repression as a decisive measure, cannot be categorically excluded, but a strategy on a continental scale cannot

be based on exceptional phenomena, and in such a case imperialism would very likely intervene militarily (as happened already in the case of Santo Domingo).'

In the context of the analysis of the general economic, social and political situation, this paragraph is hard to explain. It has been specified that on a continental scale 'a pre-revolutionary situation' is shaping up, with the ripening of 'profound social and political explosions' and the 'outbreak of real revolutionary crises.' Nevertheless, we are told that a crisis explosive enough to paralyze a state apparatus or a mass mobilization of truly impetuous character, while it cannot be excluded, is an 'exceptional variant.'

If the variant is actually exceptional, there must be definite reasons for it. Either the economic situation is not hopeless for the Latin-American ruling class, or they are not as decrepit as indicated, or the masses are not as revolutionary-minded as painted, or the candidates for revolutionary leadership are not likely to measure up to the political challenge involved.

The alternative would seem to be that either the general analysis is defective or the resolution takes a pessimistic view of the possibilities of constructing a revolutionary leadership.

The resolution does not go into this. With its reference to Santo Domingo, the paragraph ends on a note reminiscent of the days before the Cuban revolution when even some revolutionists were of the opinion that if a revolution happened to break out and win power in one of the smaller countries of Latin America it would quickly be crushed by US imperialism. The revolutionary experience in Santo Domingo, where an urban explosion precipitated the biggest crisis which US imperialism has had to face up to now concurrent with the Vietnam war, would seem to deserve better appreciation in a resolution summing up the major developments in Latin America for the past decade and projecting possibilities for the future.

It should be mentioned in passing that it is difficult to follow the logic of saying that US imperialism will 'likely intervene militarily' in the event of a major explosive crisis as in the case of Santo Domingo while saying nothing about the continual intervention of the CIA and Pentagon in the conflicts with rural guerrilla forces. The fact that the military challenge offered by the guerrillas has been successfully met by US imperialism and its agents in the past nine years by a relatively modest outlay in arms, advisers, and participants (and minimum overhead political cost) as compared with the outlay and political cost of a military invasion on the scale of the Santo Domingo operation (or the Bay of Pigs) can hardly be considered a reason for ignoring it, unless the view is held that intervention by US imperialism at this level is, because of the small forces involved, really unimportant in the continental strategy of technical preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period.

The same depreciation of what is possible practically in Latin America would also appear to be involved in the argument in point 15 in which the resolution warns revolutionists to be on guard 'against simplistic schemas', but also warns that on the other hand 'no concession whatever must be made to ideas according to which the armed confrontation, conceived as the culmination of a progressive rise and

broadening of the mass movement, can in principle be reduced to a minimum'.

The warning seems to be not to count on any progressive rise and broadening of the mass movement that would culminate with such force as to paralyse and shatter the central power.

The underlying doubts about what is really possible in Latin America emerge still more clearly in point 16 where the resolution refers to the great mass mobilizations of 1968 in such urban centres as Mexico City. Directed at the false theorizing of those who doubt the capacities of the working class and the urban masses to play a dynamic revolutionary role, the argument is qualified as follows:

'Nonetheless, revolutionary Marxists cannot conclude from this that the "classical" variant calling for a progressive rise and broadening of the mass movement and its structuring and reinforcement through traditional organizational forms before it reaches the armed struggle has been revalidated. In the international context, after all the experiences of the last decade and in face of an increasingly brutal repression by the native ruling classes and imperialism, such a variant is not the most probable.'

This affirmation stands in contradiction to the principal conclusion of the first part of the main resolution, 'The New Rise of the World Revolution', drafted for the forthcoming world congress. That document states: 'This new revolutionary rise means that essentially proletarian forces and vanguard political currents carrying on the traditions of revolutionary Marxism and workers' democracy will be in the thick of the fight, that their methods of intervening, of action, and organization will draw much closer to the classical norm of proletarian revolutions.'

Quite clearly, on this point the draft resolution on the world situation is at variance with the draft resolution on Latin America. In deciding which of these opposing positions to adopt, it is to be hoped that the delegates will decide that the perspective in Latin America are not qualitatively different from those in the world as a whole. The conclusion of the main resolution follows logically from the general analysis of the world situation—the revolutionary pattern is giving evidence of drawing closer to the 'classical norm'. What is out of line is the conclusion of the document on Latin America that 'such a variant is not the most probable' in that part of the world.

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Naturally, arguments that may be advanced in favour of the latter view should be heard and weighed with the greatest attention; and, if they turn out to be persuasive, then the main resolution should be altered accordingly.

In the draft resolution on Latin America only one argument is advanced on this question. It is limited to happenings in Latin America and does not refer to the conclusions drawn in the main resolution. However, the argument could be advanced with regard to situations in a number of other areas, including the countries in the imperialist sector. Here is the argument: 'In reality, the adversary is in nowise ready to allow a mass revolutionary movement to organize more or less legally or normally, not only because in the given economic and social conditions a general

mobilization even for economic goals would threaten disastrous consequences for the system, but also and above all because the men in power no longer underestimate the dynamics of mass movements, even when they start off with limited objectives.'

In essence the argument is not new. Not since the first appearance of the proletariat as an independent political force has the adversary taken a permissive attitude toward revolutionary formations, including small ones. The Fourth International has had a rich experience in this. Underestimation by the adversary of the potential of revolutionary groups or mass mobilization is truly an 'exceptional variant'. Our movement has always proceeded on the assumption that the adversary sees his class interests clearly and appreciates the dangers besetting them perhaps better than anyone else, even though at a certain point he may be struck by paralysis of the will and may close his eyes to what is happening. The lesson drawn by the Bolsheviks on this, and repeated by Trotsky, is that revolutionists in face of the most savage repression have no choice but to continue their patient political and organizational work—in the underground or in exile.

* * *

The proposals on strategy and tactics in the draft resolution should be considered in relation to the contradiction between the appreciation of the truly enormous explosiveness of the situation and the doubts as to the real possibilities for a successful revolution in Latin America along the lines of the Russian Revolution in 1917.

'The problem now posed in Latin America,' it is stated in point 14, 'is not primarily that of determining which are the driving forces of the revolution, a problem which for revolutionary Marxists has been resolved at the theoretical level.' The driving forces consist of the working class, backed by a peasant revolt, and aided by its allies among the petty bourgeoisie and the student youth. Nor is the primary problem one of the size of the forces. 'Gigantic forces composed of millions of men and women in fact exist and can be mobilized in revolutionary struggle now or in the next stage.' We reach the nub of the question. The 'real problem' is to work out a strategy that can succeed, bearing in mind the 'crying contradiction between the objective potential and the subjective will to struggle of broad strata on the one hand and on the other by the persistent weakness of the organized vanguard. . . .'

This is a re-statement, in terms of the Latin-American situation today of the key question posed on a broader scale 30 years ago in the *Transitional Programme*: 'The strategic task of the next period—a pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organization—consists in overcoming the contradiction between the maturity of the objective revolutionary conditions and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard (the confusion and disappointment of the older generation; the inexperience of the younger generation).'

How is this crying contradiction to be resolved? A fruitful approach for a resolution on Latin America that seeks to make an advance in this respect might be to examine concretely the reasons for 'the persistent weakness of the organized vanguard'. This would

mean considering the experiences in each country—what actually happened, for instance, in the various guerrilla struggles, what policies were followed, what actions were undertaken, and how these were related (or not related) to the specific economic, social, and political situations in which they occurred and which they sought to affect. The examination should not be limited to the record of the anti-Trotskyist tendencies active in these struggles. The course followed by the Trotskyist groups or parties in each of these countries should likewise be presented and evaluated, particularly as to how they contributed to (or hampered) carrying out the task of building a revolutionary Marxist combat party. As an example of what is required, the excellent beginning made by Hugo Blanco in evaluating the experiences of his group can be cited.

The lessons should be considered in accordance with the method used by Trotsky in the *Transitional Programme* so as to derive slogans and organizational forms and political lines of attack against the adversary geared to the concrete situation in each country in a way to facilitate bringing the immense power of the masses in the urban centres to bear in the revolutionary process. The Fourth International as a whole could profitably participate in this as it did in working out the original *Transitional Programme* and its 'first applications.

Such an approach, which would be in accordance with the 'classical' methodological procedure of our movement, would lower the risk of reaching views that conflict with the broad conclusions of the general analysis of the Latin-American situation and the world situation.

* * *

Instead of drawing a balance sheet in this way, the draft resolution simply proposes a continental tactic or strategy of technical preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period.

The proposal is advanced almost casually. We hardly notice it until, in point 15 where armed struggle is posed as the fundamental perspective in Latin America, we read: 'This is why the technical preparation cannot be conceived merely as one of the aspects of the revolutionary work, but as the fundamental aspect on a continental scale, and one of the fundamental aspects in countries where the minimum conditions have not yet been met.' Looking back to see how the entire Trotskyist movement in Latin America became committed to the 'technical preparation' of armed struggle as the 'fundamental aspect' of revolutionary activities for years to come, even in countries where the conditions are not yet ripe, we notice that it occurred in what looked like an attack against any universal formula.

The second paragraph of point 15 begins with the correct observation that there is 'no universally valid formula which can be applied to surmount difficulties and contradictions which have real objective roots . . .' It is mentioned that 'certain guerrilla experiments' failed, as in Peru, but the failures, it is asserted, 'came about, in large measure, more from errors in assessing the situation, the trends, and the relationship of forces among the masses than from errors in conception'. In short, the conception was correct and remains correct. It is universally valid. By the time we reach

point 18, it is taken as so firmly based that it can be mentioned almost parenthetically: 'Under the perspective of a prolonged civil war with rural guerrilla warfare as its principal axis . . .'. With the correctness of the conception assumed to have been established, the document concerns itself with aspects of applying it concretely, with possible variations, and so on.

The possibility that there might be a connection between the errors that led to failures in 'certain guerrilla experiments', errors which were of a political nature as the sentence indicates, and the conception itself is not even mentioned. But if the possibility so much as existed that the errors in practice might be related to an error in theory then the conception and its application should have been subjected to rigorous analysis before accepting it.

Not even the origin of the conception is indicated. So far as the resolution is concerned, it could be taken to have originated from within the Trotskyist movement. This is not so, of course. Isn't it all the more incumbent on those responsible for drafting a resolution that proposes a universal formula of this kind to indicate its origin and to evaluate its possibilities and its limitations, particularly as they have been disclosed by life? The failure of the draft resolution to trace the origin and ups and downs of the proposed tactic—both its theory and its practice—is a serious flaw. The oversight appears strange in view of the scope of the resolution which seeks to assess the major trends in the Latin-American situation for the past ten to 20 years. And it appears all the stranger in view of the fact that the resolution proposes that this tactic should constitute the major orientation of the Trotskyist movement in all of Latin America for a long time to come . . . in fact, up to the final victory which it is hoped it will assure.

* * *

The truth of it is that the resolution is a rather faithful reflection of the publicly expressed views of the Cuban leadership on this question. It goes so far in conforming with their position as to postulate that guerrilla war can stimulate a revolutionary dynamic 'even if at the start the attempt may seem to have come from abroad or to be unilateral (which was the case with Che's Bolivian guerrilla movement)'. Such a statement should be highly qualified, otherwise it can feed the propaganda that guerrillas *cause* revolutionary situations, not to mention its use as justification for adventures doomed to certain defeat.

The proposed tactic can hardly be weighed properly without referring to its relation to the success of the Cuban revolution and to the way, since then, it has been extrapolated by the Cuban leadership in Latin America and elsewhere. The resolution fails to do this in even the most summary fashion.

* * *

The following considerations may prove useful as a point of departure for probing this question:

(1) Guerrilla war in Latin America was not the invention of the Cubans. It has existed in the continent as a living tradition with a venerable history.

(2) One of the most unexpected features of the Cuban revolution was that this tactic could prove sufficient to win. Our conclusion at the time was that

this testified much more to the weakness of imperialism and the national bourgeois structure than to the discovery of something superior to a Leninist combat party.

(3) More than a mere guerrilla band was involved in the Cuban struggle. The July 26 Movement had an extensive organization. Its petty-bourgeois programme enabled it to secure financial assistance in a big way from Cuban bourgeois circles. It was also able to operate quite freely in the United States where it was actively supported by a large Cuban colony.

(4) The July 26 Movement proceeded to a considerable extent like a party based on a single issue—armed struggle against the Batista dictatorship. Its appeal cut across class lines.

(5) The key leaders of this movement were of such high calibre that when the revolution reached the crossing point to socialism, they plunged ahead, splitting their own movement, and transcending the programme they began with.

(6) In transcending their original programme and declaring for socialism, they also transcended the tactic through which they had won. Just as every succeeding revolution in Latin America must take as its model *socialist* Cuba instead of the July 26 Movement as it was first formed, so in tactics it is compelled, if success is to be assured, to make an advance, developing means capable of achieving the mass mobilizations required to win a socialist revolution. This means putting politics in command. Technique, tactics, even armed struggle, must be subordinated to political consciousness, to political direction, to a clear political programme. The key problem, consequently, is to build a combat party capable of seeing this and doing it.

(7) The Cuban leaders, although the logic of their own revolution calls for it, have not proceeded along this line up to now. The reasons for this are plain. Dependent on aid from the Soviet Union, aid which was absolutely essential to the survival of the Cuban revolution, they were confronted with the problem of the Kremlin's policy of 'peaceful co-existence' with imperialism and in particular its rabid opposition to Trotskyism. The course followed by the Cubans shows that they decided that if errors were to be made, they should be made on the side of caution so as not to jeopardize the flow of material aid. This explains why the Cuban Stalinists were not reproved for their gross attacks on Trotskyism and why Castro himself could make the kind of attack he did at the Tricontinental Conference in January 1966. It explains, too, why the Cubans took such an ambiguous attitude during the May-June 1968 events in France and why to this day they refrain from publicizing the role of the Trotskyists in the French upsurge. And it explains why Castro—with very important reservations, it is true—came out on the side of the invaders of Czechoslovakia. In short, the Cubans have not yet settled accounts with Stalinism. Until they have done so, it is misleading to say without qualification, as the resolution does in point 11: 'This leadership by its attitudes, its actions and generalizations has contributed in a decisive way to the maturing of a new vanguard.'

