

Fourth International

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL MARXISM PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Volume 7 No. 4

Price 25 pence

Summer 1972

**For an open discussion on fundamental
questions of philosophy**

**The Bolivian Revolution and the
Partido Obrero Revolucionario**

**Discussion on international
perspectives**

**Fourth International Conference
of the International Committee
of the Fourth International**

Mandel and Der Spiegel

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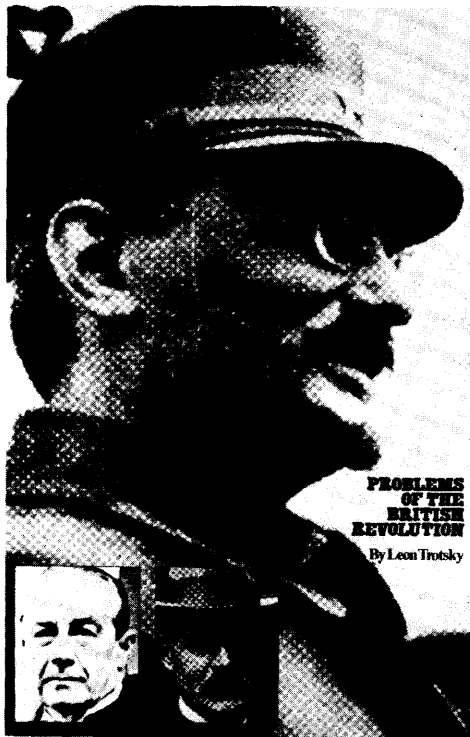
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Note: Due to pressure of space we are deferring publication of the 3rd and concluding instalment of **The Political Itinerary of Georg Lukacs** to a future issue of Fourth International.

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EDITORIAL

For an Open Discussion on Fundamental Questions of Philosophy

REVOLUTIONARY situations are marked above all by the entry of the great masses of working people on to the stage of history. At such times, age-old assumptions and accepted hierarchies are widely rejected, old scores are settled in ways which would ordinarily be considered impermissible, and men and women summon up great energies for tasks which hitherto were not conceivably within their scope.

In bourgeois revolutions, the popular masses were destined to find themselves subjected to yet another form of exploitation and oppression, once they had been mobilized behind the bourgeoisie to break the feudal and monarchical power. The plebian forerunners of communism—Levellers and Diggers in Britain, Babeuf and his followers in France—were stamped out by bourgeois reaction. Their ideas could only be reborn, at a qualitatively different level, on the basis of capitalism's future development of the productive forces and the creation of the modern proletariat.

Marx and Engels, however, were not in any way whatsoever protagonists of the idea that revolutionary consciousness could develop spontaneously out of the working class, its role in production, and its struggle against the bourgeoisie. Historical materialism developed out of all the great conquests of thought of the bourgeois epoch, particularly in political economy, philosophy, and history. Marx's theory of history shows that the development of classes proceeds

on the basis of social relations of production but in the total socio-economic formation raised on this basis. Men become conscious of their relations, fight out their struggles in the terms of the political, legal, developing superstructure dominated by the ruling class. The building of revolutionary leadership in the working class can take place only through a struggle to comprehend and grapple with the class enemy on all these fronts. This struggle cannot be carried out except through a conflict between the scientific theory of Marxism, expressed in the revolutionary party, and the spontaneous consciousness of the proletariat itself.

It is for this conception of leadership, this conception of the necessary conflict between theory and practice, that the International Committee of the Fourth International has fought. Now that the post second world war capitalist system plunges into economic slump and into mass revolutionary struggles, the responsibility of Marxists to carry forward this theoretical struggle reaches its highest point. Without question the proletariat will fight. It will throw into the fight all the great qualities which we described in the opening of this editorial. It will push aside with contempt all those who try to restrict it to petty reforms and unprincipled compromises. New leaders will be thrown up in hundreds of different struggles. But none of these things by themselves, no combination of them, can achieve the successful winning of

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workers' power unless they are unified by a revolutionary party built on Marxist theory and rooted in the masses through its struggle for Marxism.

It is the maturing of the revolutionary crisis of capitalism which brings about the new stage in this fight for theory, of which the documents published in this issue of *Fourth International* provide the opening statements. There is a conception of Marxism, manifested in the revisionism of the French OCI (Organisation Communiste Internationaliste), which sees the revolutionary party as a carrier of a finished programme which sums up all the theories and experience of the proletarian revolution. Capitalism's development pushes the working class towards acceptance of this programme in an 'organic' development. With this approach the OCI has found itself fundamentally in the same position as the American Socialist Workers Party. Although formally adopting many different political positions, these two organizations have been brought into the open as opponents of the International Committee on the basic question of Marxist philosophy, of dialectical materialism. Their target is above all the IC's insistence that the unity of theory and practice is a unity consisting of the conflict between them. The Marxist party is part of the working class as the force struggling against capitalism, but it is the conscious role of that class in conflict against the dominance of bourgeois ideology which is constantly being reformed and re-established after every advance by the working class.

'The working class spontaneously gravitates toward socialism: nonetheless, the most widespread (and continuously and diversely revived) bourgeois ideology spontaneously imposes itself upon the working class to a still greater degree.

'Hence our task, the task of Social-Democracy (i.e. of Marxism) is to *combat spontaneity*, to divert the working class movement from this spontaneous, trade unionist striving to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of the revolutionary social-democracy.' (Lenin: *What is to be Done?*)

It was this conception, against the notion of a simple and mechanical 'relation' between theory and practice, which lay behind the split at the Essen youth rally in 1971. Similarly today, when George Novack, 'philosophy' spokesman of the Socialist Workers Party, accuses the Socialist

Labour League of 'dogmatic sectarianism' in philosophy and politics (Intercontinental Press, 15 June, 1972), he is hitting at exactly the same target. Appealing to the petty-bourgeois radicals at every stage, he paints a picture of the Socialist Labour League as a regime of unbearable pressure on individuals to accept philosophical dogma. He presents dialectical materialism as 'a voluntary, not a mandatory, aspect of party activity and personal development'. The SLL, according to him, 'makes a fetish out of the dialectical method'.

Novack is concerned to do one thing before anything else: that is, to preserve a position where Marxist theory is not brought into conflict with the practice of proletarian struggle and proletarian subjection to bourgeois ideology. The result of this philosophical position has long been apparent in the SWP itself. It amounts to opening the doors, within the party itself, to all the *bourgeois* ideological pressures abroad in the working class and the petty bourgeoisie. Along with the anti-Marxism of Novack and Hansen in philosophy has gone the SWP's adaptation to middle-class radicalism and protest politics in the United States. Similarly the OCI's attack on the IC for 'reducing dialectical materialism to a philosophy' was inseparable from the political position their delegation adopted at Essen: a centrist alliance with enemies of the Fourth International. As is said in several of the documents published here by the International Committee and its sections, there is a great pain from the split with the OCI. It has brought about a situation which the IC has sought to create ever since 1954, and particularly since 1961: an open discussion involving all sections of the Trotskyist movement, on the disputed fundamental questions, questions of philosophy. We do not believe the revolutionary cadre of the Fourth International can be trained to accomplish the tasks of leadership which confront them in the immediate future without a determined struggle to drive the revisionists out of the Fourth International. Now that the SWP and the OCI have been forced into the open on the basic question of dialectical materialism and the conflict between theory and practice, the fundamental conditions for achieving that task have been created. Following the documents in this issue, we shall publish in future issues the development of these struggles on Marxist philosophy.

Statement by the Workers Vanguard (Trotskyist) of Greece

THE BOLIVIAN REVOLUTION AND THE DEVIATIONS OF THE POR



Bolivian miners entering La Paz

The victory of the counter-revolution has been established. 'Law and order' reigns in Bolivia. A victory or a defeat of the working class clearly has international significance on the relation of forces in the social, political, and economic spheres.

Our criticism, translated and reprinted from the illegal theoretical organ of the Workers' Vanguard of Greece 'Proletario', is of value only to the extent that it will assist comrades to understand the future process of historical development. And, more important, in so far as it influences the perspectives of the building of the revolutionary party and the victory of the proletarian revolution in our country.

As in our country, the temporary defeat of the Bolivian working class enables local and foreign reformists to acquire new bases.

The immeasurable value of Marxism as a weapon of social and historical orientation is more than indispensable. It is a matter of life and death for all humanity. It demands a daily determined theoretical struggle for dialectical materialism in philosophy and in methodology in all aspects of the class struggle, leading to the most urgent task of today—the building of the revolutionary Trotskyist Party of Greece.

We have struggled and we shall continue to struggle against all 'new' roads to revolution, against the various 'popular' fronts with the fake anti-dictatorship bourgeoisie,

against those who castrate the class anti-dictatorial struggle with mere anti-dictator and anti-imperialist attitudes ('first the junta must go and then we'll see').

We are opposed to the enemies of the construction of a Trotskyist youth movement and those who want the youth to have theories different from the party and worship 'the spontaneous revolutionary consciousness'. And most of all we fight against those who reject the struggle for the Transitional Programme under the influence of the day-to-day struggle, based on the theory of Marxism as a weapon against the various bourgeois influences which are transmitted by the bureaucracy and the revisionists into the workers' movement.

The bitter lesson of Bolivia gives us the courage and the will to struggle against all betrayals, deviations and errors of our own Stalinists and centrists.

In the final analysis, every error of estimation and tactics is paid for dearly by ourselves, through arrests, torture and incarceration in the medieval prisons of the hated capitalist military dictatorship. The critique that follows will, we believe, provoke discussion in the International Committee of the Fourth International and, we hope, among the members and cadres of the POR and French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste.

The deviations of the POR

The revolutionary developments in Bolivia and the part played in them by the Trotskyists of the POR who found themselves in the front line of the class struggle have justifiably attracted the attention of the revolutionary vanguard.

A discussion has been opened up in the ranks of the International Committee. We participate in this discussion convinced that the building of the Fourth International and its parties is not possible without a full discussion of, and an ideological struggle over, the great events which occur in the arena of international revolution.

First, we feel duty bound to pay homage to those of the working class and those Trotskyists who fell on the battleground of the class struggle.

However, apart from this supreme duty, we must face up to the problems arising from the class struggle in Bolivia. On these our lines have divided. The Bolivian question was in fact the culmination of a long series of differences within the IC. The last straw!

We find in the line of the POR deviations of the Pabloite type—particularly in their turning away from the Soviet experience of the October revolution, and on the question of a 'new' line, that of the 'Popular Assembly'.

The Bolivian problem has acquired an international significance also from the viewpoint put forward by the leaders of the French organization of the IC—i.e. that a 'Popular Assembly' of a 'Soviet type' can become the instrument of the taking of power by the proletariat on a world scale. We firmly believe that this tendency is characterized by a deviation from Soviet principles. The question of Soviets today is the touchstone for all those tendencies which, in the name of 'realism' and 'modernized' Marxism, in reality abandon the basic principles of the Soviet dictatorship of the proletariat.

But what was the root cause of this deviation? The key lies in Lenin's famous axiom, 'Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement.'

The struggle for theory has been at the centre of our struggle against the Pabloites and the state capitalists. The struggle for an understanding of **dialectic materialism as a theory of knowledge** has been at the centre of the divisions in the IC. But once again those who fought for such an understanding have been vindicated. It is our contention that the explanation of the POR's betrayal is found in their pragmatic adaptation to circumstances and their neglect and contempt for Marxist theory.

The bourgeois, counter-revolutionary nature of the Torres dictatorship

Torres masqueraded as a representative of the 'left'. Assisted by the right-wing trade unionist Lechin, with his influence in the unions of the COB (Bolivian Workers' Centre) he was able to create

considerable illusions in the masses.

Having suffered a long period of dictatorship, particularly under General Barrientos, the rebellious masses were deceived by the fake-left phraseology of Torres and Lechin. Proceeding from deeper motives, they took over the streets from the first moment of the Torres coup.

There is a precedent in the case of Castro. Starting from a bourgeois-democratic movement, he was forced to present himself demagogically to the workers and peasants as a 'communist' and to tolerate the growth of the workers' movement. Castro's example has inspired a whole series of military and political careerists.

The Pabloite theory of the genuine communism of Castro, and their hero-worship of the Algerian leadership, as well as that of other Bonapartist regimes such as Nasser, Nkrumah, etc., naturally reinforced the illusions of the workers in the 'leftism' of various dictatorships in many colonial and semi-colonial countries. The release of Regis Debray, an associate of Che Guevara, was conceived as a smokescreen to delude the masses who were seeking their own freedom.

In reality, Torres was flesh from the same body as the militarist leadership which held power on behalf of the financial oligarchy and American imperialism. His only motive in opposing the rise of bourgeois political parties was to monopolize the crushing of the labour movement himself.

Torres' coup took place in a period of the sharpening of the cyclical crisis of capitalism. Major financial crises, the fall of the buying power of wages, the growth of unemployment to terrifying heights and social upheavals are the order of the day.

In order to face the critical social conditions weighing down on the Bolivian masses and to overcome the crisis at their expense, Torres combined demagoguery with violence. He turned to his patrons, the Inter-American Bank and the World Bank and received \$50m loans to finance the construction of an oil pipeline between Bolivia and Argentina in order to alleviate the serious unemployment problem and forestall an uprising of the masses.

The American CIA was as much behind the Torres coup as it is with all military *pronunciamentos* in Latin America. This did not prevent Torres demagogically adopting a fake anti-imperialist position. Barrientos did the same. So did all manner of fake lefts, fake democrats, fake socialists, from Chiang Kai-shek, Castro, Ben Bella, Boumediene, Nasser, Gaddafi, Bandaranaike, Aref and others, in order to divert the anti-imperialist feelings of the masses from the channel of socialism, with the aid of many kinds of opportunist organizations.

However, all the tendencies of the 'Popular Assembly' organized an 'anti-imperialist front' without, apparently including Torres as one of their targets.

Although US policy towards Torres was one of ambiguity and manoeuvres, certain circles in Washington were already beginning to accuse him of being 'soft on communism' and began to conspire with the *gorilismo*. What frightened them was the growth of the movement and of the Trotskyist factor.

The army leadership was not homogeneous. On the extreme right were the 'gorilismo', the pro-fascists, and rabid anti-communists. Others, more supple of movement, were at the centre, or, like Torres, swayed from one end to the other, but always within the framework of the bourgeois regime.

Torres, controlling only a small section of the military machine, and unable to face the conspiracies of the extreme right was ready to come to terms with it rather than permit the arming of the masses and the growth of class revolution.

Thus, despite the 'leftist' mask, the nationalist, counter-revolutionary, dictatorial and capitalist nature of the Torres government was revealed for all to see.

Torres also posed as a reformer. Indeed, he drew up and announced plans for the nationalization of the zinc, copper, lead and silver mines. Nationalization with compensation and without workers' control is a motif of all opportunist and Bonapartist govern-

ments. Even the Pabloites see a transition to socialism in the percentage of nationalization.

But Torres did not dare go as far as to carry out this nationalization. He learned his lesson from the American reaction against Ovando when the Bolivian Gulf Oil Company was nationalized. The Inter-American Bank had already cut back Torres' credits.

On the other hand Lora's Trotskyists were demanding the nationalization of the mines under workers' control. Nationalization under workers' control without compensation has a transitional meaning. It means passing through revolution towards proletarian power, the supreme criterion of the social revolution. But Torres' demagogic promises amounted to no more than a shameless fraud.

The Trotskyists of the POR did make a distinction of the class antithesis to Torres. They announced that 'The Torres government is not a workers' government', but in saying this they should have characterized it categorically as capitalist, dictatorial and counter-revolutionary.

It was as though they were trying to iron out the class contradictions, to avoid the necessity of an uncompromising struggle for the overthrow of Torres; as though they were debating the possibility of that government being a workers' government.

After the failure of Miranda's coup against Torres, a demonstration was organized with pressure from the POR Trotskyists. Their paper, 'Massas', advanced these slogans: 'Socialism, not bourgeois reformism', 'Yes to the workers' and peasants' government', 'No to the popular fronts of compromisers and traitors'.

From this list the most concrete slogan was missing, i.e. 'Down with the Torres government'. How is this explained? Perhaps as the *leit motiv* of opportunism, striking only against the right, whilst supporting 'democracy'?

How was it that the masses were not concretely orientated to the overthrow of the government? If the regime was one of bourgeois reformism, why this boosting of Torres?

At the time of the General Strike at the end of 1970 to have demanded the fall of the government was a necessity.

When, in August 1971, the balance of forces had changed against Torres in favour of the workers' movement, whilst the danger of a right-wing coup was acute, the slogan against the coup and the falangists should have been raised without blunting the sword against Torres.

It is typical of the Stalinists, and especially the Pabloites, to have a general strategy 'against fascism', at the same time uncritically tail-ending so-called Jacobin leaderships like those of Cuba and Algeria.

In his article in the Workers Press, Lora informed us: 'At that time everybody thought—including we Marxists—that the arms would be given by the governing military team . . .'

Here we have revealed some extraordinary illusions in the nature of the bourgeois government of Torres, even in the Lora tendency. This revision of the real nature of Bonapartist governments is characteristic of Stalinism and Pabloism. It proved disastrous in the development of the revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Witness the role of the so-called 'Trotskyists' in Ceylon, or the 'co-existence' of the Maoists in Indonesia. 'This position,' added Lora, as a sort of self-criticism, 'was completely mistaken.'

Recognition of this erroneous estimation of the Torres regime would have been valuable but 'La Verité [the OCI magazine] informed us that Lora, during the COB conference, not only made 'certain concessions to socialism in Bolivia alone', but formed a front with the Stalinists with 'a Stalinist-type view of the Ovando regime'.

Ovando was a supporter of the junta who distinguished himself in the operations against Guevara. When he took power he posed as a reformer and a left-winger, his heart set on 'the liberation' of his country from 'foreign imperialism'. He permitted the repatriation of Lechin, who had been exiled by Barrientos, and, even more daring than Torres, he nationalized the Gulf Oil Company. But his counter-revolutionary role became clear when he began his attacks on the left.

The movement was rising fast under the pressures of the

general crisis of capitalism. At this time, Torres was too weak to crush it. This task was undertaken by the junta of CIA-trained officers led by Banzer, tolerated by Torres, and assisted by the errors of the POR.

It was not simply a mistake to have expected such a government of the bourgeoisie to have armed the masses. The repetition of this error by Lora, and his entrust tactic in the 'Esterouro' movement, inspired by Pablo, proved to be a profound aberration.

Ever since 1848, when the 'democrats' dissolved the workshops and drowned the Parisian workers in blood, historical experience has pointed to the same conclusion. The case of the communists of Thiers (1871); the massacre of 30,000 workers by Chiang Kai-shek in the Canton rising of 1927 and his subsequent crimes: Papandreou's record in December 1944; Suharto's role in the Indonesian massacres; the history of Arab leaders like Aref, Nasser, Sadat, Hussein; all the Bonapartist regimes in Latin America and around the world; all these experiences have proved that the most 'left', the most 'democratic' bourgeoisie considers as its primary duty the disarmament and strangulation of the masses entering into revolutionary struggle.

The deviation towards the Popular Assembly

'Information Ouvrières', the OCI paper, informs us that after Miranda's unsuccessful coup and the significant demonstrations successfully instigated by the POR in January 1970, the Lora tendency was 'the only one' which put forward the slogan for the 'Popular Assembly' as a 'lever to accelerate the struggle for a workers' and peasants' government', a line fully approved by 'Information Ouvrières'.

Why? 'In order to channel revolutionary action to this end through a concrete organ.' But how? And why did the POR not think of channelling the revolutionary flood towards the concrete historical organ of Soviets? The revolutions of 1905 and 1917 showed us that the only road to the workers' and peasants' government is the road that passes through the soviets.

Bolshevik tactics are not opposed to the slogan for a constituent assembly. With this democratic demand we may seek a rostrum from which to explain our programme for real structural changes in the regime, for the conquest of wider democratic liberties, and for the overthrow of capitalism. In parallel, we seek to destroy the illusions held by the masses in the constituent assembly, and about parliamentarism generally.

But the slogan for the assembly for Bolsheviks, connected with our central slogan for a soviet system which expresses not only a higher form of the tactic of the United Front, is also a sure instrument, concrete, and historically justified, for the conquest of power, for a workers' and peasants' government; and after the conquest of power it is the best and most democratic system for the construction of the workers' state.

The theses outlined by Lenin on the question of the constituent assembly state clearly:

'2. In formulating the demand for the convention of the Constituent Assembly, the revolutionary social-democracy, right from the start of the 1917 Revolution emphasized repeatedly that the soviet democracy is a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois "democracy" with a Constituent Assembly.

'3. For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist regime, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the democracy of the soviets of workers' soliders' and peasants' deputies is not only a superior form of democratic institution (compared with the usual bourgeois democracy crowned with a Constituent Assembly) but also a unique form, able to secure the most painless transition to socialism.'

The Trotskyists could have posed the slogan of the constituent assembly, demanding democratic rights and exposing in this way the falsehood of the Torres regime. Torres, like most dictators, made endless promises of election and the restoration of 'democracy', but he had no intention of reinstating the legislative bodies which the previous dictator, Ovando, had abolished. Indeed, he refused to convene the Popular Assembly.

Even these pseudo-demo-

cratic institutions of the bourgeoisie are irreconcilable with the dictatorship. In the end, it was forced to accept its convention for demagogic reasons, at a time when it was powerless to crush the movement in any other way.

In the end Torres was forced to accept its convention for demagogic reasons at a time when he was unable to resist the pressure of the masses. However, when he was convinced that Lechin's party would dominate the Assembly, he accepted it as an advisory body. He was quite willing to accept the muted criticism of the type of the April 21 regime of the Greek colonels.

'Let them make speeches to let off steam', he was advised by his ministers. But he wanted the Assembly to be no more than a forerunner of the legislative body that would be elected after the drawing up of a constitution. Similarly in Greece, Papadopoulos created the 'small parliament', a harmless advisory body where 3,000 appointed people vote on behalf of 9 million—a corporate body cast in the mould of the fascist state of Mussolini or Franco.

Thus the POR, together with all the other parties of betrayal, played a leading role in the setting up of the Assembly which was to be designated 'Popular', a name indistinguishable from the dogmata of 'People's Power', but something which has nothing in common with the soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers.

The opening of the Assembly was postponed for a few days in order to give Torrest a little more time to cover himself by whitewashing this dirty building. This incident was typical of the relationship between the Popular Assembly and the government.

Indeed the party of Lechin consistently defended the advisory character of the Popular Assembly and the support of the government. The same tactic was pursued by the pro-Moscow Stalinists, though Moscow itself did not find the Popular Assembly to its liking, and openly supported, as it does elsewhere, the Bonapartist regime as it was. The Maoists followed the same line, and by voting Lechin as president of the Popular Assembly, demonstrated their real

treacherous co-existentialist nature.

The POR, perhaps without realizing it, in fighting for the Sovietization of the Popular Assembly, entered the slippery road of opportunism, in the service of the institution of 'People's Power'.

Soviets and Constituent Assembly

However the comrades of the POR omitted their basic duty, to put forward the slogan of soviets, to work for the country-wide extension of the committees, which to their credit, only they had built in the mines, and to crown this embryonic Soviet organization with a Congress of the committees on a national scale, and finally, to work out a soviet constitution.

Instead of directing the masses onto the road of 1905 and 1917, they pointed to 1879. 'The relationship between bourgeois and proletarian democracy', as Lenin wrote, attacking Kautsky's support for the Constituent Assembly against the soviets, was in Bolivia placed on a basis of debasing the concept of soviets. Consciously or unconsciously there was a renegation from our basic principle that 'soviet democracy is generally a superior democratic form to the Constituent Assembly' (Lenin) and a different class basis.

The leaders of the POR, and also the leaders of the French section, did not attempt to analyse the profound differences, not only between soviets and a Constituent Assembly, but also between soviets and this 'Popular Assembly of a soviet type'.

Soviets are organs of the revolutionary proletariat, waging a life-or-death struggle against capitalism for the triumphant victory of the proletarian revolution, for power of the type of the commune.

Before he became a renegade and a defender of constituent power against soviet power, synonymous with proletarian dictatorship, Kautsky once wrote this:

'Today, the organization of soviets has behind it a great and glorious history. And it has in front of it an even greater one—and not only in Russia. Everywhere it is proven that faced with the gigantic

powers at the disposal of finance capital, from the economic and political points of view, the previous methods of economic and political struggle are inadequate. We cannot ignore them. They remain indispensable during calm times. From time to time, however, there appear before us such tasks as do not correspond to these, the success of which can be guaranteed only by the joining of the economic and political means of power by the working class.'

But Kautsky reneged. Like the Mensheviks in 1905, he rejected the soviets as the instrument of seizing power and of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In opposition to the Mensheviks and opportunists of his time, Lenin proclaimed the soviets to be the basic organs for the taking of power and maintaining it after triumph of the revolution.

The Stalinists, after Thermidor, demolished the soviet structure of the USSR, and propounded the idea that in the capitalist countries the soviets could not and should not be created before the 12th hour of the uprising. By thus disorientating it from the dictatorship of the proletariat, they destroyed the Chinese Revolution.

The Maoists, with the guerrilla nature of their new (northward) movement, not only failed to establish soviets throughout China, as Trotsky observed, but threw the soviet theory out of their ideological arsenal after they had taken power.

The Pabloites passed on to the worship of 'new types of revolution', to the Cuban, Algerian, etc. 'roads to socialism', which bear no relation to any of the principles of the Permanent Revolution or sovietism.

Now, as a continuation of Pablo's Chilean parliamentary road to socialism, there appears before us the vision of the Bolivian 'soviet-type' parliamentary road to socialism!

The POR has turned its back on the soviets with the deceitful concept of the 'Popular Assembly' which was to be of 'a soviet type'. The comrades of the POR inform us that the Popular Assembly was convened by the political nucleus which developed towards the end of 1970 as an organ of leadership and

guidance of the General Strike.

A General Strike committee, with factory committees and 'committees of struggle' formed around it, can play the role of council-soviets. With their clear class nature, Trotsky saw in these committees a form of soviet. But he always stressed that these committees should be, had to be, **committees of revolutionary struggle**.

At the foundation of the Communist International in 1919, Lenin wrote that the soviet form was an international conquest after the creation of soviets in Germany and the committees of mass proletarian struggle in England (the shop stewards' committees). He proclaimed: 'The soviets are victorious around the world. They have won the sympathy of the workers.'

What happened in Bolivia? The General Strike committee could have created throughout the country a wide network of strike committees. These should have taken up the democratic and economic demands of the masses, opposing the conspiracies of the right wing and the Torres dictatorship, orientating them towards the conquest of power by the workers and peasants. In preference to this soviet road, the Bolivian Trotskyists attempted to sovietize the Popular Assembly, and thus entered in essence a 'new road to revolution'.

The Pabloites claimed to have discovered a 'new type of revolution', led by rebellious peasantry and a 'Jacobin' leadership 'which is unlike the others'. They boasted that they had enriched the theory of Permanent Revolution; in fact they had shamelessly distorted it.

Similarly the leaders of the POR and of 'Information Ouvrières'-OCI claim the discovery of a new organ for the conquest of power, the 'Popular Assembly of a soviet type'.

Why this distortion of the soviet theory? Why were they drawn to the parliament-assembly? Why, instead of building soviets, did they try to frame a constitution, with which 'the Popular Assembly would deepen its roots in the Committees'?

Why the attempt to create a new, Bolivian-type of revolution, in place of the proven October? The Lechin tendency, the Stalinists and the 'Catholic Revolutionaries' dressed up the

Torres regime with the cloak of parliamentarism. But what of the POR?

Dual power 'sui generis'

The most serious problem of a revolutionary situation arising in any country is the problem of power. The question of strategy and tactics for the conquest of power is of equivalent importance as that of the organ which will achieve it. Any deviation from this can prove fatal.

Nothing could be more erroneous than the view that the Popular Assembly represented a duality of power. We believe that the Popular Assembly in Bolivia was an impediment to the movement which objectively had developed to a situation of dynamic dualism, preventing it from taking the road of the creation of soviets and thus the development of a dual power.

'Of what does dual power consist? In that, side by side with the provisional government of the bourgeoisie, there is formed another government which, yet weak and embryonic, indisputably exists in practice and is developing: the soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies.' (Lenin, 'On Dual Power'—April 22 (9), 1917.)

Lenin is quite clear, quite definite, on the soviets as the only expression of dual power. He continues: 'This power is not at all of the same type as exists in parliamentary bourgeois democracy.' It is not the same thing as an assembly-parliament of 'dual type', embellished with a few committees of miners.

From the point of view of class essence and democracy no Popular Assembly can be compared with genuine soviets at the factories, the places of work, the neighbourhoods, the villages and the barracks, organized in a local, district, national and governmental structure, with elected and recallable representatives throughout. The soviets are real class organs, not plastic substitutes.

Dual power means that the soviet and bourgeois powers are engaged in a struggle. The victory of the soviets establishes a new kind of state, the commune, i.e. the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The POR correctly estab-

lished committees in the mines. If these had been spread throughout the country the possibility of victory would have been incomparably greater. But subordinated to the Popular Assembly, the committees faltered away from their natural tendency towards soviet power.

The creation of the Popular Assembly was not 'a considerable victory for the workers', as the leaders of the POR and the OCI's 'Information Ouvrieres' claim, together with the Pabloites. On the contrary, it was a liquidation and a castration of the committees. It was a passing over to the side of parliamentary methodology, conciliation and compromise with the bourgeois regime of Torres.

The Pabloite opportunism of Pierre Frank and Ernest Mandel during the May-June events in France in 1968 provided us with another example of the distortion of the duality of power. With their Menshevik over-estimation of the role of the students and intellectuals, and an anti-Marxist underestimation of the role of the proletariat (take-overs of factories, committees, strikes of workers and peasants), they considered the epicentre of the revolution and of dual power to be . . . in the Sorbonne! It was not the proletariat but the students who were the bearers of revolution. Yet another road to socialism!

It would have been strange if the Pabloites, with their knack of discovering roads to socialism in the most unlikely places, had not adopted the views of the POR on the Popular Assembly as 'an organ of soviet character', as an 'indisputable lever', as an organ 'of workers', which 'pointed the way to a workers' and peasants' government'.

Support for Torres

The POR did not support Torres. The Pabloite Toussain tried to slander the POR on this question. The associates of Pablo, Frank, Mandel and Alain Krivine who have supported the regimes of Ben Bella, Castro, Nasser, Makarios and all the Bonapartes of the under-developed countries, ought not to discuss questions which really incriminate them. The POR line is crystal clear.

'It would be extremely

dangerous to say that there is a similarity of aim between the masses and the group of imperialists which formed itself around Torres because it was obvious from the start that they were both fighting for different ends.'

Lechin and the Stalinists naturally supported the 'progressive' dictator Torres, and not only against the conspiracy of the right-wing junta.