(8) There is an immense anomaly in this failure to settle accounts with Stalinism, inasmuch as the Castro team won their victory in Cuba in face of the default of the Blas Rocas and their active opposition.

One of the main lessons of the Cuban revolution is that it is now possible to outflank the Stalinists from the left.

(9) Instead of fostering an extension of this course elsewhere in Latin America, the Castro team sought to utilize the existing Communist Parties. On the surface, it appeared feasible to repeat the political formula of the Cuban revolution—but with a different combination of political tendencies from those assembled in the July 26 Movement in the struggle against the Batista dictatorship. The formula was to suppress the political differences with the Stalinists and form a combination on the single issue of armed struggle against the indigenous dictatorships and their imperialist backers. The basic idea was once again to make politics secondary to technique, to subordinate political strategy to the tactic of rural guerrilla war.

The results were hardly brilliant. No sector of the opposing camp was taken in by the camouflage. The lack of political clarity could only serve to sow confusion in the ranks of the revolutionists. Still worse, greater forces were now required to win; i.e. the masses in the urban centres. But the tactic itself was not designed to raise their political understanding, to organize and mobilize them. It banked on winning by pitting very small contingents in skirmishes remote from the cities. Moreover, the political confusion in the camp of the revolutionists involved a decisive issue in the new stage of the Latin-American revolution—the role of Stalinism. Lack of clarity on this led to some very costly defeats.

The Cubans have made progress in overcoming this limitation but only through very painful experiences. It is the beginning of political wisdom to insist that revolutions in Latin America, or elsewhere in the world where similar conditions exist, cannot be won along a 'peaceful' or 'democratic' road, or under the leadership of an alleged progressive sector of the national bourgeoisie. The issue, once considered in the radical movement to be a hallmark of 'Trotskyism', proved to be of key importance in bringing the Cubans to understand that Stalinism and organizations dominated by Stalinists are not reliable instruments of revolution. But by confining the dispute with the Stalinists almost exclusively to the issue of armed struggle, and limiting it even further to the question of rural guerrilla war, the Cubans gave precious political ground to their opponents by default. Thus the Stalinist betrayers of the revolutionary struggle in Venezuela were able to advance telling arguments on why the workers need a revolutionary party. For the Venezuelan Stalinists, who cited Lenin in a completely abstract way, this was only a smokescreen; but the Cubans were not able to answer them effectively and this could not fail to influence at least some good revolutionary-minded militants. In the same way, the Cubans failed to offer an adequate challenge to the Stalinists in the urban centres, making it easier for them to retain a rather large following which they, of course, are now seeking to use in their wheeling and dealing in the bourgeois electoral arena.

The Cubans likewise conceded the field of theory to the Stalinists under the hardly laudable guise of ridiculing the 'theorists' as against men of action, who don't need to learn about revolution in books inasmuch as they are practising it with guns.

The Cubans even made the mistake of posing the issue in terms of a conflict between the men in

the mountains and the bureaucrats in the city over who should have final command. Arguments were adduced concerning the technical difficulties of urban guerrilla war, the helplessness of the masses, the corrupting influence of the city, the difficulties and dangers of maintaining liaison, to explain why leadership should be in the hands of the men in the rural areas. The political issue underlying this obscure debate was very simple: should the struggle be led by men committed to a revolutionary struggle for socialism or by men committed to Moscow's treacherous foreign policy of 'peaceful co-existence' with imperialism? This was the key question no matter where the leadership was located under the exigencies of the struggle. But this issue, which should have been brought to the fore in order to clarify the dispute and to fight for a majority on the basis of it, was left in obscurity by the Cubans. The Stalinists took full advantage of the ineptness of the Cubans, or their hesitation at speaking out because of possible economic pressure from Moscow, to further obscure and bury the question.

The result of these mistakes was that even in such a favourable situation as the one in Venezuela, with the prestige of the Cuban revolution behind them, and the not immaterial advantages of state power, the Cubans ended up in their factional struggle with the Stalinists in a small minority.

(10) Immediately after the Cuban victory, the Trotskyist movement held that one of the most important tasks facing the revolution there was construction of a revolutionary Marxist party. This has been borne out in the most decisive way by events and ought to be pointed out in the draft resolution on Latin America.

(11) The key task facing the vanguard in Latin America, as elsewhere, still remains the construction of a revolutionary Marxist party. This takes priority over all questions of tactics and strategy in the sense that these must be directed to achieving this end as the decisive link in the revolutionary process. It is not enough to say, as the resolution does in point 19, that 'The existence and functioning of a revolutionary party, far from being an outworn schema of outmoded Marxists, corresponds to the concrete and ineluctable needs of the development of the armed struggle itself . . .'

The party is not a means to the armed struggle, as this sentence seems to say; the armed struggle is a means to bring the proletariat to power under the leadership of the party. Construction of the party must be viewed and presented as the central task, the main orientation, the almost exclusive preoccupation of the vanguard. And the explosiveness of the situation in Latin America does not lessen the need; it intensifies it.

* * *

In light of this, it is disorientating to present the party as an *adjunct* to the development of armed struggle. But this is what the draft resolution appears to do in the following aspects:

(1) In recruiting a minimum number of militants. Point 15 states, 'It must not be forgotten that the . . . application of such a strategy requires first assembling a minimum of organized and politically

homogeneous forces.”

(2) In helping to solve the problem of liaison between the guerrillas and the masses. Point 18 suggests that the solution lies through special tactical applications of guerrilla war and through the development of immediate and transitional demands, the latter helping to mobilize and raise the political consciousness of the masses as well as create growing tensions that ‘also make it more difficult for the governments to concentrate their repressive forces exclusively in the zones of armed struggle’. Either these political tasks are performed by the party, or the guerrillas themselves do it. In either case, these party tasks are conceived in the light of how they affect the achievement of guerrilla war and not vice versa.

(3) In helping to direct groups, temporarily unoccupied with revolutionary work, into fruitful fields. As point 18 suggests, a transitional programme can be utilized to help ‘certain revolutionary organizations’ which, while ‘having been formed for revolutionary combat and armed struggle . . . have been unable for conjunctural reasons to put their ideas into practice’.

(4) In providing revolutionists with something to do in countries ‘where the armed struggle is not on the agenda at present’. As indicated in point 19, they should ‘take advantage of the breathing space’ to struggle ‘for the most favourable variant’, seeking to build at least a solid nucleus on a national scale if a genuine, completely structured party with large mass influence is not already in existence (which the resolution considers to be ‘a very unrealistic perspective in almost all of the Latin-American countries’).

In the four points above, the formulations in the resolution, taken in conjunction with the proposed tactical orientation, could give the impression that our movement does not conceive the party as the key link in mobilizing the masses for the conquest of power but simply as a useful instrument in the tactic of engaging in rural guerrilla war and as a constructive way to fill in time while waiting for an opportune moment to plunge into the really revolutionary work of armed struggle. If this impression is correct, then the draft resolution on Latin America would appear to be in conflict with the projected main resolution of the coming world congress which ends with the following reaffirmation of the basic position of our movement :

The Fourth International has shown that even with still very weak forces important results can be attained in building an International. By doggedly continuing to build their own parties and their own International, revolutionary Marxists feel that at the same time they are making the most effective contribution to creating the mass revolutionary Marxist International which is indispensable in bringing the enormous revolutionary potential that has now appeared to realization as victories.

* * *

Section V of the draft resolution on Latin America, ‘Situation of the Revolutionary Workers’ Movement and the General Lines of Orientation’, seeks to indicate the attitude to be taken toward other currents in the broad revolutionary movement on the basis of the general tactical formula of technical preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war

for a prolonged period. The final paragraph indicates that it is ‘the job of the various national revolutionary Marxist organizations to translate this general orientation into concrete formulas and guidelines’. However, having laid down a general tactical prescription for the entire continent, the draft resolution in reality has in advance fixed the tactics to be followed by all national sections, leaving up to them only the job of implementing the tactical formula on the local scene.

The tendency to lay down a blanket tactical prescription is so marked that the draft resolution even specifies in point 21 that ‘integration’ into the historic revolutionary current represented by the Cuban revolution and the OLAS [and not by the Fourth International?] involves, regardless of the forms, working as an integral part of the OLAS’.

As against this, the main resolution for the world congress states (in section VII): ‘The Cuban leadership’s left turn between the Tricontinental Congress [conference] and the OLAS Conference created the possibility for a united front of all tendencies in the Latin-American revolutionary movement which agree with the general line of OLAS. The revolutionary Marxist forces have been able to take advantage of this possibility to broaden their field of action in countries like Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Guatemala.’

The main resolution speaks of the ‘possibility’ for a ‘united front’, of the ‘possibility’ for revolutionary Marxists to ‘broaden their field of action’. The draft resolution on Latin America specifies: ‘working as an integral part of the OLAS’. The main resolution leaves open the tactical question; the subsidiary resolution closes the question.

The impression given by this is that just as the main orientation advanced in the draft resolution on Latin America appears to be an adaptation to the orientation of the Cubans at their present level of development, so the prescription of working as an ‘integral part’ of the OLAS appears to be an adaptation to the organizational level they have reached.

To make an organizational adaptation of this kind could have very serious consequences for the Latin-American sections of the Trotskyist movement, whose problem is precisely the one indicated in the main resolution—to doggedly continue ‘to build their own parties and their own International’. In what way becoming an ‘integral part’ of the OLAS would help in building ‘their own parties and their own International’ is hard to say. All the more so in view of the fact that the draft resolution itself notes in point 20 that the Castroist tendency ‘has not developed any important degree of organization and in fact the OLAS likewise has not succeeded either in finding a solution to the problem of crystallizing and consolidating organized new vanguards’.

In the absence of a series of political and organizational prerequisites, to make the kind of sweeping organizational commitment proposed by the draft resolution is unsound. It would be wiser, one would think, to leave the field of relations with OLAS open, simply indicating as the main resolution does, the possibility of united fronts and a wider field of common action, a position that accords with the reality.

* * *

The inversion in the document by which tactics and technique are placed above political strategy leads

to a deficiency in an area where the draft resolution could possibly have offered some very helpful suggestions for the coming period. In the two final paragraphs of section V, for instance, after stating that elaboration of the continental strategy 'outlined elsewhere in this document' must be done in correspondence with 'the concrete needs and potential of each country or group of countries at a given stage', the document states that this 'also implies the need for a political programme' of a transitional nature. The document does not deal with this need in a concrete way at all. The next sentence states that it is up to 'the various national revolutionary Marxist organizations to translate this general orientation into concrete formulas and guidelines'. It is true that there is some ambiguity here as to whether this refers to the continental strategy of preparing for and engaging in rural guerrilla war, to the problem of a transitional political programme, or to a combination of the two. In point 18, however, this is made clear: 'The determination of the themes of a transitional programme for each given stage is clearly the task of revolutionists in the various countries.'

The draft resolution on Latin America thus contributes exactly nothing, not even a suggestion, on the themes of a transitional political programme for the intensely explosive situation facing our movement there.

Of course, it is the task of revolutionists in the various countries to work out the themes of a transitional programme for each stage. But it is still more their task to work out the tactics for each stage. Since tactics are dealt with in the draft resolution, are in fact its main preoccupation, the question arises as to why it is silent as to possible transitional themes for the coming period. It would have been completely in the tradition and spirit of the *Transitional Programme* adopted by the Fourth International in 1938 to have considered the question.

The answer appears to lie in the nature of the concept at the heart of the draft resolution. Once it has been decided that 'the principal axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare, the term having primarily a geographical-military meaning', the question of transitional steps is narrowed to the extreme, becoming reduced even in the area of armed struggle. Even worse, the central concept of the *Transitional Programme* drafted by Trotsky on the utilization of transitional slogans and transitional measures (including the field of armed struggle) to mobilize the masses and construct a combat party is hard to fit in with this 'principal axis' if it can be fitted in at all.

The reasons for this are not difficult to discern. Trotsky's *Transitional Programme* conceives the socialist revolution as carried forward by mass mobilizations, in the process of which a competent revolutionary leadership, organized in a combat party, is forged. The concept of rural guerrilla war as the principal axis for a prolonged period projects a small, heroic elite carrying the battle in the absence of the masses and in areas remote from the cities. Thus if the concept of rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period is adopted as the principal axis of revolutionary work, then the problem of mobilizing the urban masses becomes somewhat irrelevant, and along with it most of the *Transitional Programme*.

* * *

This probably explains, too, why the resolution pays so little attention to the developments among the youth in the urban centres in 1968, particularly the explosion that occurred in a capital as important as Mexico City. The meaning of the events there deserves the most careful analysis, especially with regard to their significance for transitional themes immediately applicable in Mexico but also worth studying for their possible bearing on similar or potentially similar struggles elsewhere in Latin America.

The May-June events in France clearly influenced the student masses and their allies in Mexico City, as the Mexican comrades have pointed out in their illuminating articles. Something of much deeper significance was also visible.

We have regarded the Cuban leaders as the first contingent of a new generation of revolutionists free from the crippling influence of the Stalinist movement. This was the main thing we hailed in the Cubans when they toppled the capitalist structure in Cuba. Arriving at revolutionary conclusions on the basis of their own thinking and their own experience, they were the harbingers of a great new development.

We are now witnessing a new phase of this process on a world scale. It became unmistakable several years ago with the appearance in the United States of the widespread and militant opposition among the youth to the war in Vietnam and the response this received internationally among the youth. That the youth themselves have tended to link this with the Cuban revolution and its leaders has been shown by many of the slogans they have advanced and the high regard in which they hold Fidel and especially Che.