This subordination to the bourgeois 'democratic' left is in the nature of opportunism. From the time of Varsky's support for Pilsudsky in Poland, in whom he saw the 'democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants', and of the support for the dictator Pangalos in Greece on whom the Greek CP called to 'do as you boast, my general' in 1925, the continuity of support for Bonapartist regimes in the colonial and semi-colonial countries is a result of the fellow travelling of the Stalinists with the 'democratic' bourgeoisie (as in China, Spain, Indonesia, etc).

It is no accident that Moscow always supported Torres, and that Soviet missions always operated in Bolivia.

We cannot achieve power without a merciless fight against the opportunists. It is sufficient to remind ourselves of the struggle against the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries inside the Russian Soviets.

But in the Popular Assembly we had a conciliation of the POR with the Lechin tendency and the Stalinists, and a certain United Front with the Stalinists.

If this was not so, how was it that 'the proposals and documents presented by the POR to be used as a basis for the work of the Assembly were adopted with few changes and mostly unanimously'?

And how was it possible for a POR comrade to be elected unanimously as military commander of the Popular Assembly? (Comrade Sossa's interview in 'Information Ouvrieres'.)

Communists must make a clear distinction between a 'democratic' and a fascist government. At a given moment it is necessary to concentrate their fire against the direct intervention of open counter-revolution—but not to support Torres in the way the

Stalinists and Lechin did. It is not permissible to relax the struggle against the government and its lackeys inside the Popular Assembly.

The United Front with the Stalinists

On what basis was the front with the Stalinists made? 'We fought', says Lora, 'on the lines of the united anti-imperialist front and against the banning of some tendencies from the Popular Assembly'.

It seems that Lora has learnt nothing from the 'anti-imperialism' of all opportunists from which the anti-capitalist content is removed, and which is used to blunt their swords against their 'own' bourgeoisie.

Analysis of the experiences of national liberation struggles has taught us that the bourgeoisie of a colonial or semi-colonial country cannot be more progressive and revolutionary than that of a non-colonial country.

The Pabloites gave their support to the 'anti-imperialist' petty bourgeois and bourgeois leaderships. How could the POR form a United Front in such a sham 'anti-imperialist' struggle?

The ruthless exploitation of the Bolivian masses by US imperialism and local finance capital aroused such deep hatred that the local and foreign bourgeoisie needed to base itself on the bayonets of Barrientos, Ovando and Torres dictatorships against the uprisings of the masses.

These anti-imperialist feelings of the masses are progressive and revolutionary. We depend on them for the triumph of the Permanent Revolution.

But the 'anti-imperialism' of the opportunists is counter-revolutionary. It is steeped in the spirit of collaboration with the local bourgeoisie. It is not accidental that both the Bolivian and the Moscow Stalinists supported Torres, who from the start was an agent of US imperialism.

The Stalinists inserted in the programme of the unions the view that the Bolivian revolution would have a bourgeois character. This meant that the unresolved problems of democracy, agrarian economy and anti-imperialism would be solved by another revolution, which would not be proletarian

Hence their Menshevik support for Torres.

What then would be the strategy of the 'United anti-imperialist front' of the CP and the POR? Would it be bourgeois - democratic? Or would it be proletarian, solving on the way the problems of the bourgeois-democracy?

The 'united anti-imperialist front' could not raise the question of national liberation since Bolivia is not a colonial country occupied by imperialism. However, according to the theory of the Permanent Revolution, even where there exists a problem of national liberation, the bearer of the democratic revolution is the proletariat which inscribes the tasks of the bourgeois-democracy on the banner of the proletarian revolution, and carries out the struggle against imperialism while fighting at the same time the local bourgeoisie and landlords.

For us, the anti-imperialist struggle is linked to the historical task of world revolution in general and the local one in particular, and a front with opportunists on the basis of an illegitimate 'anti-imperialism' is inconceivable.

The underlying meaning of the treacherous fake anti-imperialism of the Stalinists shown by the fact that when Rockefeller visited Latin America during a period of revolutionary situations and intense strike activity, the opportunists turned the movement towards anti-Americanism, thus disorientating the masses from the conquest of power.

We would certainly form a tactical common front with the Stalinists against Banzer, Torres, and the whole junta—behind which stand the Pentagon and the CIA—but on the basis of class demands, through concrete class organs and method of struggle, with the emphasis on the committee-soviets.

Such a front should differentiate its responsibilities from the methods of individual terror and bombings, which have been in complete opposition to the mass movement ever since the time of 'Iskra' at the beginning of the century.

The Stalinists would have done everything in their power to drag the 'united anti-imperialist front' towards guer-

rilla warfare in the mountains or the cities, and to turn the movement into a petty-bourgeois one, leaning on the peasantry and pushing the proletariat aside. (It was their love of guerrilla warfare which made the Pabloites betray the Permanent Revolution.)

But we saw none of these important, concrete questions in the history of the United Front of the Stalinists and the Lora tendency (as we were told by 'Informations Ouvrières').

Lechin's assembly at the service of Torres

The Popular Assembly placed itself under the leadership of Lechin at its June session. It suited Lechin perfectly, and he placed the Assembly at the service of Torres.

There should be no confusion between the Popular Assembly and soviets. Soviets grow out of **strike committees**; they are organs of struggle. The soviets could fall, or they could be victorious and become organs of state of the commune type.

Had the Popular Assembly won it would have become a bourgeois parliament of a hidden dictatorship, like all the rest of them. And, of course, it would have trampled over the corpses of the miners.

The ten days of the Popular Assembly decided its fate. Sossa warned of the dangers of 'coming to terms with Torres and becoming what Lechin and the pro-Moscow Stalinists wanted—i.e. an institution assimilated into the other bourgeois institutions and being used by Torres as a bourgeois parliament an organ of class-collaboration, and subjecting of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie'. This prospect alone is enough to smash the myth of Assembly-parliaments of a 'soviet type'.

In reality, by its very nature, the Popular Assembly could not have been transformed into a soviet body, despite the frantic efforts of Lora who was trying to 'sink its roots into the local assemblies and committees existing at the places of work'.

At the best, the Popular Assembly could have brought about a government of Lechin and Torres, or of Lechin and the Stalinists—a government of pseudo-reform and counter-revolution.

What did Lechin represent? A right-wing reformist trade union tendency which, since his becoming a minister in the Estenssoro government became organically linked to the bourgeoisie.

The representatives of this tendency at the Popular Assembly were appointed by the trade union bureaucracy, or came from Assemblies dominated by the bureaucracy. (From the Greece of the April 21 coup we know what such Assemblies mean.)

Estenssoro, aided by the Stalinists and by Lechin, (1952-1964) cracked down on the labour movement in a period of revolutionary upsurge. His counter-revolutionary policies paved the way for the Barrientos dictatorship.

He imposed state control of the mines—which accounted for 80 per cent of the budget income and two thirds of all exports — and which had passed into the control of the workers. He attacked the Trotskyists, who were struggling in the vanguard of the unions, and the armed rallies of workers, particularly miners, as well as in the vanguard of armed demonstrations of peasants.

At that time the peasants had occupied 4 million hectares of land, which eventually were distributed to 133,000 families. This was Lechin's role—a prop for bourgeois 'democracy' and dictatorship.

Lechin won the chairmanship of the Popular Assembly against the joint non-partisan candidate of the POR and the CP. (On what programme did this non-partisan candidate stand?)

The POR leaders believed that they were a 'minority only on the organizational plane', while their positions 'found widespread echoes' (Sossa) in the opportunist mob of the Popular Assembly. The influence of the POR is indisputable. Lora confirms that all basic documents and decisions of the Popular Assembly were introduced by the POR and passed virtually unanimously. How is the virtual unanimity, or their acceptance with few amendments explained, unless they contained elements of opportunist conciliationism?

There can be no doubt about this. The POR leaders had terrible illusions about the Lechin tendency and the

Stalinists — illusions of the Pabloite type.

The March 8 issue of 'Massas' pointed out: 'Torres feeds the counter revolution' — meaning that Torres was aiding the movement of the junta right wing (was not Torres then a counter-revolutionary?) This meant that a bitter fight was needed, not only against Torres, but also against his lackeys: Lechin and the Stalinists.

But when 'Massas' coined the catch phrase: 'Popular Assembly = workers' power', it created confusion of gigantic proportions. It was a deviation which ignored even the possible dangers which Sossa mentions.

The August rally organized by the Assembly showed, by the hostile reception given to Torres and Lechin, that the radicalization of the masses had surpassed the levels set by the Assembly. The situation was revolutionary.

Even if under the influence of the opportunists, the confused masses were requesting arms from Torres, or asking him to strike against the right-wing junta. The consciousness of the masses was on a level similar to that described by Lenin in 'Draft order for the disbandment of the Constituent Assembly':

'They rid themselves of the illusions of accord with the bourgeoisie, of the deceptive forms of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism, and arrived at the conclusion to break with these forms and with every policy of compromise.'

This was the meaning of the jeers and catcalls which greeted Torres and Lechin. The revolution educates the class at the most rapid speed. Lechin's Popular Assembly, which permitted Torres to address its rally, was **bankrupt**. Here the necessity for a real Trotskyist-Bolshevik party was demonstrated, a party free from Pabloite revisionism.

The 'Popular Assembly' Programme

If, from the theoretical and historical point of view, the abandonment of the soviets in favour of a 'parliament' described as a 'Popular Assembly' and embellished with a few genuine committee delegations, was unacceptable, from a political point of view it was disastrous.

The masses, with justification, detested the bourgeois parliaments and congresses, whereas soviets always hold an attraction for the oppressed masses. The programme which the Popular Assembly put forward from the seat of the old Congress did not correspond either to the real historical requirements of the revolutionary situation, or to the needs of the oppressed. So, at the decisive moment, the Popular Assembly was not able to raise a popular insurrection.

Sossa, in the interview with 'Informations Ouvrières' (July 7 and 15) presented us with the Popular Assembly's programme:

'The speeding up of the organization of the armed workers' militia.

'In the event of a coup the Popular Assembly will call for a General Strike.

'The bringing to justice of those who, under Barrientos, were responsible for the murder of militants.

'Examination of the proposals of the miners' delegates for workers' control of the nationalized Comibol mines.

'Examination of a further miners' demand for the creation of a unified university which would not only end the autonomy of the eight universities and clerical control of private education, but place the whole educational system under the control of the Popular Assembly.'

The decision on the militias was 'undoubtedly the most significant one' (Sossa). But it was aimed against the coup prepared by Banzer and Gutierrez, leader of the 'Socialist Falange', and it was linked to the demand for arms from Torres. There was nothing against the capitalist state or the counter-revolutionary intervention of Torres.

But had the workers implemented this undoubtedly important decision and taken up arms, they would have known where, how, and against whom to use them. The machine-guns of the workers and miners would have rung the death knell of the bourgeois-democratic parliamentarists.

Lechin, the Stalinists, and the groups that were the props of the nationalist bourgeoisie, voted for the proposal for the militia, but in action they sabotaged it by advocating the arming of the masses by Tor-

res, and 'pressurizing' him to strike at the conspirators himself!

As for 'Massas', it came to the belated conclusion that: 'The political development of the masses led them to the conviction that the time was irrevocably past for asking for arms from any "leftist" general, and that they should take them themselves, wherever they could find them.'

The misfortune was that 'the moment was irrevocably past' for agitation to arm the masses and for the POR leaders to rid themselves of illusions of pressurizing Torres into arming the workers. The error was fatal. And the result?

Only the 2,000-odd miners who had been deeply influenced by Trotskyist traditions and a few other workers and students joined the battle which was fought around Llakacota hill in La Paz.

The slogan of a General Strike 'in the event of a coup' was, of course, a most important decision. But a general political strike should be motivated by the economic and democratic demands and combine the struggle against the right-wing conspiracy with the struggle against the employers and the state.

Only with such a programme could they have achieved the mobilization of the masses as an independent factor, defeated the coup, and at the same time placed a noose around the neck of the Torres government.

But there was no programme on the problem of the crisis of capitalism and against the financial oligarchy which was conspiring to place the burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the masses.

The problems of the drop in the buying power of wages, the growth of unemployment, of the struggle for bread and for work, were not included in the Popular Assembly's plans for mobilization.

The problems of the agrarian reform, of pegging prices, debts and taxes, public works, expropriations, etc., were ignored. Marx's recommendation in 1856 that the peasants' war should be combined with the workers' movement was forgotten. The poor peasants, who, in their struggle against the landlords, needed peasants' soviets, were now turning their backs on the 'pre-

parliament' of Torres and Lechin.

The programme of the Popular Assembly demanded justice for the victims of Barrientos. It was not even 'anti-dictatorial' against Torres. The anti-capitalist content was removed from the general political strike, which is a higher stage on the road to revolution. There was no plan of action for the general disruption of the army and for the winning over of the soldiers as a basic factor in the general arming of the masses, around the soldiers' soviets. There was no plan to popularize the Transitional Programme or to outline the tasks of the party in the spirit of Lenin's April Theses. The slogan for a workers' and peasants' government was devoid of any content.

The workers' and peasants' government

The crisis of world capitalism created a revolutionary situation in Bolivia. For the bourgeoisie there was no margin for concession—hence their need for dictatorship.

Quite correctly the Trotskyists raised the question of the workers' and peasants' government. But what would be its character? The revolution could not have been anything but proletarian. And this revolution would have created the workers' and peasants' government.

The POR leaders should have made a clear analysis of the revolution—and clarified the character of such a government.

All the more, since by supporting the programme of the trade unions into which the Stalinists had introduced the strategy of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, they should have separated their position on this strategy.

For the Trotskyists, the establishment of the workers' and peasants' government was synonymous with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Its meaning was adulterated by the Pabloites on their slippery road of opportunism. They gave it the meaning of an intermediate government — between the bourgeois and proletarian powers — a sort of Stalinist version of the 'democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants'—the product of an intermediate revolution.

We in Greece, during the events of July 1965, in supporting the workers' and peasants' government as a pseudonym of the dictatorship of the proletariat, had to fight the Pabloite conception of the workers' and peasants' government as an intermediate government prior to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

However, in the same period, the formula of the 'workers' and peasants' government' of a bourgeois type crept into the line of the International Committee via an article of the Hungarian section printed without comment in 'La Verité'.

How did this leap to the theory of the intermediate government come about? Was there perhaps a common logic between the old view of the French section on the 'workers' and peasants' government' of Castro and this adulterated interpretation of the 'workers' and peasants' government'?

Well, the French Organization Communiste Internationaliste has now come into the open. 'Information Ouvrières' of August 26, 1971, stood for 'a workers' and peasants' government of the united workers' organizations . . . which would restore and broaden all democratic liberties and secure the free struggle of the masses against the bourgeoisie and its state'. As for the workers' and peasants' government, in the sense of being synonymous with the dictatorship of the proletariat, it was regarded as being no more than the distant music of the future.

That is all. A government of Stalinists and pseudo-socialists, who have proven throughout the world to be the shameless agents of the bourgeoisie and have passed over to open counter-revolution, was supposed to restore liberties and assist the struggle of the masses to overthrow capitalism!

This renegation from the dictatorship of the proletariat in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism, when the question of power had appeared on the agenda, created terrible illusions, just like those of the Pabloites about the self-democratization of the bureaucracy, revolutions led by the CP, etc.

The tactic of 'breaking with the bourgeoisie' which according to the Transitional Pro-

gramme, we can and must demand from the parties of betrayal does not, in any circumstances, mean that agitation for revolution and for a real workers' and peasants' government should be relinquished.

On the contrary, agitation for the revolution must not only not weaken: it is in fact—together with agitation for soviets—of decisive significance in a correct strategy aiming for a workers' and peasants' government.

On the other hand, the process of fighting for a pseudo-workers' and peasants' government presupposes replacement of the methodology of civil war with that of pacifism.

'Such a government must break from the bourgeoisie, call on the masses to organize in councils, organize workers' control in production, place all power in the hands of the councils and destroy the bourgeois state machine'! Hey presto! The parties of betrayal are turned into organs of revolution. This is really a cloud cuckoo land!

When the Transitional Programme speaks of 'a workers' and peasants' government' as an 'exceptionally unlikely possibility', as a 'brief stopping place on the road to the real dictatorship of the proletariat' it does not 'lend itself to presumptions' so historically long-term and ambitious as those of our miracle workers.

It stresses: 'Agitation around the slogan of the workers' and

peasants' government retains in all conditions a colossal educational value.' However, the bloc of the French, Hungarian and Bolivian sections of the International Committee advance the slogan of the bourgeois workers' and peasants' government as a permanent central task of the period and subtract the agitation for soviets and for the revolution.

This 'workers' and peasants' government' means disorientation from the conquest of power and, combined with the suppression of the slogan for soviets in favour of the Popular Assembly is tantamount to a refusal on our part to go further than the bourgeois-democratic limits in the spirit of the Permanent Revolution, and adoption on our part of the Stalinist-Menshevik theory of stages and taking the 'Chilean' parliamentary road to socialism (like Pablo).

'Reality does not excuse even a single theoretical error.'

And yet we see here the distortion of the tactic of the United Front which leads to the government of the United Front and from which we expect an impetus to the revolutionary struggle—thus weakening its ability to undermine the treacherous leaders. Here we must also note the underestimation on principle of the significance of an alliance with the poor layers of the countryside.

It is no accident that the slogans for soviets and for a workers' and peasants' govern-

ment were absent from the programme of the French organization during the May-June days in 1968. Not only because the over-ripe and over-revolutionary situation was most criminally underestimated (opportunism is used to under-estimating the revolutionary upsurge and over-estimating the resilience of capitalism), but also because they were disorientated from the basic tasks of the movement which could be summed up as: 'Down with de Gaulle! Long live the workers' and peasants' government!'

From this standpoint the position of the French in 1968 was to the right of the Bolivian organization in 1971.

In conclusion, in Bolivia, as elsewhere, we must struggle for soviets, in which the masses would recognize the organ of leadership which strikes decisively for power and for a **real workers' and peasants' government.**

'The organization of soviets', Lenin stresses in his draft for the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, 'is the **only** one able to lead the struggle of the class for its **total political and economic liberation.**' **The only one.**

We have no need of illegitimate 'Popular Assemblies of a soviet type' which were supported not only by Lechin, Allende, the Stalinists and the Pabloites, but also the 'renovators' of the soviets of 'Informations Ouvrières'.

Greece, December 26, 1971.

Statement by the Greek section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, in reply to the document 'A reply to a splitting Act' from the Organization Communiste, Internationaliste [see this issue]

On November 24, 1971 the French OCI issued a Declaration—in reply to the Resolution drawn up by the IC on October 24, 1971.

In this document, published in *Informations Ouvrières*, the OCI leadership begin, according to them, with an attempt to re-establish the truth about the events that unfolded up to the time of the split because, in their opinion, these are distorted in the Resolution of the IC.

It was not—they state—the OCI who initiated the split, but the organizations signing the document of October 24. Also, the IC was not divided into a majority and a minority, but into two equal-voting parts.

Finally, they make the observation that these points are of secondary importance and that the main question is that of the political differences between the two factions. While that is true, the events preceding the split are also of some significance as regards the essence of the differences.

For this reason, let us also begin from these events.

The IC and the EDE

The composers of the Declaration managed without any trouble to draw up the list of opponents as follows:

1. SLL (Great Britain).
2. WL (USA Organization in solidarity with the IC).
3. RCP (Ceylon).
4. LWL (Ireland).
5. OCI (France).
6. LSPH (Hungary).
7. LOM (Mexico).
4. POR (Bolivia).

From the list they removed the Greek Section (EDE) and added the Bolivian POR.

The leaders of the OCI appear to see the international movement as a chessboard, on which the game is played according to their own fickle rules. They put one 'piece' in some humble little square and put another aside—according to their own needs.

It is not by chance that in their Déclaration they characterize the Workers' League as the 'New York mouthpiece' of the SLL, that is, a 'pawn'. From our side, it would be neither right nor completely wrong to say that the OCI 'judge others by themselves'.

As far as the Greek Section of the IC is concerned, this is the first time the OCI have claimed that we constitute an organization merely sympathetic to the IC, since we expelled our minority early in 1967.

The OCI are ready to sacrifice Sections of the IC for the sole reason of drawing up lists favourable to themselves.

The decision to place the Greek Section on the periphery was taken—according to them—in the IC, after a proposal by its Secretary, Cliff Slaughter.

Which meeting of the IC was this?

The OCI, who madly deny the existence of a minority and majority in the IC 'since there was no meeting of the IC', think that decisions on expulsion or addition of Sections can be taken without a meeting of the IC.

We cannot help but remember the saying 'Practise what you preach'.

The expulsion, removal or addition of a Section are serious matters and presuppose a discussion in the IC with as wide as possible participation of Sections and

necessarily with the participation of those directly concerned.

There was never such a meeting of the IC.

Even more elementary—in these cases—is the announcement of the decision to the Sections and especially to those directly concerned.

When did the IC, or one of its supreme and uncontrollable rulers, who decides independently of the others, announce such a decision? Never!

Had such a decision been taken, the EDE would have had every reason to combat it decisively and nothing would have prevented it from doing so in public.

But no one can cite a case where reference was made to such a question, either within the EDE or in its publications.

Which is only natural, because such a question never existed.

Who could have disputed the EDE's right to take organizational measures against a minority or exclude it from the IC for such a reason? Nobody! Neither the Pope in Rome nor the Pope in Paris. What was pending in the IC in connection with the EDE was not whether it would be re-added as a section or not—a position which would have been inconceivable—but the approval or rejection of the expulsions that had taken place.

The EDE had willingly left the last word on this question to the IC even though the international organization did not recognize such jurisdiction in itself. The EDE acted according to its own conception of the IC, which was contrary to that of the OCI,

who saw the IC as a flabby and in every way powerless and incompetent body.

As far as the German SAB is concerned, the OCI finds it natural to say 'a German group, the SAB, which was formed from elements expelled from the German Trotskyist organization IAK because of their refusal to carry out in practice the discipline of the organization.'

The OCI's justice functions with different laws and prophets in Germany . . .

The OCI is too late in putting forward its contentions, which unfortunately contradict the actual relations of the EDE with the IC during the whole five-year period since the expulsion of our minority.

If the IC really considered that nothing exists in Greece except two sympathizing groups of equal status, then Greek Trotskyism should have been represented by both groups at all international meetings, at all presentations in conferences and at other activities of sister organizations.

Nothing of the kind ever happened. Every time and everywhere it was represented by the EDE and the EDE alone.

Also, had such a decision been taken by the IC, nobody, and above all the EDE itself, would have allowed the EDE to usurp a title that did not belong to it.

We must say, as an example, that this happened both at the Rally of the AJS at Le Bourget and at the Essen Rally.

After Le Bourget, *Jeune Revolutionnaire* published a photocopy of our paper *Ora tis Allagis*, with the caption 'The newspaper of our Greek comrades'.

There were not two sympathizing organizations of equal status in Greece. The times have simply changed, along with the needs of the OCI.

The OCI, stunned by recent events, do not render the situation as it really was, but as they would like it to have been.

Their solemn passion, which they never dared to bring out in the open, was for our minority to be found among the sections of the IC because in it they saw something akin to their own policies.

If during five whole years the IC did not manage to

clear up the problem of our minority, it was not because 'the conditions (after the coup d'etat) did not allow a study of the motives of this split' as they unashamedly claim, but due to the problems of the IC itself because of their own obstruction.

The EDE soon became conscious that the OCI was making its own calculations with an ulterior motive.

The OCI leaders could see 'into the future'. They did not want to cut their ties with the minority of the EDE. They had their own factional contacts with our minority and have visited Greece without consulting the IC.

It must be made clear, however, that this minority group accepts the position of the IC, not of the OCI—see the article on Bolivia in this issue.

The same ulteriorly motivated calculations which have determined the OCI's stand with regard to Greek Trotskyism were also behind the invitation to Robertson's 'Spartacists' group at Essen, along with the National Students' Association of the USA. This was not merely Berg's individual initiative. It is the OCI's own method 'for rebuilding the Fourth International' *à la française*, a 'rebuilding' equivalent to breaking up.

After having 're-established' the truth about the EDE, the composers of the Declaration went on to the question of the Bolivian POR.

'As far as the POR is concerned,' they write, 'the issues are clear'. (Our emphasis.)

Is this to be taken as a sly hint that on the Greek question they had been *unclear*?

The POR's relations with the IC

In order to include the POR in their list, they offer two 'arguments'. The first is a five-line news item published in *Workers Press*, where the POR was named as the Bolivian section of the IC.

This item, appearing once in a paper published every day, has absolute value for the OCI. From this point of view, they do not take into consideration a lengthy article by comrade Wohlforth which was published ten days later in the *Bulletin* (organ of the Workers League) and after another ten days in the *Workers Press*, and

which states the exact opposite.

In 1970—the Declaration alleges—the POR was accepted into the IC at a meeting in which Lora took part.

This meeting is just as well-known to the sections of the IC as that which expelled the EDE.

Anyway, the OCI's second 'argument' is that in March 1970—so they say—Lora's accession was announced in *La Verité* and this was not contradicted.

The addition of the POR was, however, so indisputable that seven months later the OCI criticized the POR in *La Verité* which would have been unthinkable if we are really talking about a member of the IC, without prior discussion within the IC.

As we have seen, the OCI's 'arguments' do not stand up very well.

They are revealed as being particularly rotten, however, if one examines them from the standpoint of inner causality which they lack entirely. Because it is this causality that can establish the truth of the matter and give foundations to the separate elements.

The sections which met on October 24, 1971 have, on their part, explained completely their mistrust towards the POR. The OCI have said nothing about their own trust.

They say only that the POR is an old Trotskyist organization. But this fact constitutes one more reason for mistrust, and not for the opposite. It means that the POR is an organization with more or less fixed views, and relatively difficult to change.

When the young German organization was kept in the periphery of the IC for a lengthy trial period, how could the IC have admitted Lora as soon as he decided to knock on their door?

How can the OCI maintain that the IC admitted Lora, who did not decide to approach it until nearly 20 years after the split with the Pabloites, without any reluctance, and at the same time reaffirm the longstanding reluctance of the IC towards the German organization, which had openly undertaken the fight of the IC in its own country?

How can it possibly be considered that the IC treated so loosely an organization

which, before the cock had crowed three times, was ready to play such a reactionary role in the most critical phase of the class struggle in Bolivia, ready to descend to the very depths of disgrace with the announcement in La Paz of its participation in the Popular Front which also includes former President General Torres, only one day before the CC of the OCI composed its Declaration (where it demands that we make absurd discriminations among the POR, the LSSP and the POUM)?

No, the POR could not have been and was not admitted to the IC with such light-mindedness.

Consequently, it is not the IC who manufacture majorities and minorities by adding and subtracting, but the OCI who manufacture equal-voting parts.

As for the contradictory evidence which can certainly be offered by either side, this by itself has no value whatsoever. It can at the most confirm the existence of certain internal problems which the IC certainly has to solve.

Who is responsible for the split?

Not us, but the ones who gathered on October 24, say the OCI, and for this they invoke a labyrinth of untruths, on whose paths it would be useless and joyless for us to wander.

The majority of the IC who met on October 24 did not do so in order to provoke a split but in order to recognize the existence of one.

This is not simply a claim, as we will show below.

In their Declaration the OCI maintain that it is not ideas that explain deeds, but deeds that explain ideas. So one would expect them at least to try and make a material analysis and interpretation of the supposed activities of the majority of the IC which led to the split. From the side of the majority, to what end would a split serve? Because, naturally, they would not have created a split for the sake of a split.

But it is in vain that one seeks something of this sort in their Declaration. In a text that seeks to give lessons in materialism, you will find nothing but scattered and

abstract accusations about the majority passing over 'to the theses of idealism'.

The sections that met on October 24 made an initial reference to the historical and social roots of the contempt with which the OCI confronts the question of theory. Beyond this they denounced it, concretely, for breaking from the IC to join its new friends, the centrists.

They denounced it for allying itself with the POUM at Essen against the IC, for having undertaken the role of apologist for the POR which has now joined with General Torres, for having invited Robertson, the sworn enemy of the IC, to Essen, and for having invited the ill-reputed American right-wing student organization, the NSA.

'Concerned about historic truth', the OCI note that the NSA did not vote. But their 'concern', real or not, has no value at all. Had it voted, it would certainly have voted for 'materialism' along with the POUM, POR, Robertson and the OCI, against the 'idealism' of the majority of the IC!

Next, the OCI claim that 'a crystal-clear and quick answer of the CC of the OCI came at this stage to obstruct the development of this dangerous trend', that is, comrade G. Healy's approach to the Pabloites for a public discussion following a proposal by comrade Lambert.

The SLL has of course explained its own attitude to this discussion, but for our part at least it was acceptable because it would have brought the OCI into a confrontation with these centrists and thus would have aided in a political clarification.

We believe that the OCI retreated because they became aware of the danger. But whatever they tried to avoid then, they brought on themselves with their breaches of faith at Essen. A public discussion has now been taken up at the international level, and this is one of the positive sides of this affair.

At Essen—they say—the SLL and certain other sections 'broke' the agreement to support the resolution which the OCI proposed, when they insisted on the controversial amendment formulated by the delegation of the SLL.

What agreement was this? While the SLL-YS received the

resolution, untranslated, a few hours before they left for Essen, the other sections got it—untranslated—only after the Meeting which was to decide on it had begun. How could there have been agreement on a unknown text?

As *Informations Ouvrières* informs its readers, the SLL and the other organizations which supported the controversial amendment had already decisively supported exactly the same positions during the pre-conference of the IC in June 1970. That is, that without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary party—and the struggle to build it, as well as the revolutionary youth, must be based on the fight for dialectical materialism against bourgeois ideology and all the forms which it takes within the workers' movement. How did it happen that they suddenly agreed on the opposite at Essen?

No, there was no agreement on capitulation to the centrists. On the contrary, the IC was founded on the basis of opposite agreements. And these were broken at Essen by the OCI, LOM and LSPH.

This was the split. They did not need to announce it; they had shown it with their actions.

Their stand at Essen had been presaged by the case of the Germans, to which it would be helpful to refer. In Germany, where the two trends of the IC were found in one and the same organization, the IAK, the majority expelled the minority because it insisted on its right to be associated with another section of the IC, the SLL (and the YS).

The OCI finally offer as an argument the fact that Lambert was invited by the SLL after Essen to speak on dialectical materialism at the Young Socialists' educational camp. This in itself, they say, shows that no split had taken place at Essen.

Yes, but the composers of the Declaration forgot to mention the fact that the delegation of the OCI found itself involved in serious and open disagreements with the other delegations at the summer school. The invitation to comrade Lambert was intended very deliberately to let everyone see the position of the OCI on the philosophical questions.

The reaction of the majority of the IC could not have been expressed (in a Statement like that of October 24) immediately after Essen, where for the first time after years of collaboration, the OCI separated itself publicly from the IC. The facts had to be weighed and assessed. The Statement of the OCI and of the Hungarian LSPH on October 12, in which the Socialist Labour League, Workers League and whoever criticized the Bolivian POR were linked with imperialism—and the Meeting in Paris advertising Just as the Secretary of the IC—these are facts that served to emphasize the meaning of the events at Essen.