The May-June events in France were clinching proof of the importance of this development and its broad scope. After this came further confirmation from Mexico City. In fact today there are few areas in the capitalist world that are unable to provide their share of evidence.

There is absolutely no escaping the conclusion that for the Fourth International the crucial question it faces is its capacity to sink roots politically and organizationally in *this* sector. This holds on an international scale, including Latin America, perhaps Latin America above all if the draft resolution is correct in its estimate that a pre-revolutionary situation exists there on a continental scale.

So far as the strategy of our movement is concerned, the main characteristics of this thrust of the youth in a revolutionary direction are (1) its occurrence in urban centres, (2) its involvement of considerable masses, (3) its tendency to try to link up with the workers or other sectors of the masses and to draw them into action.

It thus follows that the problem of developing transitional slogans and measures to attract these forces to the Fourth International is an acute one. What does the draft resolution on Latin America contribute to help solve this problem in that sector of the world? The answer is, nothing.

If anything, it diverts attention from the key problem now facing the Fourth International. For in place of making a concrete contribution on such political questions as how to draw the masses of revolutionary-minded urban youth closer to the Trotskyist movement and how through them to come closer to the masses of urban workers, the draft resolution advances instead the idea of preparation of

and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period 'primarily in the geographical-military meaning' of the term.

* * *

Another point to consider is whether the central concept in the draft resolution on Latin America, namely, giving a 'geographical-military' orientation priority over political strategy, can be logically confined to just one continent.

The Cubans have hardly viewed it that way, and certainly the tendencies immediately under their influence do not view it that way. They incline rather strongly to view it as an internationally valid orientation, except—perhaps—in the imperialist sector, about which they have little to say; and the sector of the degenerated or deformed workers' states about which they have nothing at all to say so far as the struggle for a political revolution is concerned. It would be very difficult to find convincing arguments to persuade these currents that in the colonial world as a whole the tactic of preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period is valid only for Latin America.

In fact logic speaks for an opposite conclusion. If the draft resolution on Latin America were to be passed in its present form by the coming world congress, our movement would be hard put to explain why the orientation decided on as good for Latin America was considered to be bad for the rest of the colonial and semicolonial world. It would certainly be contended that such a position is inconsistent and that such a sharp geographical demarcation cannot reasonably be made.

* * *

Still another consideration must be weighed. Under the title of 'An Insufficient Document', Comrade Livio Maitan submitted for the international pre-congress discussion a letter which he wrote to the members of the United Secretariat on May 15, 1968, offering some criticisms of the first draft of the main resolution. He raised an important question in his letter which may have a bearing on the reason why the draft resolution on Latin America projects the orientation it does. Comrade Maitan points to the theoretical achievements and the theoretical strength of the Trotskyist movement. Then he turns to its organizational weakness and the problem of overcoming it:

But it is only by successes or revolutionary struggles at the head of a mass movement in one or several countries that we will be able to surmount our difficulties and present contradictions. What is expected from us from now on is that we demonstrate in practice the historical value of our movement and we will be judged essentially on this basis. This can appear, at bottom, to be an elementary truth, but it is a question of inspiring our whole activity with this recognition. It is a question more precisely of determining in what countries we have the best chance of a breakthrough and subordinating everything to the elementary necessity for a success in these countries, and even, if necessary, in a single country. The rest will come later.

There are, in fact, several countries where we at present have possibilities for an important break-

through (youth movement in France, anti-war movement and youth movement in the United States, South Africa with a certain time), and we must unquestionably make an effort in the direction of India, but we must place everything above all on a sector of Latin America and you know very well which one. We must exploit the preparatory period of the congress to convince the entire movement to operate in practice, every day, with this perspective. Permit me to express myself a little paradoxically: it is necessary to understand and to explain that at the present stage the International will be built around Bolivia.

Comrade Maitan wrote this a few days after the battle of the barricades in Paris but before the mass mobilization in France has assumed such proportions as to create a revolutionary situation in which the Trotskyist youth succeeded in developing their initial openings into positions of key importance. That is why he says nothing about the meaning of the successes of the Trotskyist movement in France nor what this as well as the May-June events signified for the future of the Fourth International and the world revolution as a whole. 'Parts' of his letter, he admits in his August 20 postscript, were 'outmoded by events'. Other parts, it should be added, were outmoded by changes in the first draft of the main resolution. Yet Comrade Maitan still thought that certain of his ideas remained valid. Leaving aside the points which he believes were not fully taken into consideration in reworking the main resolution and some other more or less secondary items, it would seem that the chief point on which his views remained unchanged by the events in France (and Mexico City) was the view expressed in the two paragraphs quoted above. Moreover, he considered this to be so important that he submitted this letter as part of the preparatory discussion for the coming world congress.

Comrade Maitan appears to believe that the fate of the Fourth International now hinges on a 'breakthrough'; that if this breakthrough can be obtained, the 'rest will come later'; that it is possible that such a breakthrough can be achieved in several places, the most promising at the moment being Bolivia. Hence, he comes to a far-reaching conclusion: we 'must place everything above all on a sector of Latin America...'. The preparatory period of the congress must be utilized to convince 'the *entire movement* to operate in practice, every day, with this perspective'. (Emphasis added.)

It would seem undeniable that the orientation proposed in the draft resolution on Latin America of preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period on a continental scale fits in completely logically with the view advanced by Comrade Maitan above. If we have interpreted correctly what he is saying, he contends that the entire Fourth International must now stake everything on securing and forwarding the material means to sustain rural guerrilla war in a selected country in Latin America. And if this is to be done effectively, the entire Fourth International must subordinate everything else to this task, including possible openings in other countries making different demands and requiring different tactics.

In short, the draft resolution on Latin America appears to have been drawn up on the basis of a quite different concept of the key problem facing the Fourth International and the orientation and tasks

required to solve it than the concept expressed in the main resolution with its requisite orientation and tasks for the coming period. How the implicit contradiction between the two resolutions would be resolved in practice if both were adopted without either of them being substantially changed is hard to foresee.

* * *

If we have misinterpreted Comrade Maitan's letter and read into it something which he does not hold, he will, of course, correct us. With this in mind, we venture to say that the essence of his position appears to us to be stated in the following sentence in his letter: 'What is expected from us from now on is that we demonstrate in practice the historical value of our movement and we will be judged essentially on this basis.' By 'demonstrate in practice' he means that the Fourth International must achieve a 'breakthrough' in the near future in 'one or several countries'.

There can be no question of the revolutionary sincerity of Comrade Maitan or his concern for the success of the Fourth International. His efforts to contribute with all his considerable abilities to achieving an organizational breakthrough is wholly in the tradition of our movement. Nevertheless, as we see it, he puts the question of the practical test of the historical validity of the Trotskyist movement in too narrow a framework. If we were to apply this same criterion to the First, Second or Third International, it would have to be concluded that all of them failed to meet the test of history. Yet this is not the case, as we all know. The function of the International is to represent the long-range interests of the proletariat. The final judgement of the successive internationals will come, after the class struggle is won, when it is estimated what they contributed to overthrowing capitalism and establishing socialism on a global scale. It is the function of the Fourth International to keep its sights fixed on this target and to measure the outcome of all the battles in the light of how they slow down or speed up final victory in the class war.

Looking at the function of the Fourth International in this way, it is a mistake to assume that it has a gun at its head, that it must produce an immediate 'breakthrough', that it is under compulsion to comb the world for possibilities of meeting the demand in a hurry.

There is a very real danger under the impulse of such considerations that the movement can become overcommitted in an organizational way at a pre-selected point; and, by the very investment in this choice, become caught up in false hopes there while becoming partially blind to a very real opening in a completely unexpected area. The exact spots of revolutionary breakthroughs, historic experience has shown, are notoriously difficult to predict.

Several other unfavourable factors come into play when leaders of the International feel under compulsion to produce an immediate organizational success of major proportions. A tendency develops to underestimate the importance of small gains and successes which can quite realistically be achieved. In certain situations these can add up rather rapidly to give political prestige and weight to a section of the movement. Disregarded because they are obviously not large or individually impressive compared to what one

feels under compulsion to produce, the section can stagnate and never get beyond the most primitive of beginnings organizationally.

A compulsion of this kind also makes it more difficult to make a timely retreat when it is called for. The stupidities this can lead to are illustrated by the headline in a recent issue of *Granma*: 'Retreat: A Word Eradicated from the Dictionary'. The journalist who composed that headline forgot, for some reason, that retreat has not been eradicated from tactics and strategy in either war or politics.

Similarly the movement can become trapped in a commitment much beyond its organizational resources. When the inevitable accounting comes, the result can be demoralization of the cadres, who feel cheated of even the modest successes that might have been achieved had a more realistic course been followed.

This would be one of the grave dangers facing the Fourth International if it were to commit the whole movement to concentrating on the gamble of a breakthrough in a selected country by means of preparation of and engagement in rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period. The disproportion between the material resources available to the Fourth International and what is required to mount such a venture is very great. The Fourth International has access neither to sources of heavy financial support like those at the disposal of the July 26 Movement nor the means available to a leadership holding state power. The risk of a major defeat for the Fourth International would be correspondingly high; the chances for a breakthrough by means of this tactic correspondingly low. It should be added that if the Fourth International did have such resources it would be well advised to employ them along other lines much more likely to bring an early success in the current world situation.

* * *

In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, we stress the following points:

(1) It is completely correct, and, in fact, highly productive to mobilize the entire international Trotskyist movement around single situations or single issues. Three examples can be cited from recent experience: (a) The international campaign on behalf of Hugo Blanco. (b) The attempt to co-ordinate anti-war demonstrations on an international scale. (c) The help secured for the French comrades in the May-June events.

What is to be particularly noted in these three instances was the way the campaigns helped the national sections which engaged in them.

(2) The same holds for mobilizing aid for a national section under heavy repression. Financial aid, in particular, must be sought to help sustain the key cadres and keep them functioning. Any number of instances of this could be cited from the history of the Fourth International. It is a perennial problem but also a perennial opportunity to build and reinforce the ties of international solidarity that bind the movement together.

(3) A section of the Fourth International may find that at a certain stage of the revolutionary process in its country, it is necessary and productive to engage in guerrilla war, as a specific form of armed

struggle. The proviso is that it be conceived as a tactic entailed by political considerations, not as a new-found formula guaranteeing quick or certain success, and that it be within the means available to the section. This holds, it should be added, not only for Latin America but for similar areas elsewhere.

Finally, in view of the differences that have emerged over the relative place of guerrilla war as a tactic, it would be well to examine the question more specifically in relation to the *Transitional Programme*. Our movement has already recognized that in certain countries, under certain circumstances, guerrilla war can play a positive role. However, it has not analysed the negative consequences of guerrilla war if it is attempted in countries, or under circumstances, where it is out of place. Experience would now seem to testify rather heavily for the conclusion that while

the appearance of guerrillas can signify a sharp rise in the class struggle, it can also mark a phase of decline, in which case it must be judged as a sign of despair and desperation, one of the symptoms of defeat.

As a consciously applied tactic, guerrilla war would seem to come under the section of the *Transitional Programme* dealing with the arming of the proletariat and the linkup between the proletariat and the peasantry.

A critical study of the varied experience with guerrilla war in a whole series of countries would be extremely useful to put this tactic in better perspective, to relate it properly to political strategy, and to counteract the rather widespread tendency to elevate it into a universal formula and even a panacea.

'An insufficient document'

By Livio Maitan

Rome, May 15, 1968

IF URGENT TASKS had not prevented me from undertaking the job during the next weeks, I would have liked to explain in detail the reasons that led me to abstain at the time the US adopted the first draft for discussion at the world congress ['The New Rise of the World Revolution']. Unfortunately I must limit myself to the substance of it by reproducing the text of a letter which I sent to the US (United Secretariat) on May 15.¹

First of all *some remarks of a methodological nature*. We were in agreement that it was necessary to prepare some theses, whereas the draft does not have that character (except, to a large degree, the first chapter, which, moreover, is by far the most satisfactory). Even abstracting from the lapses in editing, which are very bad, on which I am not calling as much attention as appears to me to be called for, we are confronted with a descriptive document, in which conjunctural appreciations are very frequent and which from this fact give it rather the nature of a general resolution. I do not have any objection to the congress adopting such a document in addition, but we need something else now. I thus suggest re-affirming the decision to adopt theses aimed essentially at arming or re-arming the movement on certain major questions which are posed at this convulsive stage of the world situation.

Within this framework, I believe it would be useful to base our generalizations not on general appreciations but on analyses of certain typical cases, or typical in representing a tendency (for example, the experience of recent years in Czechoslovakia, the Syrian experience, the guerrilla struggle in Thailand).

I will take this up in the different chapters. I will indicate my opinion on certain problems, at times by following more or less what is said in the draft.

1. It should be noted that in my letter the numbering of the chapter does not correspond to the numbering in the final document, which added Chapter II on France.

(I) It was clear to us from the beginning what were the causes and the limits of certain defeats suffered by the colonial revolution, particularly beginning in 1964. It was not a matter of a structural evolution unfavourable to the revolutionary tendencies (nowhere in the world has there been any stabilization whatsoever of the economic and social structures of the colonial and semi-colonial countries), but of the interaction of the two following fundamental factors:

(a) The crisis of the imperialist system and the maturing of the revolutionary forces on a world scale operated in such a way that the growing over into a socialist revolution became more and more a problem of the immediate future, a concrete imperious necessity. This pointed to inevitable dramatic confrontations, in which the outcome was determined essentially by the lapse in the subjective factor (which only in certain cases can be explained as owing to reasons pertaining primarily to the economic and social structure).

(b) The victory of a socialist revolution in Cuba and the disintegration of the colonial system in Africa were a major lesson for American imperialism, which adopted a line that took the offensive much more than in the preceding decade, demonstrating its determination to exploit to the fullest extent its enormous military potential and its political and economic weight. The new economic expansion in the US, while not the most direct cause of the imperialist counter-offensive—as some people have held—was unquestionably one of the essential conditions for unleashing this counter-offensive and for its partial successes.