The OCI—who, notably, detest the title of secretary—today justify themselves, maintaining that Just was placed alongside Cliff Slaughter as co-secretary.

Not exactly. During the pre-conference of the IC in August 1970, a co-secretariat composed of Just (OCI), Nagy (LSPH) and Banda (SLL) was elected, alongside the Secretary, Cliff Slaughter.

Just was not advertised as a member of the co-secretariat at the Paris meeting.

Theory and practice — party and class

We now come to the political differences—the essence of the split.

These differences must, above all, be confronted from the standpoint of method. The most important lesson from the development of the American SWP, a lesson now being reaffirmed in the retreat of the OCI, is that the rejection of centrist policies on one question or another is insufficient or false when it does not extend to the rejection of the anti-Marxist method found behind them.

We rejected, say the OCI leaders, the SLL's amendment to the resolution at Essen 'because it expressed the passing over to the theses of idealism'. And they explain themselves:

'No, behind every development of opportunism within the workers' movement there is not "ideology" with the form of the revision [abandonment of Marxism], there is the reality of social forces in struggle, the class struggle, which is expressed within the

workers' movement itself, which is the arena and outcome of this fight and which gives rise to justifications in the form of the revision of Marxism.'

It is a fact that the abandonment of Marxism cannot be explained by the abandonment of Marxism. No one, however, had supported this empty tautology, neither the SLL nor the other organizations signing the Statement of October 24. On this point the OCI is carrying coals to Newcastle.

The 'reality' of social forces in struggle explains the revisions of Marxism—but what is the relation of Marxist theory about reality to reality itself? The disagreement is located exactly at this point.

In the opinion of the OCI, theory is a simple reflection of reality, without an active role; Marxism, a collection and classification of the experience of the practical movement.

They say that a practical capitulation in the field of the class struggle is followed by its theoretical justification in the form of the revision of Marxism. This is only right by half and for that reason untrue. Theory is not dragged along behind practice. It follows practice but at the same time precedes it.

It is certain that every theoretical capitulation leaves the way open for even greater practical capitulations.

Theories spring from material reality, their limits are fixed by material reality. Marxist theory could not have been born anywhere but within capitalism, out of the same social conditions which created the workers' movement. However, as theoretical 'reasoning' it did not come from the workers' movement but appeared alongside it as the conscious opposite of the unconscious action of the working class. As a theory, Marxism does not develop except to the degree that the world changes practically. As such, it is not a passive reflection of changes taking place in practice. It plays a tremendously active role, acting upon its own material resources. As Marx said, 'and theory becomes a material force when it is embodied in the mass movement'.

Entirely to the contrary, the OCI presents theory as a kind of wart on the face of the 'reality' of social forces in

struggle, and rejects the decisive importance of the struggle for Marxism against bourgeois ideology and its variants within the workers' movement.

Every opportunist recognizes the fact that the bourgeoisie does not rule only physically, with its repressive state mechanism. He accepts the fact that the conveyance of bourgeois ideology to the masses plays a meaningful role in their slavery. But at the same time he denies that its opposite, Marxism, can play a role of its own in the liberation of the masses. The theoretical struggle is for him not indissolubly tied to each moment of the practical struggle. The ideological emancipation of the working class is not a dynamic process which is realized every day, but comes suddenly and all at once after its social emancipation. The opportunist who refuses to fight for ideological emancipation does not, in fact, even want social emancipation, or, in the best of cases, does not believe in its possibility.

At Essen the OCI denied that the only basis for the building of the Fourth International is the struggle for Marxist theory. This denial is indissolubly linked to their spontaneist outlook on the party and, in essence, to a denial of the party itself. The OCI declaration states:

'The revolutionary party does not arise opposite the working class movement. The building of the revolutionary party springs from the total development of the class struggle.'

And a little further down: 'Marxism is "the conscious expression of an unconscious process". The revolutionary party is the organized form taken by this conscious expression within the class struggle.'

The party is the 'organized' form of Marxism; distinguished from the movement as regards organization and not as regards consciousness; it is an extension of the spontaneous movement in the same direction as the spontaneous movement. Like Marxism, the party 'springs from' the total development of the class struggle, or, to use the charming words of Stephane Just, from the 'organic process' of the class struggle.

Incidentally, we hope that

Stephane Just, that worthy man who 'defends Trotskyism' by substituting for the 'natural process' of the Pabloites his own 'organic process', will explain to us in one of his later volumes why, while in pre-war Spain and in post-war Greece the 'organic process' of the class struggle reached its highest point, civil war, Marxism did not appear in the consciousness of the workers, nor did the Marxist party appear in their leadership. Maybe he will succeed in finding an answer, where Pablo and Mandel failed.

On the basis of the 'total development' of the class struggle, from which everything can only 'spring', the Pabloites gave Castro the title of 'spontaneous Marxist'. Accordingly, the OCI stated in the original resolution at Essen that which it quietly made disappear in the final one, that the youth has 'spontaneous class consciousness', while Charles Berg declared, in the preparatory campaign in France, that the youth is 'spontaneously internationalist'.

The IC has broken from the Pabloites, insisting that the revolutionary party cannot be built, and socialism cannot triumph, spontaneously and empirically. The truth is not painted on the world's face. On the contrary, the surface of things reflects their essence in a distorted manner and this spontaneously leads to the formation of a distorted consciousness about things.

In the first volume of *Capital*, under the title 'The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof', Marx analyses the material roots of the original distortion of consciousness which takes place within the system of capitalist relations of production. Inseparably tied to the capitalist mode of production, says Marx, is the fact that the product of Man's labour alienates itself from its producer, transcends him and gives him the illusion that it rules over him; something like fetishes, which, while they are primitive man's creations, are regarded by him as his creator. The same fetish character is taken on by the product of man's labour when it assumes the form of a commodity in the market. It loses every trace of its origin, of the social division of labour and the human effort concentrated in

it. It appears as something mythical, something which determines its producer. Thus relationships between human products appear to be relationships between things. This is the material basis of the whole process of mystical distortion of the consciousness of the producer, the whole ideological veil that hides the true face of the exploitative nature of the capitalist system.

Labour power, being the only commodity the proletariat possesses, also assumes the fetish character of the commodity-form, which catches the worker up in a whole net of illusions. From within these illusions, his spontaneous struggle cannot surpass the limits of the fight for a better price for the commodity, labour power; the limits of trade union consciousness, that is, the bourgeois consciousness of the proletariat.

Lenin dedicated his pamphlet *What is to be Done?* to the fight against the standpoint that sees socialist consciousness and the revolutionary party as products of the spontaneous development of the labour movement.

But in the OCI they attempt to counterpose Marx to Lenin. Just regards the contents of Lenin's pamphlet as 'metaphysical discussion'. P. Broue, in *La Vérité* (No 554-555) says of *What is to be Done?*, 'We do not look upon it as our Bible'. They defend it in so far as it was shown to be effective in the building of the Bolshevik party. But a dialectical work has no need of such defence.

A year after the publication of *What is to be Done?*, at the Conference of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, Plekhanov (who had not yet become involved with Menshevism), with Lenin's consent, showed clearly what is the root of spontaneism, the opposition of spontaneity to consciousness, of the party to the class, the meaning of the 'introduction of Marxism from outside'; 'outside the boundaries of the struggle for a better price for labour-power'. At this point the thread of the Leninist approach to consciousness is tied to Marx's analyses in *Capital* on the same subject.

What is to be Done? constitutes a continuation and development of Marxism. It is not limited to a criticism

of *Rabocheye Dyelo* in the epoch of the omnipotence of the Tsarist Okhrana. Exactly because it is a concrete dialectical analysis of a concrete situation, it rises above the particular to the general and answers the basic questions not only of a decade but of the whole period of imperialism. In it is analysed the whole dialectic of the relation of the vanguard to the masses and of the building of the revolutionary party.

The amendment of the SLL to the resolution at Essen began with the words: 'There can be no revolutionary party without revolutionary theory.' The OCI rejected the amendment as 'idealism' and 'silly talk'. This corresponds to the rejection of *What is to be Done?*. History has answered the Menshevik critics of Lenin as well as the OCI.

Beyond the historical lesson, an independent analysis easily proves that idealism was behind not the SLL amendment, but the theses of the OCI.

If Marxism is nothing more than a shadow of the 'total development of the class struggle', then it is necessarily, as Hansen maintained, 'consistent empiricism'.

Lenin said that cognition advances 'from living perception to abstract thought, and from this to practice'. The main characteristic of empiricism, however, is that it makes an absolute out of one moment in the process of cognition, practical experience—it rejects the abstraction of thought and as a consequence the cognizability of the world, and thus man's ability to change it consciously. For this reason, empiricism, even when it claims to be materialistic, remains essentially on the level of metaphysics and idealism.

The OCI's theories are nothing but the continuation of the teachings of 18th-century French empiricism and a capitulation to its latter-day variants. Thus it is not strange that the 'materialistic' objectivism of their leaders is easily transformed into subjective idealism. For example, they write:

'If we do not begin from the political contradictions of the SLL leadership and from its refusal to work them out in a discussion within its ranks, we cannot understand the shocking bad faith and the criminal lightness . . .' etc., etc.

Beyond the attempt to play the demagogue on undefined 'contradictions' within which the SLL leadership finds itself, the fact remains that our objectivists now come to maintain quite subjectively that contradictions are resolved by 'discussion within the ranks of the organization'.

Despite their scorn of Marxist theory, the OCI do not fail to point out in their Declaration that 'the class struggle does not forgive a single theoretical mistake'. This assurance, in flagrant opposition to the whole content of the Declaration, to all the policies and practice of the OCI, has no meaning other than that their leaders want to light a candle to both God and the devil so as to have friends everywhere.

The OCI do not recognize the meaning of the revisions of Marxism in relation to the development of opportunism within the labour movement. Their own sliding back to opportunism is not of course a consequence of the revision of Marxism, but it has not happened without revision. The abandonment of the principles of Marxism here plays the role of the necessary letter of introduction, the admission ticket to the entrenchment opposite the IC. In there, they will now bring into the world new practical and theoretical monsters.

Marxist philosophy and Marxist programme

The OCI, in order to avoid the task of supporting Marxism against revisionism, in the struggle for building the revolutionary party, has first of all created a total confusion of terms and meanings. They make a fundamental distinction between Marxist philosophy and dialectical materialism in order finally to maintain that philosophical activity ran its historical course a century ago and that any Marxists occupying themselves with the main philosophical problems, any struggle whatsoever in the abstract area of philosophy, constitute an avoidance of the concrete tasks of the proletarian struggle. They identify dialectical materialism itself with Trotsky's Transitional Programme, transforming it into a metaphysical category, given once and for all.

The OCI leaders try to base their conception of philosophy on certain extracts from the works of Marx and Engels, like the final thesis of Marx on Feuerbach:

'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it.'

With this position, they think that Marx puts a final end to the role of philosophy. Its meaning, however, is entirely different. Marx here defines simply and with exactitude the essence of all the old philosophy, materialistic included.

Its basic lack was that it saw the source of all social evils in men's mistaken conception of the world. Before Marx, philosophers believed that in order to change society, men had first to abandon their mistaken beliefs and to see the world correctly. They were not aware that the false ideas and religious prejudices against which they were fighting had their roots deep in the objective conditions of material life of society and that consequently they could not defeat them except in the process of change of the material conditions themselves, through practical action. For this reason, at the heart of all previous philosophies there was, mainly, not practical action for the transformation of the world, but intellectual action for its interpretation.

For Hegel, the idea was the creator of reality, which constituted only its external appearance. For Marx, on the contrary, 'the idea is nothing but material reality, transferred to and transformed in the human brain.' (Preface to *Capital*, Vol I.)

Marx set Hegel, who had been standing on his head, on to his feet. He did not abolish him. Emphasizing the precedence of the material and of men's action, Marx raised philosophy from activity which explains to activity which transforms.

When the OCI invoke the statement of Marx in *The German Ideology*, that philosophy was surpassed by the development of the sciences, they again show a gross misunderstanding of Marx's viewpoint. For Marx, philosophy as a science standing above the sciences was surpassed, but not philosophy based on human action and the sciences.

As an independent intellectual activity, philosophy springs from the original distinction between manual and intellectual labour, which marks class society throughout its history. At each stage in the development of the productive forces, at every stage in the development of class society, philosophy has represented the indirect, non-mechanical, reflection in the superstructure of the degree reached by man in his conquest of nature. The development of philosophy, like the development of each level of reality, never took place smoothly but always through conflicts which reflected the social contradictions.

The basic conflict out of which human society develops is that between the forces of production and relations of production. Each new rise in the productive forces conflicts with the inherited framework of relations of production, and out of this conflict the change in the form of society takes place. When society took on its most developed class form and the division of labour acquired the most complicated possible character, when the relations of production became capitalistic, the outlook for future development became fundamentally different from what it was in former social changes. It is no longer a question of a more complicated division of social labour, but of the alteration of the distinction between manual and intellectual labour, within a classless society.

The horizon which will open with the overthrow of capitalist relations of production by the chief productive force, the working class, is a new world where the splitting up of human activity into autonomous sectors, independent of the conscious control of human will, will cease to exist. Philosophy will be embodied in this new life for mankind and not cut off from it.

Marx called this process of the embodiment of philosophy in human action the 'realization' of philosophy, (Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right) which is realized in the world proletarian revolution.

'Philosophy cannot become reality without the disappearance of the proletariat, and the proletariat cannot disappear without philosophy becoming reality.'

Marx made a fundamental distinction between the realization of philosophy out of the struggle of the proletariat for the emancipation of mankind, and the denial of philosophy sought by the activists of his epoch. 'The *practical* political party in Germany demands the *denial of philosophy* . . . It believes that it carries out this denial by turning its back on philosophy and by turning away its face—mumbling a few peevish and worn-out phrases about it . . . but you cannot annihilate philosophy without making it reality.'

The joining of philosophy with the action of the masses does not take place automatically, nor without conflicts. The proletariat was and is still excluded from the process of intellectual production. As a whole, it will embrace the treasures of culture only when it has disappeared as a class, within communism.

Only the vanguard of the class, linked with other elements pushed by the crisis into the proletarian camp, can, within the revolutionary party, 'the central ideological workshop of the working class,' absorb and surpass critically all the prior conquests of human thought in history, philosophy, economy, and thus become able to conceive capitalist reality as a whole.

The observations of Marx and Engels on philosophy do not signify anything other than that philosophy cannot develop except within the revolutionary party and in the struggle for building it as the conscious leadership of the working class. Outside the party, philosophy dies and rots. And vice-versa, there can be no development of the party except within the fight for the development of revolutionary philosophy. This is the only path towards the disappearance of the proletariat and of philosophy.

As the creation of the workers' state has the aim of the disappearance of the state, as the final destination of the party is the disappearance of the distinction between the vanguard and the masses, in the same way the struggle for Marxist philosophy is in the final analysis a struggle for the disappearance of philosophy, philosophy as a separate, alienated activity.

The denial of the characteri-

zation of dialectical materialism as 'Marxist philosophy' is not new. It has its historical precedents. Especially during the inter-war years of heavy defeats of the labour movement, middle-class intellectuals, allied within centrist groups and leftist trends, showed their enmity towards Marxist theory and Bolshevism by launching a direct offensive against the philosophical bases of Marxism.

There are two distinct tendencies among them: the one narrowly academic, the other more 'war-like'.

On the one hand the revisionists of the so-called Frankfurt School, especially Marcuse, proclaimed the death of philosophy and its transformation by Marx into a 'Critical Theory of Society.' On the other hand, Karl Korsch, extracting the theoretical conclusions of the anti-Bolshevik fight of the leftists in Lenin's epoch, considered the raising of Marxism into 'philosophy' by Lenin and Trotsky to be a concession to bourgeois materialism. 'There is no Marxist philosophy, there is only Marxist critique of political economy, which is the science of the proletarian revolution,' said Korsch.

Both revisionist tendencies had a common idealistic method, the idealism of the Left Hegelians implacably combated by Marx and Engels. And a common political conclusion: the denial of the role of the revolutionary party.

With the difference that Marcuse assigned the role of overthrowing capitalism to the intellectuals—the ideal bearers of the immaterial 'Critical Theory of Society'—while Korsch left the development of history to the spontaneous development of the masses, who would be liberated from their illusions about the need for a revolutionary party . . .

The idealist isolation of theory from practice, either for the benefit of some Critical Theory—Non-Philosophy, or for some Non-Philosophical Critique of Political Economy, or for the benefit of academic speculation, or for narrow-minded activism, always came to the same logical conclusion—the denial of the struggle for working-class consciousness and finally the denial of the role of the revolutionary class by itself.

It is not by chance that

centrist and leftist trends, like those of the Frankfurt School and Korsch of Burnham, who had called dialectics a 'religion', appeared at the most critical moments of the class struggle, when Trotskyism was fighting for the continuation of Bolshevism, first within the Left Opposition, then by founding the Fourth International.

It is not by chance that today, at the highest point in the history of the class struggle, when the order of the day becomes the building of mass Trotskyist parties of the Fourth International, to lead the struggle for working class power in the immediate future, a split breaks out within the IC of the Fourth International centring around the subject of Marxist philosophy.

At every decisive turning point, the opponents of the working class direct their offensive against the very foundations of Marxism, in order to sow total confusion. On the way in which Communists face the subject of Marxist philosophy depends their whole strategy and tactics in building the party and in the struggle for power. The OCI with their stand brought these offensives into the ranks of the International Committee.

The OCI reject Marxist philosophy, but 'accept' dialectical materialism in words. But in it, they see nothing but the Programme, which is 'the most complete expression of dialectical materialism in our epoch.' They make an absolute out of the Transitional Programme and thus transform Marxism into an immobile dogma. From the former standpoint of the 'total class struggle' which alone can determine ideas, they pass over to the subjective standpoint of the dogma which can only be applied.

'Marxist theory'—the ywrite in their Declaration—is the concentration and generalization of all the determinations of the class struggle, of its historical development. . . . The Marxist method only exists through its content which integrates all the moments in the proletariat's struggle for its emancipation. In this sense, the programme of socialist revolution concentrates Marxism . . .'

If for the OCI philosophy finished with Feuerbach, dialectical materialism (which is

not philosophy) finished with the writing of the Transitional Programme.

Still we know that after 1938 the earth did not stop turning. And consequently that Trotsky was not another John the Evangelist and the Transitional Programme was not the Holy Apocalypse.

Marxist theory is not a 'determination' which can be concentrated in a programme, Marxist method does not have as its content the 'moments in the proletariat's struggle.' On the contrary, the method, the dialectic, is the content, the law, the essence of the moments of the struggle of the proletariat and of their determinations.

The Programme is not the content of Marxist method: Marxist method is the content of the Programme. The Transitional Programme is the application of dialectical method to a certain moment of the continuous historical becoming, during which not only the determinations that can be expressed in a programme, but also the method itself, are transformed.

Certainly Marxist method develops from within the moments of determinations. It is not something self-existent but the generalization and the essence of concrete analyses of concrete situations. In this sense every determination is a part of the method.

Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution and his analysis of the degeneration of the first workers' state, the USSR, constitute a gigantic contribution to the development of Marxist method. The Transitional Programme of the Fourth International comprises, for this reason, not a simple episode, but an important knot in the knotted line of development. Despite all this, it is not the knotted line itself, nor is it its end.

The OCI, by making an absolute out of the Programme and identifying it with Marxism, identifies precisely the historic moment with the historic becoming and puts an end to it. After this, it is natural for them to utter the following:

'If one understands how a muscle is developed with exercises, it is difficult to conceive the "development" of dialectical materialism.'

This must go down in history. They accept that

'Marxism is the consciousness of the spontaneous becoming' and simultaneously deny that it is itself a becoming, something which cannot help but develop. But the identification of the Programme with dialectical materialism does not happen by chance. Its purpose is to replace the struggle for consciousness with the worship of spontaneous activism.

Since Marxism is nothing more than the Transitional Programme, 'the defence of Marxist theory cannot be other than the defence of the programme, that is, the struggle to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

In other words, the task of the struggle for Marxism is the task of applying the programme. This is something analogous to the centrist slogan 'the task of every revolutionary is to make a revolution'.

It is true that the task of every revolutionary is to resolve the crisis of the leadership of the working class and to make a revolution. That is, to make the programme reality. The realization of the programme however is possible to the degree that it is consciously understood. Consequently, the struggle for the programme is understood only as the struggle for Marxism within the labour movement, against bourgeois ideology, in whatever form it may appear, in order for the consciousness of the working class to be developed and transformed up to the assimilation of the programme, out of the practical struggles for power and up to the taking of power.

But no. For the OCI the defence of the programme, the struggle to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership, is realized not 'by fighting against bourgeois ideology', taken by itself, 'but by organizing the youth on the field of the political struggle for the sake of the proletarian revolution, under the political leadership of the proletariat.'

In brief, the revolutionary organization is built as we organize, or 'amass' (ammaser) the youth—to use a verb beloved of the OCI.

'Youth!' cries Charles Berg, 'your weapon is the organization. To arms! To the organization!'

Alas, the youth was never short of organizations. What

was lacking was revolutionary organization.

Strategy — tactics the United Front

The substitution by the OCI of empiricism and activism for Marxism could not help but be followed by a political liquidation of the revolutionary party into the revisionist mob, and a sell-out of the revolutionary programme.

This policy consists in raising the tactics of the United Front into strategy, of the abandonment of the actual strategic aim of the revolutionary movement (the seizure of power) for the sake of an alliance with the revisionists.

As a theoretical justification they put forward the sophistic argument that strategy and tactics are in essence relative terms.

They say in their Declaration that strategy and tactics have interwoven meanings. That the United Front, which is a tactic in relation to the strategy of the socialist revolution, is a strategy in relation to the means we use for its realization.

Everything is relative. But the IC is not a club of academic philosophers discussing the relativity of every determination, but an organization of revolutionaries who for themselves recognize only one strategy: the proletarian revolution.

Strategy and tactics are interwoven in another, even more important, sense. Tactics is one moment of strategy. It is included in it, as one tree is included in a forest. That is why we say that it is strategy (the goal) that determines (includes) tactics (the means). It is basic to start from such a conception. The Stalinists, by distinguishing, with absolute boundaries, strategy from tactics, can then claim that any of their counter-revolutionary activities nevertheless serves the proletarian revolution.

But it is also basic for us to make a distinction between strategy and tactics, so as to be able to see the forest behind the tree.

The OCI wipe out every distinction. They are 'inventing' here yet another absolute. The further development of their argument is as follows:

'It is a strategic line in the sense that it is always [that is,

independent of circumstances, relationship of forces, tactical considerations in the strict sense of the word] present in a revolutionary policy.'

All right. But just as 'present' in a revolutionary policy is the defence of the workers' states against the imperialists. Why should we not raise this task as well to the level of strategy?

Trotsky, in an extract which they unfortunately decided to quote in their Declaration, insists on characterizing the defence of the USSR as a tactical task. Stalin and the Stalinists, by raising the defence of the USSR up to the level of a strategy, subordinated the interests of the international working class to the interests of the bureaucracy.

The fight for the unity of the working class is an important and permanent task. Without its unity it would not have been able to seize power. It is often impossible for it to win the most elementary demands within the limits of capitalism. Nevertheless unity remains one means to the end. If you make it your goal (as the Stalinists do) you can then subordinate everything to it, including the real goal, the overthrow of capitalist power. We have already seen this being practised by the bosom friends of the OCI in Bolivia, for the sake of unity in the Popular Assembly, with the Stalinists, Lechin, not to mention the bourgeois Torres.

The United Front is a prerequisite for the seizure of power by the working class, the soviet—as stated in the quote from Trotsky in the OCI Declaration 'is the highest expression of the United Front'. But working-class unity, up to and including its highest expression, the soviet, despite its importance, is not by itself sufficient to guarantee the seizure of power. But it can often serve as the vehicle of counter-revolution.

Neither Lenin nor Trotsky had any kind of fetishism about the soviets. When the Bolsheviks were in the minority, Lenin said: 'No power to the soviets.' When they dominated them: 'All power to the soviets.'

With regard to the United Front, the main question is on which political basis will it succeed? Revolutionaries confront the United Front,

even in its highest form, first of all from the standpoint of the fight to raise the consciousness of the working class and to unite it really and organically on the basis of a revolutionary programme, around the revolutionary party.

Outside this struggle there is no United Front but capitulation to the class enemy and its agents.

In May-June 1968 the OCI forwarded the slogan of a 'Central Strike Committee'. In their Declaration they write 'the centralization of the strike committee born in this struggle: a step towards workers' councils, elements of the United Front, was the concrete form of the perspective of a workers' government, a government of united workers' organizations.' For that 'committee' of theirs, the OCI leaders today speak as though they had discovered the key that solves all of life's mysteries.

Supposing that this Committee was formed, it would not in reality have been anything but a committee with an overwhelming Stalinist majority. The OCI leaders, drunk with their own words about soviets and workers councils, overlooked this 'detail'. The task during the General Strike was to break the influence of the Stalinists on the masses. Since the OCI did not fight at any point for this task, the Stalinists would have been able—in certain circumstances—even to welcome a faceless Strike Committee, in order to finally place on it their own sins.

The IC document of October 24 accuses the OCI of not fighting for a CP-CGT government. In their Declaration they reply that it would not have been this which would have given a political character to the General Strike.

They are trying to break into open doors. It is not a question here of the character of the strike, but of whether the OCI should have done what Lenin did when he said to the Mensheviks: 'Cut off relations with the bourgeoisie—take the power.'

Out of the struggle for the taking of power by the CP, the workers would have been able to become conscious of the counter-revolutionary nature of their leadership, and its aversion to taking power.

The OCI sees in the invitation extended to the CP and not to the Socialists, a 'preference', and they wonder what it means.

Quite simply, knowledge of the fact that the French CP influences the largest, the freshest and the most advanced sections of the working class, without whose breaking away from the Stalinist influence, the overthrow of the French bourgeoisie is impossible.

Trotsky writes in the Transitional Programme that this challenge, systematically forwarded to the Stalinists and reformists, can play a tremendous educational role for the working class.

Lenin said that we support the social traitors 'as a rope supports a hanged man'. It is evident that such a 'preference' is never likely to incur the gratitude of the Stalinists.

Revolutionaries face all questions always from the standpoint of uniting the class around the revolutionary party in the struggle for power. Cut off from this task, their Strike Committee was nothing but a panacea. The OCI, having raised the United Front to the level of a strategy, reduced it in essence to a technical question. They see it as a roof under which they have the ambition to co-exist with the Stalinists, the reformists and the Centrists.

They seek this co-existence up to a governmental level, by putting forward the slogan 'A government of united workers' organizations'.

This is the last step in the ladder of renegacy. Their government of united workers' organizations is not the dictatorship of the proletariat but the helmet of the bourgeois state. It is the same Stalinist slogan of 'advanced democracy', in distinction to the social revolution, which they have disguised by putting a worker's cap on it.

This is the essence of the raising of the United Front to the level of strategy. Its restoration to the level of a tactical task is of chief importance. But that does not mean that the matter is exhausted in this way. In what circumstances and with what conditions is a certain tactic necessary? Which organizations form real tendencies in the labour movement and can form elements of the United

Front? From every standpoint the OCI is launching a miserable caricature of the United Front. But all this could become the subject of another article exclusively on this question.

The slogan of a government of united workers' organizations, which in its final version took the form of a workers and peasants' government, that is, a clear absurdity, reflects the most total adaptation of the OCI not only to Stalinism, but to the most right-wing reformist bureaucracy.

On all the basic questions the OCI have adopted the theses of the reformists. The denouncement in the IC text of October 24 that Berg takes an abstentionist position as far as Vietnam is concerned, is lenient. In reality he has shown a clear reactionary mania. In December 1967 he wrote in *Révoltes*:

'They are trying to make us believe that the Viet Cong, melted by bombs, bombarded day and night by the most powerful air force the world has ever known . . . they are trying to make us believe that heroism is enough for them to defeat the military power, that "brave Vietnam (David) defeats evil America" (Goliath). . . . In reality the forces of

EAM limit themselves to small operations, being powerless in front of the military superiority of the enemy . . . The Viet Cong cannot last.'

The same goes for their positions regarding the workers' states—they are a pure echo of the positions of reformism.

For Eastern Europe and the USSR, as for the capitalist countries, they put forward the 'strategy' of the United Front. They demand a 'government of parties and organizations based on the proletariat . . .'. (S. Just, *In Defence of Trotskyism*.)

About this government—they say—the revolutionary party can be led to make a United Front with currents, with tendencies such as that of Dubcek' (op. cit.).

All this bears no relation to the Trotskyist strategy of the political revolution for the restoration of Soviet democracy. It is a reflection of the counter-revolutionary pressure from the imperialists who wish for a return from the Stalinist governments to Social Democracy.

The Pabloites thought the restoration of Soviet democracy in the Workers' States would be realized by liberalized Stalinism. The OCI goes even further, assigning this task to Social Democracy. For this

reason, Lambert, at a meeting which took place in Paris on February 5 and 6, 1972, felt it his duty to greet with enthusiasm the rebirth of Czechoslovakian Social Democracy.

The Pabloites had launched a campaign against the theoretical foundations of the Fourth International in order to draw it into a reconciliation with Stalinism. But they were unsuccessful. The OCI is doing the same in order to reconcile the Fourth International with Social Democracy. And its attempt will not meet with better luck. All the more, because 1972 is not 1953. The centrist capitulators have already missed the train. In the sense, of course, that we are implacably continuing the struggle against them, as a section inseparable from the whole fight for the building of the Fourth International. The conditions now are more favourable than ever for the development of Marxism in the struggle against all revisionists. The split with the OCI is not an element of backsliding. Only incorrigible impressionists could conceive it in this way. The split with the OCI will become a source of strength and forcefulness on the way towards the final triumph of the Fourth International.

DISCUSSION ON INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

The following two articles were published in 'Workers Press' during April 1972 by the Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League, in preparation for the Fourth Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International which was held in London April 10-15, 1972. They are the last two of the four main documents covering the split with the Organization Communiste Internationaliste.

Declaration of the Central Committee of the International Communist Organization (for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)



Continued from
Fourth International
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Reply to a splitting Act: For the Defence of the International Committee! For the Reconstruction of the Fourth International!

Workers Press, the daily paper of the Socialist Labour League in the November 5 issue, and the 'Bulletin' weekly organ of the Workers League of the USA, dated November 8, published a document entitled 'Declaration of the International Committee of the Fourth International' (Majority).

This document was adopted on October 24 at the end of a meeting attended by, according to the signers, representatives of the following organizations: Socialist Labour League (Great Britain). The Workers League (USA), League for a Workers Vanguard (Ireland), International Workers League (Greece), and a German group 'Sozialistische Arbeiter Bund' formed by elements expelled from the German Trotskyist organization, IAK, for refusing to obey in action the discipline of the organization.¹

The title of this document is in itself a flagrant political falsehood. There cannot be any 'majority' of the International Committee any more than there can be a 'minority' since there was no meeting of the International Committee.