The war in Vietnam was, from all the evidence, the culmination of this more aggressive policy of imperialism. It cannot be denied that in the first phase it permitted imperialism to score considerable gains, above all preventing the Vietnamese revolution from gaining a complete victory on a national scale, which would have been perfectly possible in the immediate future in the absence of foreign military intervention. The Indonesian affair was also, at least in part, a

by-product of this same intervention.

But as the test of strength became prolonged and deepened and the Vietnamese organized their extraordinary reply, the war became a verification of the overall relation of forces. The imperialists ran into an outcome that was exactly the opposite of what they wanted; namely, they revealed for the whole world to see their incapacity to liquidate the Vietnamese revolution, despite the timorous and wait-and-see attitude of the USSR, and, in fact, China also, thereby suffering a historic setback. At the same time the limits of the receding of the colonial revolution in 1964-1967 was confirmed by the clearer and clearer fact that the regimes set up by counter-revolutionary coups (particularly Brazil and Indonesia) proved absolutely incapable of achieving any economic and political stabilization that was at all durable, having to once again confront the threat of considerable mass movements and active nuclei of guerrillas.

After a certain respite, the crisis of imperialism has once again become aggravated and the most probable tendency unquestionably is that of further aggravation :

(a) The unfavourable relation of forces on a world scale, revealed particularly by the last phases of the Vietnamese conflict, will continue.

(b) It has been proved once again that 'reformist' solutions of the problems of the so-called underdeveloped countries are objectively impossible.

(c) The inter-imperialist contradictions are becoming sharper and sharper on the economic level (crisis of the monetary system, etc.).

(d) The economic power of the United States itself is running into more and more substantial limits (crisis of the dollar, etc.).

(e) Last but not least, a radical change has already developed—and is going to develop more profoundly in the future—with regard to the domestic situation in the United States, which for 20 years has represented an essential element of the power of imperialism.

If all of this is true, if the fundamental perspective is that of a coming aggravation of the crisis of imperialism within the near future, then it must be emphasized that a possible solution—through a partial compromise or through a prolonged truce—of the Vietnamese conflict would, upon the whole, have a secondary importance (except, perhaps, in the event of a compromise very unfavourable to the Vietnamese, a hypothesis which seems to me completely unlikely). Revolutionary struggles would continue in any case on a broad scale, particularly in Asia, other explosions would occur and other conflicts would break out and there would probably be other points where things came to a head, replacing Vietnam in this regard.

(II) A whole part of this chapter, 'The End of the Long Imperialist Boom', seems useless to me because it only repeats—in a very cursory way, moreover—what we have already said in several more rounded documents (it is from here on, moreover, where the tone and rapid comment of an article becomes predominant). I think it is necessary to centre the analysis on the central points; namely, the aggravation of the inter-imperialist competition, the new explosion of financial and industrial concentrations which mark the growing internationalism of

capital and the monetary and financial crisis. It is correct, in my opinion, to stress the importance of the greater synchronization of the cycle in the different capitalist countries and in this respect richer and more concrete elements must be brought into the analysis.

On the other hand I do not think it would be useful to insist on '29 as the essential point of departure. It is quite improbable that such a dramatic blow-up will occur within the near future, if we consider only the strictly economic aspect. But it would be a mistake to forget for a single instant that the world context today is incomparably more critical, more revolutionary, and thus even economic phenomena more limited in themselves could have much more explosive social and political repercussions. (To mention only one aspect, would the working class of the advanced capitalist countries, including that of the United States, be inclined to accept at the present time, after the improvement it has experienced in its standard of living for 15 to 20 years, even a part of the sacrifices imposed during certain periods in the 1930s? It appears to me absolutely improbable. . . .)

There is another problem which the document mentions in passing and which ought, instead, to be treated a little more amply. This is the question of the outlets which imperialism can obtain through economic agreements with the workers' states. It is essential to indicate the real meaning and trend of agreements of this nature. Politically there is no doubt that the agreements already reached, for example, between the USSR and Fiat, have been advantageously exploited by the bourgeoisie (this goes still more for the agreements concluded by the bureaucracy with the oligarchical Latin American governments). But, in the final analysis, the other aspect of the problem is more important, because it is a question of verifying whether this could constitute a new safety valve for the imperialist economy in its difficulties (if only a safety valve of limited efficacy). On this level, I agree with the opinion expressed in the draft, but it should be insisted on a bit more. In addition, it should be stressed that the international context makes such operations more difficult and uncertain.

(III) The chapter, 'The New Stage in the Crisis of the Bureaucratic Regimes', etc., does not correspond to our present needs in analysis nor to the demand to give a clear response to some questions that are being posed at this stage among broad layers of the revolutionary left. The stress in the draft is rather on refuting the 'optimistic' interpretations of the economic reforms.

But in the circles of interest to us the prevailing criticisms are 'ultra-left', stimulated among other things by the massive propaganda of the Chinese. For us then it is a question of :

(a) Critically examining the analyses that claim that the democratic reforms imply the restoration of capitalism or a serious drift in that direction.

(b) Stating as correctly as possible the consequences of the 'reformist' course on the structure and internal differentiations in the bureaucracy and on its ideological evolution.

With regard more particularly to Yugoslavia, it is time to draw a balance sheet that is not based on merely recalling the analyses of the 1950s (a valuable contribution in this respect was offered in the article which appeared in the QI in November 1966). Personally, I do not believe that Yugoslavia has reverted to

a capitalist state; but the problem actually posed is : It is necessary particularly to indicate the meaning and significance, among other things, of the following phenomena :

(a) The substantial development of a capitalist accumulation in the countryside.

(b) The presence of foreign capital to a not insignificant degree in the industrial sector as well as in the tertiary sector.

(c) The suppression or close to it of the monopoly in foreign trade.

(d) The growth of the petty-bourgeois layers who draw their income from tertiary economic activities strictly dependent on support from abroad.

By precise and serious analytical replies on all these questions—which are of concern, I insist, not only to the ‘grouplets’ of state caps or the remnants of Bordigism but to very broad sectors of the revolutionary youth—we will be able at the same time to score points on the methodological level, refuting all kinds of impressionistic concepts and any more or less ‘new’ theory based on an abstract utilization of economic categories independently of concrete social categories.

As for China, there will be a separate document on the big internal crisis and I do not propose that it be taken up likewise in the general theses. But there is an aspect concerning the influence which China and the Maoist current are exercising in the world situation and in the revolutionary workers’ movement which should be examined here. I believe that we should not forget or brush aside what we were the first to stress; namely, that the evolution of the Chinese leadership and its polemic against the Soviet leadership and the majority of the Communist parties could not fail to have absolutely important consequences. This aspect has been rather neglected by us in our most recent phase in which we were often occupied in polemicizing, correctly, against the apologetic interpretations of the ‘cultural revolution’. But, despite the attitude of the Chinese in the Vietnamese affair, despite their responsibility in Indonesia, despite the lamentable bankruptcy of almost all the orthodox Maoist groups, we must not lose sight of :

(a) That the international line of the Chinese remains objectively more progressive than the Soviet line and there is no ground for equating them.

(b) That China is aiding and stimulating some sweeping guerrilla movements in several Asian countries.

(c) That the Chinese criticism has had an incontestable effect in the revolutionary ripening of broad layers of the new revolutionary left in the advanced capitalist countries.

(d) That despite certain traits of the ‘cultural revolution’, the attitudes and conceptions of the Chinese leaders continue to operate objectively in a direction diametrically opposed to that of Stalinism. (The comrades will obviously understand that I am utilizing the term Stalinism here in the more specific sense of the word and not as a synonym for bureaucratic concepts and praxis in general.)

(IV) (‘Resumption of the Colonial Revolution’, etc.) With regard to this chapter, I will limit myself to stressing :

(a) That in a document of this kind conjunctural appreciations on the possible outcome of negotiations over Vietnam should not be introduced.

(b) That the part on Latin America should be left aside until the special document is ready.

(c) That the part on the Arab revolution is absolutely insufficient, and particularly the appreciation on Syria, insofar as it is outlined, is too limited. (I hold, in contrast, as I mentioned above, that the evolution of this country merits a separate analysis.)

(d) That the part on Africa, which contains inexactitudes, moreover, should be developed on the basis of what was achieved in the document at the previous congress.

(e) That it is correct and imperative to call attention to the capital importance of the Indian revolution, but the paragraphs of the draft are far from being satisfactory.

(V) (‘On the Imperialist Countries, the Crisis of the Workers’ Movement’, etc.) The document should be centred more clearly on the following questions and ideas :

(a) We are in a phase of major crisis for the Social Democracy in Europe as a whole. If one recalls the objective and even subjective role which the Social Democracy has played in the past decade as a stabilizing force owing to its influence on the working class in most of the capitalist countries of Europe, its decline and the serious diminution of its grip appear as an important factor of social and political disequilibrium.

(b) The explosion of the student movement on a mass base never before seen in the advanced capitalist countries (the roots and threads of which should be explained broadly) has shaken the political equilibrium of countries like France, Italy and Germany and created grave difficulties for the traditional bureaucratized parties and unions. We have entered in reality into a new phase of the historical crisis of the workers’ bureaucracies.

(c) If one considers the cumulative effects of the economic tendencies outlined in the draft, of the major crisis of the Social Democracy and to a more limited but not less significant degree up to now by the CP bureaucracies, of the explosion of the student youth and the more and more marked appearance of militant layers of the worker youth (the latter phenomena not remaining without effect on the layers of workers in general), if one recalls the almost generally recognized profound erosion suffered by the postwar bourgeois democracy and the Gaullist regime itself, and if, of course, one does not forget for a single instant the fundamental features of the world situation, it follows that we are moving in a series of European countries towards growing economic, social and political disequilibrium and toward major confrontations even within the relatively near future. The prognoses on the possible outcome of such confrontations can naturally vary from one country to another and there is no doubt that within certain countries at least (England, Belgium, for example) the perspectives at the present time do not warrant any optimism. But it is necessary above all to ascertain whether the fundamental tendency which I am indicating really exists, and, in case of a positive answer, to draw all the consequences.

(d) If the hypothesis advanced in the preceding point is well founded, the tactical rearming of our European movement is not only a necessary task but also an urgent one. We will discuss this question within the framework of the debate on the draft concerning the tactical orientation, but I will say right now that the line expressed in the report at the last IEC requires substantial rectification. The orientation which we have followed, more or less in all the countries of western Europe, beginning in 1952, is visibly outmoded and it is necessary to indicate as soon as possible for each country, the lines and new forms of our activity.

(IV) ('The Construction of a New Revolutionary Leadership'). It is correct to begin, as the document does, with two essential facts:

(1) In a general objective sense, the situation has never been so favourable for the construction of new revolutionary Marxist leaderships.

(2) Despite this, we are running into multiple difficulties.

I believe, however, that Walter bypasses a little certain crucial problems. My remarks, thus, are partly in agreement with the document and partly independent of it.

(a) It is necessary without doubt to reiterate our reply to concepts of the Marcuse, Sweezy, etc., type. But it is necessary to round it out a little better, by recalling more rigorously certain basic methodological criteria while at the same time providing more specific analytical elements. With regard to the subject of the united front, I admit that I do not understand the usefulness of advancing it here in this form. If the draft is directed against spontaneist deformations which are being propagated here and there in our ranks, I am in agreement on the need to take up the question, but the axis must be considerably different because of the fact that the source of the deformation does not reside most often in an opportunist conception of the united front (on the contrary, the united front is criticized most often from a sectarian angle among broad revolutionary layers), but in a passive adaptation to pressures exerted by new mass movements.

(b) In order to explain where, in my opinion, the gravest difficulty ahead of us now lies (I will speak here of the new difficulties in the dynamic sectors, leaving aside all the traditional difficulties which, while in decline still weigh heavily), here are some quite empirical examples. In Italy, our organization ran into difficulties beginning from the time when the vanguard movement of the new generation acquired the breadth of a mass movement, and it recently happened that people who agreed with the general concepts of Trotskyism and with our fundamental analyses on Italy, did not accept the invitation to join up with our ranks because, in their opinion, revolutionary Marxism has now become a common heritage of broad revolutionary layers and the existence of a specific Trotskyist organization is no longer necessary. In certain countries of Latin America, some militants freely maintain that Castroism has accepted, in practice, concepts of the Latin-American revolution and the world revolution which the Fourth International has traditionally promulgated. They appreciate our activity and are ready, if necessary, to collaborate with

us, but just the same they do not consider it necessary or useful to join our movement (such attitudes exist, for example, in the Chilean MIR). In the United States, I heard the comrades affirm—I suppose with good grounds—that the SWP used to have a considerably greater number of black militants than today.

I do not believe that the essential cause of our difficulties in recruitment and gain in influence in sectors such as those I have just mentioned lies in our subjective deficiencies. There was an unquestionable delay in the Italian section in understanding the dynamics of the student movement, but the fundamental orientation was correct, the organization was active and rather dynamic, and, in any case, our errors were never at any time graver than the errors of other competing tendencies. As for the SWP, the honour due it on the Afro-American question is absolutely unassailable and I consider that in truth the interpretations and the orientations that our American friends have expressed on this capital question—in the beginning with the help of Trotsky—from the 1930s, represent one of the most notable theoretical and political heritages of our movement as a whole.

The explanation must be sought in the following direction: on the one hand certain present movements which are being unleashed, by their very scope go beyond the present possibilities of our restricted organizations; on the other hand—and above all—these new movements, which are breaking through or passing over every 'traditional' organizational framework and in which the militants often display a tendency to consider us, too, as part of the 'traditional' left, exercise a powerful attraction in circles where formerly we were alone or almost alone in speaking a revolutionary language. In other words: to the degree that the weight of the ideological factor in the choice of political alignment decreases (in the cases indicated from the very fact that a series of ideas have become, more or less, common property), it is understandable that some layers of militants and cadres prefer, at least at this stage, to merely join mass movements rather than become linked organizationally with the Fourth International or national Trotskyist organizations.

I am not at all ignoring or underestimating other factors operating in the same direction. I am convinced that the subjective weaknesses and inevitable inexperience of new layers contribute to the indicated tendencies, and, it goes without saying, I hold that we must not make any theoretical concession to spontaneist concepts. But the actual situation, a difficulty that is real, a serious problem that is posed, must be recognized.

(c) Under what conditions will we be able to overcome these difficulties and exploit to the fullest at a later stage the enormous objective possibilities existing for the revolutionary movement?

Our capacity for political analysis and overall theoretical generalization—which is based in the final analysis on our international organizational structure—will be a major trump card in the future, too, naturally on condition that we prove capable of constantly renewing and enriching our patrimony. More particularly, our role will be appreciated at its true value by the new movements if we are in a position to express in time and better than any other current their real needs and to outline solutions to the problems which they raise. It goes without saying—in

addition—that we must continue to apply in the most supple way our basic criticisms through integration in the real movements and avoid any kind of political sectarianism or organizational fetishism. We should not forget what we must do now in many countries with people who are ultrasensitive on this subject.

But it is only by successes or revolutionary struggles at the head of a mass movement in one or several countries that we will be able to surmount our difficulties and present contradictions. What is expected from us from now on is that we demonstrate in practice the historical value of our movement and we will be judged essentially on this basis. This can appear, at bottom, to be an elementary truth, but it is a question of inspiring our whole activity with this recognition. It is a question more precisely of determining in what countries we have the best chance of a breakthrough and subordinating everything to the elementary necessity for a success in these countries, and even, if necessary, in a single country. The rest will come later.

There are, in fact, several countries where we at present have possibilities for an important breakthrough (youth movement in France, anti-war movement and youth movement in the United States, South Africa with a certain time) and we must unquestionably make an effort in the direction of India, but we must place everything above all on a sector of Latin America and you know very well which one. We must exploit the preparatory period of the congress to convince the entire movement to operate in practice, every day, with this perspective. Permit me to express myself a little paradoxically: it is necessary to understand and to explain that at the present stage the International will be built around Bolivia.

* * *

August 20, 1968

It is evident that parts of my letter have been outmoded by events, but I consider that certain ideas remain valid. Taking into account, in addition, the final editing of the draft, I would like to add the following:

(a) The chapter on the May revolution in France is obviously weak—this is due in large measure to the time when it was written—and I propose that the discussion not be limited to the draft, but take into consideration all the contributions which the different sections and different comrades have made on this subject. I likewise hold the characterization of the May events as a 'revolutionary upsurge' to be faulty. In reality France underwent a genuinely revolutionary crisis with the objective possibility of taking power and afterwards there was an ebb in which it is necessary to evaluate precisely its extent and possible duration (I do not wish to examine this problem here, but it must not be conjured away through a term which, at the same time, minimizes and simplifies things). I will add that, for my part, I do not like formulations such as we find on page 7 of the French text ('se rapprocheront beaucoup plus de la norme classique des révolutions prolétariennes') ['will draw much closer to the classical norm of proletarian revolutions'] which on the one hand does not offer any help at all to understanding the real processes, and on

the other provides arguments for those who seize on anything to 'demonstrate' our so-called dogmatism.

(b) In the chapter on the workers' states, the remarks which I made and which I still consider valid were only partly taken into consideration. In particular, I consider certain formulations on page 21 to be highly debatable from the methodological point of view. For example, the formulation: 'La faillite idéologique de la bureaucratie s'exprime également dans la crise croissante au sein du "camp" socialiste et du mouvement communiste international' ['The bureaucracy's ideological bankruptcy is manifested also in the growing crisis in the "socialist camp" and the international Communist movement.'] is at least unfortunate, the same as the formulation: 'La faillite idéologique de la bureaucratie se double d'une crise politique intense'. ['Thus, the bureaucracy's ideological bankruptcy goes hand in hand with an intense political crisis.'] The impression must not be given that we think the essential cause is the 'ideological bankruptcy'. The contrary is true: the 'ideological bankruptcy' is nothing but the outcome of objective contradictions which the bureaucracy is incapable, in the long run, of surmounting and which also prevent it from assuring either an international co-ordination of socialist construction or projecting a revolutionary strategy corresponding to the objective needs of our epoch.

(c) With regard to the chapter on the colonial revolution, I remain convinced that it would have been preferable to avoid introducing paragraphs on Latin America without the special document having been prepared. What was written, in any case, is quite insufficient and involves a certain number of loose formulations, which could give rise to misunderstandings. As for the paragraphs on the Arab revolution, I question the opportuneness of indicating very clearly the perspective of a Pan-Arab revolutionary party (such, at least is the impression that can be given by the text). I do not deny that such a perspective would be the most desirable variant, but I doubt that it is realizable within a reasonable period. I think that it is necessary to deal with this subject in a more supple way.

(d) Finally, I believe that in this document or in another one, the world congress ought to stress very clearly the organizational implications of the analyses which we have sketched out and which point, fundamentally, to the conclusion that we are on the eve of new confrontations on a world scale or in numerous regions of the world. I am, in particular, convinced that we will be obliged to adopt forms of illegal activity, even in countries where we have enjoyed relative legality for a rather long period. Our foes have undergone some important experiences—from their point of view—they are resolved to defend themselves by all means and they have learned to track down even the 'splinter' groups, the new vanguard. Our movement, which still remains very weak organizationally, must take all the necessary measures in time to avoid lengthening the already very long list of victims of the repression. We need courageous and devoted militants; but, even more, militants in condition to fight as long as possible.

Livio Matain

Letter from Jose Valdes

Santiago de Chile, March 29, 1969

To the Delegates

Dear Comrades:

Our comrades of Chile send fraternal and Fourth Internationalist greetings to the comrade delegates. Because of the impossibility of travelling, we are sending some notes for your consideration.

José Valdés

(1) We have resolved to support in general the Draft Resolution presented by Comrade L. [Livio Maitan].

(2) We reject the document of Comrade J.H. [Joseph Hansen].

(1) We approve in general the document of Comrade L. because we hold that it contains not only a correct political analysis of the L.A. situation and its perspectives and provides a clear line of orientation for the construction of the revolutionary vanguard, but also because it constitutes a step forward in our F.I. movement with regard to the *decision* that the Trotskyists of Latin America and other parts of the world prepare politically and technically to integrate themselves into the armed struggle or to accelerate the beginning of the insurrection.

We Trotskyists have represented the continuity of the revolutionary Marxist tradition, betrayed by Stalinism and the Social Democracy, we have made programmatic, theoretical and political contributions, many of them accepted at the present time by other revolutionary currents, and we represent historically the interests of the proletariat. But the absence of a decision to prepare ourselves militarily in specific favourable political conjunctures to organize a plan for the insurrection of which Trotsky spoke to us in the 'Russian Revolution' and in his 'Military Writings' caused our movement to lose incomparable opportunities in various countries to convert ourselves into the real vanguard of the revolution. It is time to ask ourselves: What would have happened if the Trotskyist movement had resolutely decided to prepare itself, and to prepare the worker and peasant vanguard, in order to initiate an armed insurrection in Bolivia and Ceylon, countries in which the Trotskyist movement had gained an appreciable mass influence?

The document of L. contains not only this important strategic decision (which for some is of a technical character but which for us is fundamentally political because it is intimately linked to the construction of the party and the triumph of the Socialist Revolution), but also correctly characterizes the present situation as prerevolutionary, reaffirms the continental character of the Revolution, gives a correct long and prolonged perspective to the armed struggle fundamentally because of the imperialist reaction and intervention (case of Santo Domingo). The document of L. clearly defines the Cuban Revolution and the Castroist current, delimiting itself from some of its

positions and foquista guerrilla deviations, correctly indicating the basic orientation for integration into the Castroist movement in order to construct the revolutionary Marxist party. The document warns about impatience and spontaneism and is careful to indicate that the transitional programme must be adapted by each section to the specific situation of the country.

In other pages included herewith, we propose some additions and corrections to the document of L.

(2) We reject the document of Comrade J.H. for the following reasons:

(a) It leaves our L.A. movement disarmed, or at least paralyzed, since the L.A. sections of the F.I. are already carrying out a policy that coincides in general lines with the Draft Resolution presented by Comrade L. In this sense the criticism of Comrade JH constitute a criticism of the present orientation of the LA sections of the FI. Comrade L. in this case would be the 'Albania' of the polemic.

(b) He does not make any concrete analysis of the present political conjuncture in LA nor indicate either perspectives or precise tasks that would help us to carry out a policy and strategy for constructing the party.

(c) He does not indicate a clear policy with regard to Castroism and the rest of the revolutionary left concerning the continental nature of the LA revolution. His criticisms of Castroism and its revolutionary tactics leads to political confusion, lamentable in the case of Comrade J.H. who contributed so much in his articles in recent years to clarifying a correct position on the Cuban Revolution. Now comrade J.H. has come to place in doubt whether the Cuban leadership has contributed in a decisive manner to the maturing of a new revolutionary left. The Castro-Guevarist leadership has committed errors, but no one can place in doubt that its orientation and influence have provoked a crisis among the traditional parties of the left and have contributed to liberate new revolutionary forces which today constitute the most viable and real alternative for accelerating the LA Socialist Revolution.

(d) The position of Comrade J.H. with regard to armed struggle and guerrilla war is frankly traditionalist and, in some cases, hardly serious when he ridicules the action of the guerrilla groups, approximating in his criticisms, made from a rightist angle, the pamphlets against Debray written by the theoreticians of reformism and Stalinism. It would have been more fruitful if Comrade J.H. had drawn a balance sheet of the errors committed by the Guatemalan, Venezuelan, Colombian, Peruvian, and Bolivian guerrillas in place of opening a discussion in the abstract on guerrilla war.

(e) He does not indicate a clear orientation for constructing the revolutionary Marxist party, limiting himself to posing generalities on which we are all in agreement, such as the necessity for carrying on work in the fronts of the masses, based on the transition programme.

Comrade J.H. says that the crucial question for the FI is to link itself to the youth. We agree. But to win the vanguard of the Latin-American worker, peasant, student youth, which is Castro-Guevarist in its great majority, it is necessary to have a clear policy to facilitate the integration, something that Comrade J.H. does not do; just the contrary, all his arguments could block us from this integration and lead us to isolate ourselves from the youth. Comrade J.H. says that the document of Comrade L. distracts attention from this key problem for the FI. To the contrary, the document of Comrade L. is precisely an effort to give a policy that expresses the concerns of the Castroist Latin-American youth.

Comrade J.H.'s entire policy reduces to proposing the *possibility* of a united front with OLAS. In some LA countries it would be suitable for the sections of the FI to pose a united front with the Castroist organization. (We should not speak of the OLAS in the abstract because this organism has not been constituted in hardly any country; it is more concrete to refer to the revolutionary group that is closest to and linked with Castroism.) In other countries, there are incomparable conditions for becoming integrated into the new revolutionary left. The precise position of J.H. of opposing integration into the Castroist current would close the possibility of applying this line, which would lead in some countries to our isolating ourselves from the vanguard.

Integration into the Castroist current must not be understood as an application of the old tactic of entryism, since we would not be integrating ourselves into a reformist grouping but into a revolutionary nucleus which in fact, although not in words, accepts the theory of the Permanent Revolution and the propositions of the Second Declaration of Havana, the March 13, 1967 speech of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara's letter to OLAS on 'creating two, three, and many Vietnams,' documents in which the socialist character of the Revolution is specified. We integrate ourselves in order to apply this programme in revolutionary action and insofar as is possible to win the leadership of this movement with our best cadres in order to guarantee the application of this programme.

(f) Comrade J.H. says that the document of Comrade L. is in contradiction with the document on the world situation presented to the WC [World Congress] in which it is indicated that the present revolutionary process tends to approach the 'classical' model or norm. This estimate, which is debatable and which ought to be specified, would in any case be a tendency of present concrete armed struggles and guerrilla wars of Asia, Africa and LA.

(g) The document of Comrade J.H. could be of interest in opening a polemic on another level on problems of revolutionary strategy, but it contributes very little towards a WC bringing out a positive resolution that would effectively help the possible work of the sections of the FI.

Although the document of Comrade J.H. is rejected, *we propose* that it be included as discussion material for a debate which the sections of the FI should resolve to initiate now on questions of strategy in the armed struggle.

(h) He distorts the document of Comrade L. when he says that the Draft Resolution on LA 'simply proposes a continental tactic or strategy of technical preparation in a rural guerrilla war for a prolonged period.' On page 1, we have pointed out the political contributions of this document, with which we believe that we have demonstrated the unilateral criticism of Comrade J.H. He also distorts when he says that the document of Comrade L. is a 'faithful reflection of the publicly expressed views of the Cuban leadership on this question' (of guerrilla war). In reality, Comrade L. tries to indicate his differences with the Castro-Guevarist theory of the 'foco' and polemicalizes with the thesis of Debray, without naming it. *We propose* that the WC agree to incorporate into the discussion on insurrectional strategy (which we proposed in the previous paragraph should be opened after the WC) a document criticizing the theory of the 'guerrilla foco.' A documented debate, conducted without haste on the subject, would be of great benefit to the sections of the FI and would avoid the superficialities of Comrade J.H. in demanding that Comrade L. ought to pose the tactic of guerrilla war for all continents.

(i) Comrade J.H. criticizes Comrade L. because he supposedly suggested in a different article, 'An Insufficient Document,' that the resources of the FI should be concentrated so that one of its sections could place itself at the head of an insurrection. No one can deny that the Trotskyist movement would qualitatively increase its prestige if it contributed decisively to the triumph of a Socialist Revolution. But this cannot come from an act of will without the objective and subjective conditions to carry it out in practice. If these conditions were to obtain in some country we do not have the least doubt that a genuine praxis of proletarian internationalism would concentrate forces—not only economic ones—for such an aim. International aid and solidarity are not only empirical and pragmatic objectives, in face of accomplished facts, such as taking up collections for sections suffering repression or propaganda for freeing political prisoners. If it were only for this, that kind of proletarian internationalism would be an internationalism for the stage of defence and defeat. There can and must be also a proletarian internationalism to prepare the offensive and victory of the armed insurrection, the only road for the triumph of the Socialist Revolution.