The factional meeting of October 24 was held in fact without informing the OCI, the League of Revolutionary Hungarian Socialists (LSRH), the Revolutionary Workers Party of Bolivia (POR), and the Workers Marxist League (LOM) of Mexico. The document which came out

of this meeting was not sent to the sections of the International Committee before being made public.

The purpose of this document is to break up the framework of the International Committee, to break up the discussion and not to provide the basis for a serious discussion. Therefore, as such, it is not so much a question of an answer, but a clarification: this is the purpose of the present declaration.

All the same this document represents by itself an element of the very discussion that it wants to prevent: this discussion will be carried out and the Central Committee of the OCI will publish next a text which will answer the basic questions posed by the present stage of the fight for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

Who wants to break up the International Committee?

The first chapter of the text adopted on October 24 is called 'A New Period for the Trotskyist Movement'.

A flamboyant headline for such a pitiful attempt to break up the International Committee founded in 1953 to defend Trotskyism, the programme of the Fourth International against the liquidationists.

The whole argument of this chapter is dictated by the following conclusion:

'There is the International Committee of the Fourth International resting on the foundations laid down by Trotsky in 1938, the first four Congresses of

the Third International and all the work of the IC since 1953, particularly the decisions of the 1966 conference. And there is the bogus "IC for the reconstruction of the Fourth International", represented by the OCI and the Hungarian section, who want to regroup with centrists against the Fourth International. This split, and not the Bolivian revolution and the Bolivian POR is the basic issue.'

To believe the authors of this document, the OCI and the LSRH have thus created the split by publicly attacking the SLL and the Workers League in company with Lora (whose organization is supposedly not affiliated with the IC) and in holding a meeting where comrade Stephane Just abusively designated himself the title of Secretary of the IC, etc., all in able to avoid discussing the 'fundamental questions'. What terrible crimes!

Suppose for a minute that the formal excuses used by the signers of the October 24 Declaration are well founded: OCI and the LSRH committed a splitting act in relation to the IC. What then was the duty of the other sections and especially of the most important among them, the SLL? To propose a plenary meeting of the IC as soon as possible, to place those who threatened the unity of the IC before their responsibilities, to force them to make a retraction or else make a clear break. The way to proceed was certainly not to hold a secret meeting with four sections of the International Committee and then to try and make it appear that the others had taken the initiative to split.

But it only seems to be illogical. The strange method used by

1. It must be noted that this German group is only mentioned as a sidebar in the 'Bulletin' of the Workers' League. It is omitted in the Workers Press.

the leadership of the SLL who initiated the October 24 meeting can be explained by the inane nature of the excuses and by a panicky flight from 'fundamental discussion'.

Let us re-establish the facts, the best way to give politics its proper rights.

For more than two years—and especially since the pre-conference of the July 1970 of the International Committee—the leadership of the SLL has been multiplying its efforts to prevent any discussion on the 'fundamental question', that is, on the concrete content of the present stage of the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

In September 1969, the OCI submitted a political text, 'For the Reconstruction of the 4th International' for discussion. In July 1970 a pre-conference of the IC sections and groups associated with it was held, a step towards an international conference regrouping organizations, groups and militants who base themselves on the Transitional Programme.

The OCI text was the only document submitted to the discussion. The SLL delegation began by affirming that the heart of the problem was 'Marxist philosophy'. Then they declared that the OCI text was correct in its overall line, but needed some amendments. Then they declared that the text was unacceptable. Finally, they asked, due to 'lack of preparation' (when it meant taking a stand on a text in their possession for nine months) that the vote be put off until the second session of the pre-conference. They proposed that this session take place in October.

The OCI delegation, fighting to preserve and strengthen the International Committee, accepted this report, taking into account the political difficulties of the sections. But—by a common proposal of the OCI and the SLL—a statement was voted on which provided a framework to continue the discussion and which characterized the OCI text as a basis for discussion in line with the principles of the Fourth International.

Since July 1970, the leadership of the SLL has refused to call the second session of the pre-conference. Instead it appealed to the leading centre of the liquidators of the Fourth International, to the 'Unified Secretariat' of Mandel and company to propose a common conference in terms not only opposed to the decisions of the pre-conference but contrary to the meaning of the whole battle of the International Committee, proof of which is the article of its general secretary Gerry Healy in the September 8 issue of the Workers Press.

At that point a clear and rapid



Bolivia, August 1971: workers fight (above) armed only with dynamite.

reply by the OCI Central Committee retarded the development of this dangerous tendency. But that it was able to reveal itself to this extent shows the seriousness of the oscillations of the SLL leadership which has led the SLL today, with the document of October 24, to become the vehicle of conceptions close to those of the Pabloites to the point where the Pabloites run out to distribute it as widely as possible.

Since this episode, the SLL leadership intensified its obstructionist attitude, only to come out of it in order to launch a deliberate offensive against the unity of the International Committee, with a disloyal and slanderous attack against the POR of Bolivia: Tim Wohlforth's article in the August 30 issue of the 'Bulletin', reprinted by the Workers Press September 8, and in the October 24 document 'Our Statement on Bolivia'.

The OCI replied publicly to this public offensive, explaining its estimation of the revolutionary struggle in Bolivia (declaration of the Central Committee of the OCI September 17) without mentioning the SLL or the Workers League.

Then, after Comrade Lora wrote to the sections of the IC to ask that the IC hold a meeting as soon as possible to discuss a report prepared by the leadership of POR; the Lambert comrades (OCI), Nagy (LSRH), and Lora (POR), signed a public declaration which said:

'What is more natural than for all the difficult problems of the whole international class struggle to be reflected and concentrated within it? What is more natural than for the gigantic world struggle to be expressed in the crisis of all the organizations of the working class?

'Today, the leadership of cer-

tain organizations of the International Committee, like the Socialist Labour League and the Workers League, lacking clarity precisely on the strategy of conquering power and on the reconstruction of the Fourth International, have given in to enormous pressures by attacking the POR.

'The three delegations, meeting in Paris, believe that the discussion is a legitimate one, between the sections of the IC as well as within each of these sections, but that the method used by the Workers League and the SLL must be condemned, as they, without even studying the reports from the POR leadership, undertook to publicly condemn the Bolivian section of the IC.

'This is why the OCI delegation and the Organizing Committee of E Europe support the demand of comrade Lora that the International Committee meet in plenary session as soon as possible to take a position on the report of the POR on the Bolivian revolution and on the tasks of reconstructing the Fourth International.'

No political reaction to the political problems raised, no answer to the proposals put forward, no attempt to set up a discussion, but suddenly October 24, the declaration of a split by a factional meeting, held secretly by four sections of the IC and abusively baptized 'IC Majority'.

In fact, in addition to the fact that we do not see how a majority could be created within the IC without a meeting, we must bring up the strange manner in which the SLL built this 'Majority'.

As it is well known, the activity of the IC to reconstruct the Fourth International led to the formation of new groups which did not automatically become members of the IC. There

was unanimity on this question as on others. Thus, for example, the German Trotskyist organization, IAK, a sympathizer of the IC, is not a member.

The International Committee is thus composed at the present time of the following eight sections: OCI (France), SLL (Great Britain), LSRJ (Hungary), POR (Bolivia), Revolutionary Communist Party (Ceylon), Workers Marxist League (Mexico), League for a Workers Vanguard (Ireland), and Workers League (USA).²

There is presently no Greek section, because the latter, which participated in the 1966 Conference split into two groups on the eve of the 1967 coup d'état and conditions have not allowed a study of the motives of this split and an analysis of each group's policies. Therefore, on Comrade Slaughter's suggestion, the IC decided to treat the two groups as sympathizers of the IC.

As for the POR in Bolivia the issues are clear: an old Trotskyist organization, section of the Fourth International before the split of 1951-1952, the POR rejoined the IC in 1970 on the basis of its experience and its fight against Pabloism in Bolivia itself. It joined after a meeting of the IC which Comrade Lora personally attended. Moreover this was officially announced in 'La Verite' (No. 547 March 1970) and was not denied by anybody.

The legitimate status of the POR in the IC was not challenged in the slightest by the SLL who wrote in No. 545 of its daily paper, Workers Press, August 28, 1971, on the death of a Trotskyist student leader at La Paz during the struggle against Banzer's troops that: 'the POR is the Bolivian section of the International Committee'. It would be inconceivable to think that the POR is a member of the IC when its militants are felled by fascist bullets and that it is no longer a member when an analysis of its policies must be discussed. In any case these are procedures alien to Trotskyism.

Thus, the efforts of the SLL to create, by adding and rejecting, a fictitious majority in the IC do not change the facts: There are only four member organizations of the IC among the organizations which signed the October 24 text.

Moreover, and on the question of 'reconstruction of the Fourth International' since the October 24 document alludes to the decisions of the 1966 Conference, let us remember that the fundamental texts of that conference

2. *Organization in political solidarity with the IC, the Workers' League politically has the status of a section, although as an organization it is not affiliated to the IC because of reactionary laws in the USA.*

(general resolution manifesto and resolution on tasks) were essentially elaborated by the OCI and that they politically legitimize the use of the word 'reconstruction'.

The resolution on tasks (adopted unanimously) is moreover entitled 'Resolution on the Reconstruction of the Fourth International' and states among other things that:

'The international conference declares that the Trotskyist movement, in the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International, must build the centralized leadership of the world party of socialist revolution in a fight organically linked to the fight in each country for the construction of revolutionary parties leading the revolutionary struggles of the masses. The construction of these parties and of the International must be conducted on the basis of the experience and the pursuit of an incessant battle against revisionism.'

'The IC is composed of representatives of sections designated by it. At the present stage, the decision of the IC can only be taken by unanimous vote. At this stage, the IC is not proclaiming itself the centralized leadership of the Fourth International which must still be constructed.'

Finally, concerning the Secretary of the IC, let us simply recall that in light of the difficulties the SLL faced in assuming responsibility for this post, it was agreed to institute a co-secretariat composed of Comrades Slaughter and Just.

We have insisted at length on aspects which may seem secondary and judicial in order to give a clear place to the political aspect and to show that the formal excuses have nothing to do with reality, but are only traps aimed at covering up an organizational break without political debate.

The essential thing is of course this 'fundamental discussion' that is spoken of and which naturally includes the experience of revolutionary struggle of the Bolivian proletariat and the policies of the POR for they are at the heart of the debate: the meaning of the 'imminent revolution' the question of the struggle for power and the way in which the working class can approach this problem (the United Front, a workers' and peasants' government, the institutions of dual power and the dictatorship of the proletariat).

This discussion only has meaning for Trotskyists in light of the problems of the reconstruction of the Fourth International which the leadership of the SLL seeks to avoid by wanting to break the frame-work of the IC. We must seek out this discussion, beyond the manoeuvres, the falsehoods and the amalgamisms

a criticism of the October 24 document.

Split at Essen?

'Split at Essen'; this is the dramatic title of the second chapter of the October 24 document. A split which is supposedly expressed by the fact that 'the delegates of the OCI, the Hungarian section, and the LOM of Mexico voted with the centrists and even right-wing organizations (they refer here to the National Students Association of the USA) against an amendment proposed by the majority of the sections of the IC (Ceylon, Ireland, SLL, USA, Greece). We have already explained what this 'majority' is. What then happened at Essen? First, we must remember, because some seem to forget it, that it was an international gathering of revolutionary youth which brought together 5,000 participants and representatives of 32 countries. This gathering was called on the basis of an appeal written by the AJS and taken up by the Young Socialists at their January, 1971 Conference at Scarborough. This call, initiated by youth organizations working together with the International Committee was also signed from the beginning by youth organizations which did not consider themselves Trotskyist (like the JCI, youth organization of the POUM).

The incontestable success of the Essen meeting was a political success in which the International Committee and its organizations raised the level of the fight for the construction of a Revolutionary Youth International. In this sense, Cliff Slaughter, speaking in the name of the Central Committee of the SLL, correctly hailed this gathering as 'a step forward in proletarian internationalism'.

The international meeting was preceded by a conference of delegates where a resolution was presented and adopted unanimously (including by the Young Socialists delegation) and ratified the next day by the 5,000 youth present.

Right at Essen, the International Committee met to determine its political intervention. Amendments were proposed — moreover, several by the SLL were accepted.

But during the conference, the delegates of the SLL and the Young Socialists, breaking with the agreement passed by the IC, presented a new amendment that the OCI delegates considered deeply false.

The chairman, Comrade Berg, proposed to consider this amendment and to refer it to the Liaison Committee established at Essen, in order to prevent the SLL and YS delegates from being politically crushed. This solution would allow the question to be taken up within the sections of

the IC without a public battle before making a final decision. The YS delegation refused. The majority of the Conference adopted the proposal of the AJS. We must point out, in the interests of historical truth, that the NSA delegates who were only observers, did not take part in the vote.

In any case, this is not the essential point. There was not the shadow of a political concession by the OCI, the LSRH or by the POR to centrist elements. Nonetheless the amendment was inadmissible for the OCI.

'There can be no revolutionary party without revolutionary theory. Behind each opportunist development in the history of the workers' movement, and especially Stalinism, stands revisionism.

'The continuity of the struggle for revolutionary Marxist theory in the past, the struggle of the Fourth International and the International Committee, was the only basis for the initiatives which led to this gathering and for the struggle to construct a revolutionary youth international.

'Everywhere, revolutionary youth must devote themselves above all to the task of developing Marxist theory in the fight against bourgeois ideology and all the forms that it takes in the workers' movement. This is the only basis for combating the dangers of adventurism, of "pure" activism and militancy with which the revisionists and the Maoists misled the youth and which can only lead to historic defeats for the working class.'

Why? Above all, because of the section expressing the idealist position, the abandonment of Marxism, in the name of an ideology which it baptizes as 'Marxist philosophy'.

'When the French delegation opposed the SLL amendment on the struggle for Marxist theory, it sealed an opposition to dialectical materialism which is not in the least new,' explains the October 24 document. 'One year earlier, in June 1970 at the pre-conference of the IC these differences had become explicit.'

At the 1970 pre-conference, the OCI and LSRH delegations had warned the SLL of the serious political risks of any tendency which transforms dialectical materialism into an ideology (philosophy), a system of ideas developing within itself which breaks with the very essence of dialectical materialism; the unity of method, of form and content. They emphasized that a discussion on the Marxist method was a serious vital discussion for it concerns the foundations of the programme and it should thus be approached with caution.

The correctness of this warning has been revealed by the Essen amendment. The babbling about 'Marxist philosophy' has led, we repeat, to a fall into ideology.

No, behind each development

of opportunism in the workers movement, there is not 'ideology', in the form of a revision (abandonment) of Marxism, there is the reality of social forces in struggle, the class struggle expressed within the workers' movement itself which is the arena and outcome of this fight, and which gives rise to justifications in the form of a revision of Marxism.

It was not Bernstein's 'mis-understanding' of Marxism which lay behind reformism, it is the class collaborationist practice, resting on the situation of the workers' aristocracy in the period of the development of imperialism, which creates the necessity of ideologically justifying this practice. This doesn't mean that Bernstein is only a 'reflection'. In his political activity, he is an expression and at the same time an integral element of the struggle within the workers' movement. The defence of the proletariats' class interests imply a 'defence of Marxism' through an implacable theoretical criticism of revisionist ideology, a criticism which itself is an integral element of the proletariat's class consciousness in his organized struggle for emancipation.