CHINA

The differences between the two documents on the 'Cultural Revolution'

Extracts from SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 27, No. 4, July 1969

By Joseph Hansen, commenting on changes made by the United Secretariat in the resolution on China.

Two changes have thus been made: '*advocates a more militant line to its followers*' in place of 'pursues a more aggressive diplomatic policy than Moscow' and '*bureaucratic centrism*' in place of 'opportunism'.

Let us take the first change—Mao's diplomatic policy and the line he advocates to his followers abroad. I think two questions are mixed up here. What Mao suggests to members of his cult is not necessarily identical with the regime's diplomatic policy. Even in the case of a healthy workers' state the diplomatic policy of the government might be at variance with what the leaders of the revolutionary party in that country might suggest to revolutionists abroad.

Thus this change shifts us from the question of Peking's diplomatic policy to a different subject, the allegedly more militant line it advocates to its followers abroad.

Why this change was made, I do not know. It was not explained at the congress. To strike out mentioning Peking's diplomatic policy could be taken to mean that it is not worth mentioning or that it is of no interest to us.

The substitution is not without its faults in its own right. It could be interpreted as implying that Peking, in advocating a more militant line to its followers abroad, is coming nearer to the positions of revolutionary Marxism.

The insistence that Peking comes nearer than Moscow to the positions of revolutionary Marxism can lead some comrades to conclude that Peking is not only near to those positions but is actually coming nearer or could come nearer. The comrades of the majority, we have deduced, do not hold this position, but they are far from having made this crystal clear. So perhaps we should take a minute or two to explain the consequences of thinking that Peking is coming nearer to the positions of revolutionary Marxism, or could come nearer.

If Mao is capable of projecting a more militant line to his followers abroad, what is to prevent him from projecting a *more and more* militant line? A revolutionary line, or something close to it? If it is really possible, then we should prepare for it.

But then it is ridiculous to call for a political revolution in China. What revolutionists everywhere ought to do, if the possibility is a real one, is struggle to push Mao more and more in that direction. However, that runs counter to the line of trying to mobilize the masses in China to overturn Mao's regime through a political revolution. If Mao can project a more and more revolutionary line, then in the intra-bureaucratic struggle between Mao and Liu Shao-chi, we ought to try to form a bloc with Mao in order to crush the danger from the right wing. That would create conditions in which it would be much easier to push Mao further to the left.

Fortunately, the comrades of the majority are completely against any such perspective and reject it out of hand. They stand for a political revolution in China.

It appears to us, however, that there is a certain inconsistency in this stand and the formulations demanded by the majority comrades concerning a supposedly more militant line advocated by Mao to his followers abroad and the supposedly more radical line pursued by the Chinese leadership towards world revolutionary developments. We wondered what concepts they had in mind that led them to insist upon such formulations.

Let's turn to the second change in this sentence on page 15, the change from 'opportunism' to 'bureaucratic centrism.' That seems like a very small change, a tiny unobjectionable change, but it turned out to be one of the points that stood out in the discussion on the 'Cultural Revolution' at the world congress.

In his contribution, Comrade Pierre Frank explained that while he was not the one responsible for suggesting the change, he voted for it. In defence of his vote he said that 'bureaucratic centrism' was the correct label to put on the policy of zigzagging between opportunism and ultraleftism which the comrades of the minority themselves included in the original draft.

(We would have been willing to settle for the original sentence about Mao zigzagging between opportunism and ultraleftism in his foreign policy. Unfortunately the comrades of the majority deleted it.)

In any case, Comrade Pierre said, in defence of his vote, that the formula 'bureaucratic centrism' was used by Trotsky in 1928 in his introduction to *The Third International after Lenin*.

It should be mentioned that a new edition of *The Third International after Lenin* was published this spring in France under the editorship of Comrade Pierre, who also supplied a preface. This edition has been checked against the original Russian manuscript in the Trotsky archives at Harvard. It is an improvement over the old English edition and includes a foreword by Trotsky, written in 1929 after he was exiled from the Soviet Union, which does not appear in the English edition.

In the foreword Trotsky mentions 'Stalinist centrism,' and he also refers to its zigzag course in foreign policy. He calls Stalin's policies 'a variety of the same centrism' as that represented by 'Friedrich Adler & Co.' but 'based on the ideological and material resources of a state that emerged from the October Revolution.'

What Comrade Pierre had in mind, I suppose, was not this foreword, in which the term 'Stalinist centrism' is used, but the subsequent item in the French edition, a letter written by Trotsky from Alma Ata in 1928, which actually constitutes an introduction to the main document in the book, the famous criticism of the Draft Programme of the Communist International. In the English edition, this letter, entitled 'What Now?' follows the main document. It is here that Trotsky uses the term 'bureaucratic centrism.'

What did Trotsky mean by this term? To begin with, I don't think he identified it with zigzagging, although zigzagging is one of its characteristics. For example, Trotsky speaks elsewhere in *The Third International after Lenin* of the 'inevitable Leftward zigzags of the Chinese bourgeoisie.' Evidently 'bureaucratic centrism'—which certainly does not refer to any bourgeoisie—has a deeper content than mere oscillations in policy.

Comrade Peng made what I thought was an effective rebuttal on this point. As he put it, we no longer stand in the period of 1927-28. The situation has changed. As a matter of fact, Trotsky, and the whole Left Opposition internationally, dropped the use of the term 'bureaucratic centrism' in reference to the ruling group in the Soviet Union when the orientation of calling for a political revolution was adopted in 1933. Trotsky in 1927 and 1928 had not yet reached the position that a hardened bureaucratic caste had crystallized out in the Soviet Union which could be removed from power only through a political revolution. 'Comrade Pierre Frank, of course, understands this very well,' Comrade Peng said, 'but then he did not explain it.'

Comrade Peng maintained that if one believes there is an analogy between the situation in China today and the situation in the Soviet Union in 1927-28, then it is inconsistent to call for a political revolution in China.

On the other hand, if you call for a political revolution in China, then to be consistent in drawing an analogy with the Soviet Union, you must say that the situation in China today is comparable to the situation in the Soviet Union after 1933, or after it became clearly established that a hardened bureaucratic caste had seized a monopoly of power and consolidated its position so firmly that it could be

removed only by a political revolution.

For myself, I would like to add a few observations on Trotsky's use of the term 'bureaucratic centrism.' In 1927-28 he distinguished between the Right, which was intertwined with the growing bourgeois tendency observable in the Soviet Union at the time, the Left, represented by the Left Opposition, which was carrying on the traditions and program of Leninism, and the Centre, the key figure of which was Stalin. Trotsky's terminology, as well as his platform at the time, was shaped by the view that the Communist party in the Soviet Union and the Comintern on a world scale could still be reformed. Thus in the letter 'What Now?'—which I assume Comrade Pierre was referring to—Trotsky states the position of the Left Opposition as follows:

'In any case, the Opposition, by virtue of its views and tendencies, must do all in its power to see that the present zigzag is extended into a serious turn onto the Leninist road. Such an outcome would be the healthiest one, that is to say, involving the least convulsions for the party and the dictatorship. [Trotsky means the dictatorship of the proletariat.] This would be the road of a profound party reform, the indispensable promise [premise?] of the reform of the Soviet state.' (Emphasis in the English original.)

We can see in this the consistency in Trotsky's use of the term 'bureaucratic centrism' and his program of reform rather than political revolution.

This is not the end of the matter, however. In 1935 Trotsky returned to this question and brought things up to date both as to terminology and the great historic analogy he saw between the degeneration of the French and Russian revolutions. He did this in an article entitled 'The Soviet Union Today.' This was published in English in the July 1935 issue of *The New Internationalist* and republished in the summer of 1956 issue of the *International Socialist Review*.

Trotsky explains in this article that 'bureaucratic centrism' has given way to 'bureaucratic absolutism'; or, in relation to the historic analogy he was discussing, 'bureaucratic Bonapartism.'

In the period 1926-27, Trotsky recalls, the question of the 'Thermidorean' reaction was intensively discussed among the opposition circles. A split even occurred over the question. At the time, Trotsky projected the possibility of a Thermidorean triumph only in the future, and even then, of course, only if the growing rightist tendencies in the Soviet Union were not halted. Looking back, he continued, it can be seen that the analogy was used in a faulty way. Actually the Soviet Thermidor began in 1924. And the Thermidoreans can celebrate, approximately, the tenth birthday of their victory. The present political regime in the USSR, he said, is 'the regime of "Soviet" (or anti-Soviet) Bonapartism, closer in type to the Empire than the Consulate.'

Trotsky did not say in his article whether he considered it to have been an error to use the term 'bureaucratic centrism' in the earlier period. He was concerned only about correcting the broad analogy with the French revolution; and he said that whatever adjustments this correction might call for, it did not alter the correctness of the programme and policies which the Left Opposition had fought for. These had been vindicated completely by events.

We note that by 1929, in his foreword to *The Third International after Lenin*, he used the term

'Stalinist centrism' instead of 'bureaucratic centrism,' and distinguished 'Stalinist centrism' as a specific variety of centrism, observing that in distinction from centrism in general, as hitherto seen in the workers movement, it had at its disposal the ideological and material resources of the state that had emerged from the October Revolution. By 1935 he had adopted the term 'Soviet Bonapartism.'

Whatever we may say today about the use of the term 'bureaucratic centrism' in the late twenties, it is clear that the shift to the term 'Stalinist centrism' and then 'bureaucratic absolutism' or 'Soviet Bonapartism' did not signify that the Trotskyist movement had taken the view that the Kremlin could no longer follow a zigzag course. During his pact with Hitler, Stalin ordered a sharp left turn for the Communist parties in the Allied countries. Again in the period following World War II, Stalin finally shifted far enough to the left in Eastern Europe to topple a number of capitalist states.

All of this has an important bearing on our appreciation of the course of the Chinese revolution, but I will leave that for another time.

In relation to the question of using the label 'bureaucratic centrism' to designate the bureaucracy in China, Comrade Livio Maitan made the point, if I understood the translator correctly and the translator was translating and not betraying Livio, that the phrase 'hardened, crystallized caste' is not a scientific designation. The term 'bureaucracy' is meaningful but the term 'hardened, crystallized caste' does not signify anything in a scientific sense. I think this relates to Comrade Livio's view that the term 'Stalinism' should be reserved for the specific period of the worst excesses under Stalin in the middle thirties, a view I do not at all agree with.

Aside from that, we have used the term 'hardened caste' and similar terms to designate the development of the bureaucracy to such a point in a workers' state that it completely displaces proletarian democracy and establishes its own rule. In the political arena, we have recognized this qualitative difference from 'bureaucratism' in general by calling for a political revolution.

The attitude of the bureaucracy towards political power—towards proletarian democracy—is a certain indicator of the degree to which a caste has been formed. If it succeeds in eliminating proletarian democracy, refusing the masses any possibility to express themselves; if it prevents the formation of independent proletarian tendencies and political parties, you can be certain that it has special reasons for this and that it understands these reasons quite well. The point of qualitative change in the crystallization of this peculiar formation is registered by its success in monopolizing state power, which it then uses to consolidate and defend its special privileges at the expense of the interests of the masses and the revolution.

In comparing the bureaucracies in China and the Soviet Union from this standpoint, I would say that differences between the two can be recognized. The Soviet bureaucracy is older, more hardened, more entrenched, with the greater wealth and resources of an advanced industrial power at its command, able to afford a more crass display of opportunism. In other words, a number of differences in quantity or degree can be found—and these are important—but qualitatively, the two formations are pretty much the same.

In both instances, we are compelled to call for a political revolution and by that fact we recognize that a certain identity or equivalence does exist despite the differences.

It may seem that I am belabouring the point. But it also seems to be of considerable importance to the comrades of the majority. Even after the discussion at the congress they insisted on their formulation with but a small modification. Here is how it reads in the final draft which is to be published as the majority document:

'While not forgetting that the Chinese leadership is led by the defence of its own interests to inspire among its partisans in the world a more militant line than Moscow's, the Fourth International criticizes the bureaucratic centrist nature of the policy.'

We would very much like to know why the comrades of the majority are so insistent on the forty-year-old label 'bureaucratic centrist' which Trotsky dropped so long ago.

These differences will no doubt be resolved rather easily as more information becomes available. However, other differences have emerged that go somewhat deeper. A tentative list of these may prove useful.

1. There are difficulties over the nature of Mao's foreign policy. We think Mao's foreign policy is not revolutionary; that he alternates between ultraleftism and opportunism or combinations of the two and that fundamentally he seeks 'peaceful coexistence.' The majority comrades do not speak so clearly on this. We are not sure if they think Mao's policy is revolutionary, sometimes revolutionary, or just what. In the resolution they assert that it is 'objectively' revolutionary. They appear to dismiss its subjective, or consciously calculated aspects.

3. There are differences, apparently, over the nature of the regime. In our opinion, it represents the interests of a narrow, nationalistic, bureaucratic caste, a bureaucracy of a certain specific character. The comrades of the majority appear to view the regime as 'bureaucratic centrist' in the sense of the term used by Trotsky in 1928 to characterize the Stalinism of that period before he reached the conclusion that it could be broken up only through a political revolution.

4. Back of this difference may stand different estimates of the meaning of the term 'Stalinism.' We consider Maoism to be a variety of Stalinism. Where the comrades of the majority stand on this is not clear to us.

5. To clarify this difference, or possible difference, may require a discussion of the origin of the Chinese revolution and the role played in it by the Maoists. A number of theoretical questions come up, such as explaining how a 'Stalinized' Communist party could come to power in China.

Some of these questions have not been probed extensively by our movement. Perhaps it is now requisite for us to go into all this in greater detail. Such a discussion will most likely prove valuable in removing sources of differences that could prove even more troublesome in the future than they are now.

6. It is possible that differences of a political nature could arise in the course of the discussion. These would hinge on what attitude to adopt toward Maoism and could generate a certain warmth in the discussion. I don't think this will occur. Nevertheless,

it is worth noting a certain insistence on the side of both the majority and the minority as to the correct attitude to adopt in approaching the Maoist youth. This could adumbrate a political difference.

Our opinion is that it is best to make a sharp delimitation and attack the positions of the Maoists in a vigorous polemic while at the same time seeking to engage them, wherever possible, in common actions. Naturally, in a common action working relations have to be established. But on the political and theoretical level, a sharp demarcation is required, otherwise we can lose our own ranks to the Maoists.

The majority comrades think that this sharpness is unnecessary and even stands in the way of approaching the Maoists for the purpose of recruiting from them. At the congress, the majority comrades constantly referred to the fact that during the May days in Paris, the Maoists were to be found on the 'same side of the barricades' as our comrades. Therefore, they maintain, a sharp tone should not be adopted in polemicizing with them.

Beyond this tactical question involving the comrades in Paris in May 1968 we see a much bigger question, the problem of ultraleftism, which goes beyond Maoism—Maoism being only a contributing current, although an important one.

How big is the problem of ultraleftism today? How serious is it to the world Trotskyist movement? What are we going to do about it? There are evidently differences over how we should estimate this. Our opinion is that ultraleftism has made inroads into our ranks in some parts of the world and constitutes a considerable problem.

7. Finally, looming behind all of these differences is the question of how to go about building a revolutionary combat party. In the United States, this concerns us a great deal. We see it in relation not only to the Communist party, which is no longer the great problem it once was, but in relation to the ultraleftism of Progressive Labour, of tendencies in the SDS and other formations, notably the Black Panthers. We have the impression that other sectors of the world Trotskyist movement face comparable problems in their daily work of forging a combat party.

Does unanimity exist on how to solve these problems? Here the test of practice is decisive and we think it would be very fruitful if a better exchange could be reached between the sectors of our movement as to their experiences in grappling with ultra-leftism.

In closing, let me indicate where the comrades of the majority think we are in basic agreement and what our opinion is on this.

They maintain that we both agree that a privileged bureaucracy exists in China, and that there is a need for a political revolution.

We think this is a correct judgment in general but that the comrades of the majority are unclear or inconsistent in their characterization of the bureaucracy and still more unclear or inconsistent in relating the need for a political revolution to their view of the bureaucracy and its policies.

They maintain that we both agree that the 'Cultural Revolution' represented an intrabureaucratic struggle in which we supported neither of the two main contending factions.

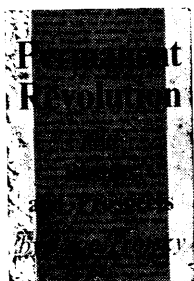
That is accurate in general, in our opinion, but again it appears to us that the comrades of the majority are inconsistent and that various things they argue for really imply offering critical support to Mao in the intrabureaucratic struggle.

They maintain that we both agree that the masses were mobilized in China and that this weakened the bureaucracy. We think that is accurate but we differ on the degree to which the bureaucracy was weakened by the mobilization.

The area of agreement is substantial and should enable us to undertake an educational discussion without undue friction arising.

Finally, I should like to add that in my opinion this is only the beginning of the process of clarification. We hope for a free discussion throughout the world Trotskyist movement, and we are fully aware of the fact that this takes time.

In the next phase, I trust, we will be able to proceed beyond the necessity of examining two texts that on first glance appear to be almost identical.



This is a polemic against Radek in 1928. Trotsky examines the arguments against his pre-war theory of the permanent revolution (as expounded in *Results and Prospects*) and takes up the history of his differences with Lenin before 1917, of which Stalin and his henchmen made so much. Trotsky shows that it was Lenin's criticisms of his attitude to the centralised Marxist party, which he afterwards understood and accepted, that kept them apart, and not their differences on the permanent revolution.

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ALGERIA

Draft Resolution

The Algerian Revolution from 1962 to 1969

I

Six months after the coup d'état that overthrew Ahmed Ben Bella, the Eighth World Congress of the Fourth International, meeting December 1965, analyzed the situation in Algeria in a resolution, 'Progress and Problems of the African Revolution.' This analysis singled out the following aspects in the development of the Algerian revolution from 1954 to 1965:

(1) Before independence, the Algerian revolution took the form of a deep-going mobilization of the masses. The political instrument of the revolution, the FLN, took form as a politically ill-defined multi-class front.

(2) Following independence, the FLN literally burst into fragments at the time of the crisis in the summer of 1962, which developed along very unclear lines.

(3) A new stage characterized by a dynamic of growing over into socialism opened with the exodus of the French colonists. The rising curve in the revolution reached its highest point with the March 1963 decrees and continued up to the expropriation measures in October of the same year. Observing this process, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International took note of the fact that a workers and peasants government had been established in Algeria. At that time the process had already slowed and a pause had set in.

(4) Algerian society remained marked by the coexistence and conflict of different and antagonistic forces and sectors. A significant Algerian private capitalist sector continued to exist, including in the countryside, as well as a powerful foreign capitalist sector (oil and gas). Furthermore, imperialist aid continued to be important and Algeria remained dependent on the franc zone. An administrative, economic, and military state bureaucracy developed which enjoyed a privileged share of the national income.

(5) The coup d'état of June 19, 1965 was the outcome of the deterioration in the situation which Ben Bella could no longer forestall. The coup d'état was supported by the most well-known representatives of the state and army bureaucracy. Its result was to encourage those forces most hostile to a socialist conclusion to the Algerian revolution.

In adopting these conclusions, the World Congress, however, left discussion open on the Algerian question. Moreover, *an amendment judging that the characterization of the Ben Bella government had been premature and had caused a certain confusion as to the tasks of revolutionary Marxists was rejected by only a relatively narrow majority.* Superimposed on this difference in evaluation was a difference with the comrades who had worked in Algeria over the assessment of the June 19 coup. They held that the coup only replaced one Bonapartist team with another, changing the form but not the content of the government.

II

Today, however, we can say that in coming to grips with a general analysis of the policy the Boumédiène government has followed for more than three years and an analysis of the present situation in Algeria, these points of disagreement seem secondary and of purely historical importance.

Immediately after June 19, 1965, two factors favoured a temporary misunderstanding of the nature of the coup d'état:

(a) The fact that the coup eliminated only a relatively small number of figures, while a whole series of ministers in the Ben Bella government joined Boumédiène's 'Council of the Revolution.'

(b) The support which the Chinese leadership gave to the Boumédiène regime in the weeks following the coup and which was motivated by considerations of a factional nature linked to the way in which Ben Bella and his team had been preparing the Afro-Asian conference.

Today these factors are no longer operative. In Algeria as well as elsewhere the nature of the Boumédiène government is clear. After having overthrown Ben Bella, Boumédiène adopted a completely different orientation from that of the Ben Bella government.

But while the revolutionary vanguard is no longer affected by hesitation, Moscow and not Peking is making conciliatory moves towards the regime, accompanying this with an attempt on the ideological level to paint up the Boumédiène regime as 'anti-

imperialist.' This line is being followed by the PAGES,¹ in which former members of the Algerian Communist party are active. In addition, after the Algerian leaders assumed verbal 'leftist' positions in the Israeli-Arab conflict, Fidel Castro, who had very severely condemned the authors of the coup d'état, went back on his condemnation, doing this in the form of self-criticism.

Thus it is necessary to reaffirm the position of the revolutionary Marxists on the present regime in Algeria without any ambiguities.

The June 19 coup d'état was a victory for the reactionary forces, a qualitative expression of the erosion and the molecular changes occurring both in the state personnel and organisation and consciousness of the classes—thus it clearly represented a qualitative change. After a period of deterioration it became relatively 'easy' for Boumédiène to register this change in the relationship of forces qualitatively which the revolutionary party had not been able to counteract. The contradiction between the capitalist state and the socialist orientation of the workers and peasants government was then eliminated by Boumédiène and his army, 'the only force in the country capable of protecting the Constitution and the national institutions.' (*El Djeich*, organ of the army, June 1965: 'Why June 19?')

During the first period extending from 1965 to the end of 1967, which still reflected an equilibrium of forces, there was an increasing drift to the right. At the end of 1967, a second period opened, which continues to the present, with the rise of Kaid Achmed (former Commander Slimane) to the second highest political post in the country, to the position of head of the 'party.'

As the background for this shift in the balance of forces, a dual phenomenon should be noted:

(a) The development of a state capitalist sector in the economy in close osmosis with imperialist interests.

(b) The steady loss of momentum by the UGTA trade-union apparatus. This apparatus thought it could maintain its independence and serve as a centre for a new mobilization of the masses by limiting itself in the interval to a defensive struggle to preserve self-management, if not to a purely economic struggle.

The attempted counter coup d'état of El Affroun, led by Tahar Zbiri in December 1967 and supported by a section of the trade-union militants, was a desperate attempt to reverse this drift. The masses did not intervene in any way.

III

The essential feature in the changes which have occurred in the Algerian economic structure has been the strengthening of the 'mixed' (state capitalism and foreign capital) fuels sector of the Algerian economy. This is the main sector of the economy from the standpoint of export and has undergone constant expansion (39.7 million tons produced in 1967 as against 26.1 million in 1964). The fuels sector is dominated by Sonatrach,² a state company created

originally to manage the third Hassi Messaoud-Arzew pipeline completed in 1966 but which has developed into one of the principal petroleum producers. The activities of Sonatrach, which is aided by American and Soviet experts and collaborates closely with foreign interests, have expanded to such a degree that this enterprise constitutes a veritable state within a state. The basis for the collaboration between imperialism and the state sector is still the 1965 oil agreement concluded shortly after the June 19 coup d'état and ratified in the French parliament by a UNR-PCF majority. Algerian state capitalism has been collaborating with imperialism without any major conflicts. The 'nationalization' of the American oil companies distribution network in September 1967 was, in appearance, an anti-imperialist measure in response to the Israeli aggression. In reality it was a purchase agreed to by the companies involved. The same was true of the purchase of the other distribution centres in May 1968. While collaborating with imperialism, the state sector seeks to assure its control over the transfer of currency and to impose its conditions with regard to export prices. These are minor conflicts in which the primary objective is 'getting into position' for the renewal of the 1965 agreement in 1969.

It must be added that the Algerian left forces have never advanced specific demands for this sector, limiting themselves to declaring that nationalization of mineral and energy resources was a 'long-term goal' (1964 Algiers Charter).

As against the constant expansion of this sector, the modest self-managed industrial sector, composed in general of old plants, is steadily losing momentum. Its social weight is minimal. The workers in this sector are calculated at less than 15,000 (6 per cent of the Algerian working class). Moreover, the new investment code freezes the limit of development of this sector. It guarantees that there will be no nationalization of the foreign capital invested in Algeria for ten years time and that after that it can be nationalized only with payment of 100 per cent compensation.

The nationalization of French plants in June 1968, planned by American and Swiss 'experts,' was carried out according to this scheme. These plants were turned over to state companies that were not self-managed. Some of them were previously self-managed plants returned to their former owners (Norcolor). In other cases, the 'nationalization-purchase' was made long after these concerns had brought the enterprises in the self-managed industrial sector to their knees (oil works, soap factories).

Parallel to the industrial sector, peasant self-management has had to struggle constantly against sabotage by the authorities combined with difficulties on the French wine market (wine import quotas).

As for the 'agrarian reform', adopted in 1966 but left unimplemented, it itself is nothing but a caricature of the reform drawn up under the Ben Bella government. Matching the appetites of the state bureaucracy, it is limited to an area producing a net annual income equal to the state payroll.

IV

Given the social and political weakness of the Algerian bourgeoisie, this state bureaucracy has

1 PAGES: Parti de l'Avant-Garde Socialiste, formerly ORP (Organisation de la Résistance Populaire) founded after June 19.

2 Sonatrach: Société National de Transport et de Commercialisation de Hydrocarbures.

proved to be more of a danger to the Algerian revolution than the bourgeoisie itself.

In order to understand the reasons for the behaviour of this new bureaucratic layer, we must examine the elements making it up, its international context, and the international social forces on which it bases itself.

We can define three layers in the Algerian state bureaucracy. These layers are based on the social interests they have represented in post-1962 Algeria, independently of the social origins of the bureaucrats themselves. According to this criterion, a bureaucrat may drift imperceptibly from one stratum to another.

(1) An initial layer which made it possible to maintain a 'well functioning' state apparatus between the cease-fire and the formation of the first Ben Bella government. It is composed of a certain number of functionaries, who were old and recent collaborators with the colonial regime, coming from the famous 'Lacoste promotion'. It is made up both of Algerians and reformed and co-operative Pieds-Noirs.³ This stratum is the most faithful supporter of the leaders who want to maintain a state of the bourgeois type. By its inertia and its sabotage of revolutionary measures, this layer plays an important braking role. It hides behind the mask of 'technical competence' in order to maintain itself. But it is being subjected to criticism by the most conscious cadres, who demand that it be purged. The continually promised removal of this stumbling block is always indefinitely postponed. This stratum takes advantage of the delay to consolidate its privileges and it exercises a pernicious influence on the opportunistic nationalist cadres who are slipping into reactionary positions.

(2) The national bourgeoisie was extensively represented in the first Ben Bella government. These cadres based themselves in the state apparatus on a bureaucratic layer of high functionaries (cabinet members, prefects) whose actions then and since have been guided by the same class interests. M. Khider, the secretary of the FLN, worked in the party apparatus to consolidate the power of these strata, if not for a seizure of power by them. Representatives of this layer were to be found in the successive Ben Bella governments. A few were unmasked, but these bourgeois bureaucrats remained throughout the machinery of state. Certain bourgeois technocrats remain also in the Boumédiénne government.

(3) The third layer in the state bureaucracy, and the most numerous, formed as a bureaucratic layer in the FLN administrative apparatus during the war. It emerged from the agrarian and urban petty-bourgeoisie which flocked to the FLN and the ALN. This layer rallied first to Ben Bella and then to Boumédiénne. It includes the majority of the army and men in the ministries whose opposition to the June 1968 'nationalizations' tends to show that some of them, too have slipped into the first group. The vast majority of the intermediate-level functionaries in the ministries and the local administrations have come from different strata of the petty bourgeoisie—small and middle tradesmen, middle peasants, petty functionaries of the colonial era. The ANP officers are almost entirely representatives of the petty bourgeoisie.

3 French born in Algeria.

A part of this strata came from the working class in the cities or in emigration. Former working-class cadres in the MTLD and former CGT or UGTA unionists have risen to positions of responsibility in the state apparatus. Boumaza, Alia Yahia, and Zerdani represented this element. But in the context of the alliance that the petty bourgeoisie has concluded with the national bourgeoisie, this layer of the working-class bureaucracy, which is rather weak moreover, has been buffeted about between the government and the mass pressure it is subject to—insofar as it is conscious of the political weight of the pressure from the masses. This layer will never be capable (with very rare exceptions) of conducting a proletarian policy. It is being totally rooted out of the state apparatus.

The most characteristic feature of this state bureaucracy is its heterogeneity. Representatives of the national bourgeoisie are found side by side with representatives of the working class, in the same ministerial and government commissions, in the Political Bureau.

The question which arises continually for each of these strata is, whom to serve. Such a heterogeneous bureaucracy becomes conscious of its social role only through constant confrontation with the social forces and classes which it claims to serve as a whole. This is why since 1962 all government bodies have been torn by clique infighting and struggles over immediate interests.

The pressures of imperialism on this bureaucracy must not be overlooked. French imperialism has brought pressure to bear through economic co-operation, continuation of the Evian accords, and the 1965 hydrocarbon agreements; British imperialism through mixed companies. American imperialism has exercised pressure through its not inconsiderable economic aid. And West German imperialism as well as others have been present. No less important is the considerable economic aid provided by the bureaucracies of the workers' states—the USSR, China, and Yugoslavia heading the list. Far from being provided in accordance with the principles proclaimed by Che Guevara at the Algiers Afro-Asian Economic Seminar, this aid has been accompanied by declarations favourable to the regimes in power and in the last analysis has favoured stabilization of the state structures and the status quo. The same effect was produced by the ideological default of the former PCA (Alger République) and later, after Harbi's arrest, of the ORP-PAGS (speculation on conflicts in the government team even today) assuming that a 'socialist state' or a 'non-capitalist road' had been achieved or was in the process of being achieved.

Enmeshed in this international context, the state bureaucratic structures have become allied with the retrograde socialist forces.

V

The general political resolution of the Second Congress of the UGTA in 1965 listed the 'bureaucratic layer being formed' among the 'forces of counter-revolution' alongside the feudalists and exploitive bourgeoisie.

But the Oumeziane leadership of the UGTA, elected at the Second Congress, timidly avoided drawing the necessary conclusions from this analysis. It tried to counter the dismantling of self-management

by a defensive struggle, seeking support in the government. Its paper has been repeatedly prevented from coming out (May 1966, December 1967, and up to the present).

In Algeria today, the workers' right to determine the rules under which their unions function, to elect their representatives freely, to formulate their programme without interference from the authorities, and to decide their actions in complete independence—that is, the four necessary criteria of trade-union independence from the state apparatus—have been deprived of all semblance of reality.

VI

At the present time, despite Cherif Belkacem and then Kaid Ahmed's 'reorganization', the 'FLN party' is still non-existent.

But on the side of the opposition organizations, the picture is not a reassuring one.

(a) The 'CNDR' or ex-'PRS',⁴ was never able to develop after its initial 'Menshevik-type' positions condemning the Ben Bella government's revolutionary measures as 'premature'.

(b) The 'PAGS' or ex-'ORP'⁵ became nothing but a vehicle of the Kremlin's foreign policy, under Alleg's leadership after Mohammed Harbi and Sahouane were arrested. This was shown by its turn on January 26, 1966, toward the formation of a broad 'people's democratic' front demanding even the release of Ait Ahmed, who was imprisoned at that time, and proposing a front with the FFS. It has no mass base.

(c) Ait Ahmed's 'FFS' and Mohamed Labjaoui's 'OCRA'⁶ represent factions in the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois wing of the old apparatuses.

(d) The 'Rassemblement Unitaire des Révolutionnaires' (RUR), which was born of splits from the ex-ORP and the OCRA, represents, from the standpoint of its programme and its analyses, the tendency closest to revolutionary socialism. Its base in Algeria, however, is as limited as that of the other movements.

VIII

(1) In this context the fundamental strategic task remains the organization of a revolutionary Marxist vanguard and the subsequent formation of a party of the urban and rural workers which would struggle for the overthrow of the Boumédiène regime and the establishment of a government of the worker and peasant masses.

4 Conseil National de la Défense de la Révolution, and Parti de la Révolution Socialiste.

5 Parti de l'Avant-Garde Socialiste, and Organisation de Résistance Populaire.

6 Front des Forces Socialistes, and Organisation clandestine de la Résistance Algérienne.

Amendment proposed by Charlier and Germain to the resolution on Algeria

Today the Trotskyist movement is unanimous in its assessment of the current situation in Algeria. After the June 19 coup d'état, however, the limited

(2) Inseparably bound up with this task is the necessity of struggling to revitalize the trade-union movement and gain its complete independence from the state.

(3) This struggle can only be waged through and parallel to a revival of the mass movement. And the mass movement can be revived only through struggle for:

(a) Stimulation of the noncapitalist sector of the economy by putting the entire nationalized industrial sector under self-management and giving priority to this sector as regards fiscal advantages and the development of trade relations, etc.

(b) The establishment of a monopoly of foreign trade and the introduction of mandatory national planning to avert strangulation of the self-managed sector.

(c) Nationalization of the petroleum-producing enterprises belonging to all the imperialist countries involved in the June 1967 aggression against the Arab revolution, and the establishment of workers' control exercised jointly by representatives of the oil workers and the socialist industrial sector over Sonatrach and the other oil companies.

(d) Abrogation of the pseudo-agrarian reform of 1966 and implementation of a radical agrarian reform by means of expropriation of the large landowners and severe limitations on the right to hold property in land. The starting consideration must be that it is of course incorrect to call only for the restriction of large and middle landownership independent of seeking the most productive use of the land. But it is not correct either to envisage agrarian reform as an attempt to put the most land possible under cultivation according to abstract criteria of economic efficiency, independent of social relationships.

(e) Amendment of the 1966 law on municipal government for a new definition of municipal boundaries guaranteeing that the municipalities will be economic units and eliminating interference by the FLN apparatus.

(f) Defence of the revolution by the creation of workers' and peasants' militias based on the big farms, the big factories, and the municipalities.

(g) Renovation and purging of the state apparatus, the creation of organs of people's power, and promotion of equalitarian tendencies in the struggles against bureaucratic privileges. Revival of the struggle for democratic demands—emancipation of women, the struggle to keep Islam out of public affairs, the struggle against illiteracy and for education, the struggle against regional particularism.

(4) Particular importance must be accorded to work among the Algerian workers in Europe as well as work for the release of all the interned militants and leaders, especially Ben Bella, Ben Allah, Zahouane, Harbi, and Hadj Ali.

importance of the change in the government make-up led some militants to ask whether the character of this coup had not been exaggerated; since, after all, it

did not exceed the dimensions of a palace revolution. Subsequently, the majority agreed that the coup was the qualitative expression of a molecular deterioration which had occurred in the last period of President Ben Bella's regime. But in view of the rapidity with which the state bureaucracy accentuated its right turn, a second question arose: Had the Trotskyist movement exaggerated the advances of the Algerian revolution in February 1964 when it characterized the Ben Bella government as a workers' and peasants' government? This is the question which must be answered now. And there is nothing academic in our taking up this question. Since 1954, the world Trotskyist movement has engaged in unconditional support of the revolutionary struggle of the Algerian people. After independence was won, a number of the movement's cadres put themselves at the service of the Algerian people and, until 1965, their government. At the World Reunification Congress in July 1963, although this work was directed by cadres belonging to a tendency that was subsequently to leave the mainstream of the movement, it was approved unanimously by the movement's highest authority. In undertaking this labour of self-criticism, the Fourth International is applying the Leninist rule that 'The seriousness of a revolutionary party is measured by the attitude it takes toward its own errors'.

These considerations are by no means intended to minimize the real advances which marked the development of the Algerian revolution during the first years after independence. They are not intended either to denigrate the real anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist actions of the Ben Bella government and, more precisely, the limited team around Ben Bella, which on several occasions went outside the institutional framework to make concessions to the masses. The process of legalizing the conquests of the masses by decrees, going beyond the established institutions, is an example of this. This way of operating is comparable to that which any workers' and peasants' government must resort to in operating within the structures of a bourgeois state while not hesitating to come into conflict with them.

To answer the question concerning the nature of the Ben Bella government, it is, however, likewise necessary to take into account the fact that the masses in movement that won self-management were the permanent workers on the large estates that later became self-managed farms; that is, the agricultural proletariat in the true sense of the word. After the summer of 1962, this agricultural proletariat was the only sector of the masses in motion. It was this mass that formed the Ben Bella team's social base. This relatively narrow social base enabled the Ben Bella government to play a Bonapartist role. The masses of poor peasants could have offered a broader social base, but they were atomized during the crisis of the summer of 1962. These masses have not been able to mobilize themselves to this day.

The Fourth International did not correctly weigh the importance of this void and therefore tended not to see this major difference between the situation in Algeria and the situation which led to the establishment of a workers' state in Cuba less than two years after the Castroist team took power. (A comparable risk would have existed if the Cuban leadership had split into three or four opposing fractions in January 1959 and found itself unable to mobilize immediately

all the exploited masses in the country through the rapid and radical implementation of the land reform, the urban reform, the major nationalizations, and the general literacy campaign, etc.)

In this situation, a revolutionary leadership possessing an adequate instrument, a revolutionary party, would have been able to quickly attempt to re-establish contact with the masses. But in Algeria, the FLN was never a 'party' in the class sense. Moreover, it no longer existed after 1958, except as an organization in the federation of France and as a government in the GPRA. For all other purposes it had abdicated in favour of the ALN.

This erroneous analogy with the Cuban situation subsequently led the Trotskyist movement to minimize the seriousness of certain events, such as the Khider apparatus' gangster-like attack on the UGTA congress. The falseness of this analogy was made worse by a wrong assessment of the nature of the ALN, especially after the application of the Evian agreements, and by the conception, maintained primarily by the Pablo tendency, that in the concrete Algerian situation of 1962-3 the army could play the role of the party. The grave consequences of the delay in organizing an Algerian revolutionary vanguard were seriously underestimated. In view of the qualitative difference between the limited mobilization of the Algerian masses in 1963 and the general mobilization of the masses in Cuba in 1959-61, the analogy with the Cuban revolution was methodologically false.

It was the narrowness of the Ben Bella team's social base also which little by little, as no other sector of the masses moved in to reinforce the agricultural workers, resulted in Ben Bella's becoming a prisoner of his own state apparatus.

The Trotskyist movement never used this category in the Algerian context as a synonym for a dictatorship of the proletariat. Such a variant of a workers' and peasants' government is only one among others. The state structures were always correctly analyzed as bourgeois, except by the comrades of the Pablo tendency. These comrades used confused formulas like 'anti-capitalist state' or 'semi-workers' in the press of the International. They underestimated the weight of the bourgeois apparatus and its ability to halt or reverse the dynamic of permanent revolution. This capacity proved decisive.

But although the International correctly applied the designation of workers' and peasants' government to the Ben Bella regime, it did not sufficiently stress the imperious necessity of establishing independent organs of political power by the urban and rural proletariat. Such bodies, moreover, would have been the best instruments for a general mobilization of the masses and the sole means for making the process of permanent revolution irreversible. It was primarily the comrades of the Pablo tendency—who at the time controlled the journal of the French section—who made this incorrect analysis of the dynamic of the Algerian revolution. They assigned the mass mobilization essentially the role of supporting the Ben Bella tendency and realizing the FLN programme, failing to understand that their hope for a gradual change in the nature of the Algerian state was a utopian and non-Marxist conception.

A concomitant error was committed in May 1964 when the International Executive Committee set the task for the revolutionary Marxists of collaborating

in the formation of a revolutionary socialist left 'led by the FLN' (the IEC resolution, 'The International Situation and the Tasks of the Revolutionary Marxists', QI, July 1964) instead of stressing the need to work among the ranks first to create a revolutionary Marxist organization linked to the Algerian masses.

The lesson of the events in Algeria is of considerable importance. The victory of the socialist revolution in Algeria was possible. But a decisive factor was lacking: the revolutionary party.

Within the frame of this self-criticism it must be added frankly that if the participation of the Trotskyist movement in the Algerian revolution, its support to the struggle and to the most progressive tendency after 1962 were considerable, too little was done in carrying out the specific function of the Trotskyist movement—to form the nucleus of a future Algerian

revolutionary party. The work of training and recruiting Algerian militants was considerably neglected for work at the top.

Doubtless, during an initial phase, in view of the smallness of our forces, it was correct to concentrate on a campaign of practical support for the revolution which was creating a climate favourable to the spread of our ideas. But after a given point the formation of an organized nucleus should have been given priority. The International recognized this at its Seventh World Congress. It did not, however, make the necessary effort to impose this line. Thus, it shares the blame for this error with the comrades of the Pablo tendency, who were the main ones responsible for this work and for the false orientation as regards building a revolutionary nucleus.

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