Marx explains that we must go from the arms of criticism to the criticism of arms: but the arms of criticism is itself a moment in the development of the class struggle and in this sense is a criticism of arms. Also, the theoretical struggle is always an expression of the class struggle; it does not exist outside of it.

Neither does the limited character of Stalin lie 'behind' the theory of 'socialism in one country'. This expresses the interests of the bureaucratic caste which took hold of political power. Does this mean that the theoretical struggle is 'secondary'? No, on the contrary. Marxist theory is the concentration and generalization of all the determinations of the class struggle, of its historical movement, and in this sense the class struggle 'does not permit a single theoretical mistake'. But theory, Marxist method, is not an abstract system of ideas of social reality, existing in and of itself and which only needs to be 'applied'. The Marxist method only exists through its content which integrates all the moments in the proletariat's struggle for his emancipation. In this sense, the programme of socialist revolution concentrates Marxism and the defence of Marxist-theory can only be the defence of the programme, that is, the struggle to resolve the crisis of leadership.

It is not by fighting against 'bourgeois ideology' in isolation, on the level of ideology, that the International, revolutionary parties, and of course a revolutionary youth organization will be built. It is by organizing the

youth in a political fight for the proletarian revolution, under the leadership of the proletariat.

The formulation of the astonishing Essen amendment means that the youth organization is a substitute for the party and not a part of the struggle to construct it. Theoretical elaboration comes from the programme, and thus from the party and the necessary relationship between the theory and the construction of the youth organization is the formation of young communist cadres, a task which unites the assimilation of the programme to the political fight.

Programme, Consciousness, Revolutionary Party.

But the Essen amendment goes further. In a fraudulent way—since it only deals with youth organizations—it makes the ideological struggle the basis of the construction of revolutionary parties.

'Revolutionary youth,' we are told, 'must devote themselves above all to the development of Marxist theory.'

At this point, we have the right to ask a question: is or is not the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International the highest expression of Marxism, that is, the theoretical generalization, on the basis of the Marxist method, of the experiences, struggles and gains of the world proletariat, of the whole movement?

On this point, at least the October 24 text is absolutely clear. The answer is no and thus the content of the Essen amendment is perfectly revealed.

'What became the most important thing in the preparation of sections was to develop dialectical materialism in a fight to understand and the working class under objectively changing conditions. This means the assimilation and development of dialectical materialism as the theory of Marxist knowledge. Reflecting the attacks on dialectical materialism by the petty bourgeois intelligentsia in the advanced countries, particularly in France and Germany and in the Eastern European countries; the French and Hungarian delegations declared that dialectical materialism was not a theory of knowledge and defended the position that only the programme forms the basis of building revolutionary parties.

'This is the very essence of revisionism which opens the way to liquidation of the party into centrism.'

So you say!

We are so naive that we thought that the method of the Transitional Programme was the revolutionary mobilization of the

working class, beginning with its present level of consciousness, against the bourgeois state, a mobilization indissolubly connected to its organization, whose movement towards accomplishing its tasks was its consciousness, or as Marx and Engels said in 'German Ideology'.

'A massive transformation of men is necessary for the mass creation of this communist consciousness as well as being a prerequisite for its success; but such a transformation can only take place by a practical movement, by a revolution; this revolution is necessary not only because it is the only way to overthrow the dominant class; it is equally necessary because only a revolution will enable the class which overthrows the other to sweep away all the garbage of the old system which hangs on to it and enable it to build a society of new foundations.'

But no, to 'transform' the consciousness of the working class is a specific task, possible when one 'undertands' this consciousness, an understanding which is gained on the condition that one wants to 'develop' dialectical materialism (which means precisely what? If one understands how a muscle is developed with exercises it is difficult to conceive the 'development' of dialectical materialism.)

What that means in any case, is that the programme is not enough. There is more, above that, in actuality up in the sky, as an independent factor, whose 'development' undoubtedly depends on the intellectual gymnastics of the thinkers of the SLL, Marxist philosophy as a 'theory of the knowledge of Marxism'. But what then is the programme if not the most complete expression of dialectical materialism in our epoch? A recipe book?

It will be necessary to carry this discussion through to its end and no preventive 'splits' sanctioned by trumped up majorities will prevent it.

Profound disagreements were revealed at Essen. By themselves do they make a split? Proof of the contrary was demonstrated by the leadership of the SLL who after Essen, invited Comrade Lambert to give the last presentation at the SLL's educational camp . . . on dialectical materialism!

Form and content: the revolutionary struggle of the Bolivian proletariat, the policies of the POR and the desire to break up the International Committee

The sliding towards ideology and the putting forward of pronounced idealist positions,

cannot be explained by an abrupt ideological loss of balance by the SLL leadership.

The mists of so-called Marxist 'philosophy' invade the political landscape of the SLL at a very precise moment in relation to precise political problems.

The most dangerous oscillations of the SLL leadership are in relation to the central question of the reconstruction of the Fourth International. They declare their disagreement with the decisions of the 1966 conference that they nevertheless accepted. The Fourth International does not need to be 'reconstructed': it is timeless, immobile, incarnated in the International Committee.

In other words, the SLL leadership confuses the continuity of the Fourth International, the defence of its programme, assured by the activity of the IC and its organizations, faced with the attempt to liquidate the Fourth International with the existence of political conditions, relations between Trotskyist organizations and the class, conditions of selection of an international leadership leading to the formation of a centralized international leadership.

This attitude is related to a refusal to follow through with an analysis of the crisis of the Fourth International, to a tendency to see it only as an episode, whereas the Fourth International, reorganized after the war, was broken up as a centralized organization around the Transitional Programme by the capitulation of the vast majority of its leaders, a capitulation whose origins must be identified in order to conduct an effective battle against revisionism.

There is no need to construct the Fourth International, it is enough to build the revolutionary party in each country. This is in fact the construction of the Fourth International in each country. The correct affirmation that the fight to build revolutionary parties in each country is an international task thus winds up as a hollow formula to the extent that the international dimension, that is the concrete tasks of reconstructing the Fourth International practically no longer exists.

This is not simply an academic position. It has led the SLL leadership to first ignore and then to practically oppose all the initiatives taken towards reconstructing the Fourth International.

No Trotskyist organization can be built outside of the fight for the reconstruction of the Fourth International. The wrong orientation of the SLL on this, to the extent that it was carried out, could not help but have an effect on all its activities. The greater and greater place given to ideology corresponds to the more and more narrow limits of the impasse that the SLL leadership

has got itself into.

From this point of view, Essen marked an important stage. The oscillations of the SLL leadership were expressed by its refusal to participate in the Essen meeting, then by the fact that it was drawn into it without mobilizing its organization. They were thus at this meeting under false pretences and the 'ideological' offensive expressed its political hostility to this step forward in the reconstruction of the Fourth International which places the SLL and all the organizations of the IC before its responsibilities.

If we do not begin from the political contradictions of the SLL leadership and from its refusal to work them out in a discussion within its ranks, we cannot understand the shocking bad faith and the criminal lightness in its approach to the problems of Bolivia and the policies of the POR. It is not a question of moral errors but of the results of an orientation which is taking the SLL in the direction of abandoning the programme of the Fourth International.

In all seriousness, the SLL leadership thus explains that Bolivia was only a pretext used by the OCI to precipitate the split by avoiding discussion.

There is the same relationship between the real political developments within the IC and the affirmations of the SLL as there is between a positive and negative photograph. The terms must be reversed to find the truth.

It is the leadership of the SLL and its New York mouthpiece who seized on the problems of the Bolivian revolution not as a means of political clarification but as a pretext to present the other sections of the IC with the accomplished fact of a brutal public offensive against the POR. It is the SLL who is running away from a full discussion in the name of a public break over the question of Bolivia and which avoids at the same time any discussion on Bolivia.

But form does not go without content. The chosen pretext is at the same time a question of capital importance since it directly concerns the proletarian revolution.

The revolutionary process in Bolivia marked the highest political point reached by the upsurge of the working class on the whole Latin American continent and it was characterized by the role played by a Trotskyist party, section of the IC.

This deserves a serious discussion, a rigorous assessment of the POR policies, an assimilation of the lessons of the struggle. In this sense, it is legitimate to discuss the policies of the POR at every point. The OCI, for its part did not wait for events to happen: within the IC, between

organizations which base their activity on the same programme, it conducted a discussion with the POR ('La Verité', No. 550, October 1970).

What is criminal, is that the deliberate desire of the Workers League and the SLL to use the victory of the fascist coup against the unity of the IC, leads them to reject this serious discussion, to repeat the most vulgar slanders of the enemies of Trotskyism and the proletarian revolution against the POR without even trying to inform themselves of the facts.

The coup d'état took place on August 20. On August 30 while communications were cut off, Tim Wohlforth publishes an article which brands the POR as having main responsibility in the workers' movement for the fascist coup. In this article, which the SLL hastens to make official by publishing it in Workers Press and where there is not the slightest reference to solidarity in struggle against the class enemy or the least allusion to the role of American imperialism, Wohlforth goes even further: he compares the position of the POR to the LSSP of Ceylon. Here is an amalgam worthy of the Stalinists: even if Wohlforth's attack against the POR were considered to be correct, what relationship is there between the renegades of the LSSP which rules with a bourgeois government and covered up a bloody repression, and the fighters of the POR who stood with their class before the counter-revolution?

The desire to treat the Bolivian question without regard to the real positions of the POR as a 'war machine' against the unity of the IC is manifested once again in the October 24 text.

The POR and Lora repeated the policies of Pouv in Spain in 1935-1938 and did not act in a fundamentally different manner. The relationship with Torres and the COB parallel those that the POUM held with the republican government and the CNT. The support that the OCI gives the POR reveals today the meaning of its political bloc with POUM.

This little paragraph is full of mistruths and is a good example of amalgams. We could write pages just on this subject alone. We will simply make two remarks, the first essential point which 'reveals' the political trickery of this pseudo-exposition: one of the characteristic traits of the POUM policies was the entry into the Catalogne government (bourgeois government). What characterized the policies of the POR was the refusal to collaborate with the Torres government, the preservation of the political independence of the proletariat.

The second remark which shows with what indifference the SLL leadership treats historical problems of the workers' movement: the CNT and COB parallel. The CNT was in the hands of a political faction. The anarchists, the POUM militants were expelled and Trotsky criticized them precisely for adapting to this situation by forming their own union organizations. The COB, university centre, included all the tendencies of the Bolivian workers' movement and the POR militants, while not being its leadership played a considerable role in it, including at the conference level. Where is the parallel?

But better yet, in his interview in 'Informations Ouvrières' Comrade Lora explained:

'The ultra-leftists and Pabloites forget the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky: they elaborate their "documents" with extreme simple mindedness and put Torres and Ovando-Banzer on the same level. These people refuse to understand the various shades of bourgeois nationalism in a backward country.

'Because they are outside of the class struggle, they do not understand that there is a difference between the bourgeois democratic methods of the Torres government and the method of the fascists: the difference that exists between going to prison legally or being liquidated with a bullet in the back of the neck.

'Revolutionary tactics must begin with this difference. It is not a question of supporting Torres but of crushing fascism in order to impose the workers' government.'

This passage is commented on in the October 24 text in the following way:

'Revolutionary strategy does not begin with the difference between the left wing and the right wing of the army, but from the perspective of overthrowing the whole bourgeois order.'

Where Lora spoke of tactics, the editors of the October 24 text have substituted the term, strategy. Furthermore, the SLL introduces an almost absolute distinction between strategy and tactics. When it is a question of the workers' United Front (we will return to this) strategy and tactics are presented as totally separate categories which lead parallel existences in a metaphysical heaven. On the other hand when it is a question of attacking the POR, strategy and tactics become interchangeable terms.

Moreover, when we read that criticism of the POR's policies were founded on the 'necessity to build the Fourth International on the basis of principle and total honesty' it seems to be an accidental comic note in an otherwise sinister text.

But once again, we must come to the essence. The October 24 text proclaiming Wohlforth's article to be 'our declaration' has no more than that to say about the Popular Assembly.

This is however the most important question on which the OCI first took a position and gave an opinion on the programme of the POR.

Therefore this is the question which must be discussed first. But from reading the October 24 text we learn simply that the OCI talks about a 'whole process' concretized in 'something' like the Popular Assembly.

In its declaration on September 17 the Central Committee of the OCI emphasized that the POR had been 'the motor of the Popular Assembly, that is the organ which materialized the struggle of the Bolivian proletariat to build its own power and which opened the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat in Bolivia'.

Yes or no, was the Popular Front, originating in the united reply of the Bolivian masses and their organizations to the October 1970 coup d'état, an organism of the proletariat's hegemony, from the base to the top?

Yes or no, did the Popular Assembly become, through the intervention of the POR, an organ of dual power which concretely opened the way to a workers' government? In this sense, did it or not deserve the epithet that its enemies gave to it, the first Latin American soviet?

Yes or no, was the correct strategy to begin with this reality given by the mass struggle itself, with this soviet organ to pose the question of power by linking the mobilization of the masses around the Popular Assembly as their expression to the fight inside the Assembly to open concretely the way to power with the slogan: 'All Power to the Popular Assembly'.

Could this struggle be conducted independently of the Bolivian vanguard, of the revolutionary maturity of the masses themselves, independently from all the revolutionary developments in Latin America?

The OCI gave an answer. The anti-Trotskyist centre of Mandel & Co in confusion have given theirs. What is the answer of the SLL and of the groups which signed the October 24 declaration with them?

This is a discussion which cannot be avoided by any organizational measure for it is a discussion that is at the heart of the problems raised by the present stage of the class struggle. The period of 'imminent revolution'—and thus also of imminent counter-revolution—the period of class confrontations raises the question of power:

how can the masses concretely approach and understand the question of power?

This is the question of institutions of dual power, of a workers' United Front, governmental slogans, concrete questions of course as the October 24 text points out but this concrete would only be a dead abstraction if it was not the expression of a 'generality', that is that the period that we live in is marked by the movement of the international working class towards its own power.

This is not an abstraction to us of which the revolutionary party should be a passive expression. This manner of understanding problems shows very well the deep lack of understanding by the SLL of the dialectic. On the contrary, it is concrete reality which constitutes the decisive part of the revolutionary party and the fight to build it nationally and internationally.

Some attacks on the OCI

There is an implacable logic to political conflicts. The SLL's evolution can only lead it to attack the OCI at its heart: the very method of the construction of the revolutionary party, the question of the workers' United Front, the means and expression of mobilization of the masses, a fundamental part of the construction of the party.

But politics do not exist in a vacuum. If one attacks the policies of the OCI it is necessary to propose an alternative. And here the SLL must use the weapons of the Pabloites. Thus the attacks against the OCI lead to this conclusion:

'... the position of the OCI on the united class front becomes a complete liquidation of the party and subordinates it to the labour bureaucracy and the Stalinist and Social Democratic parties.'

To reach this conclusion, the SLL leadership must purely and simply invent, in vague terms, a 'spontaneist position' of the OCI, must multiply attacks so exaggerated that they become insignificant, so little have they followed the OCI position, and which would make the collaboration of the OCI and the SLL in the IC incomprehensible.

For our part, we seek political clarity, not just to make an impression which can only fool those who want to be: the SLL does not suddenly veer from white to black. We will simply point out the contradictions of the leadership and show the orientation that it has developed, which if continued, would lead to the abandonment of the programme of the Fourth International and to the break up of the SLL.

We wish to take up just two attacks.

Firstly, the October 24 document dares to state that at the beginning of 1968 Comrade Charles Berg took an openly abstentionist position on Vietnam. This clearly means that he gave equal weight to imperialism and the revolutionary war of the Vietnamese people, in other words, that he took an openly counter-revolutionary position. This is false and outrageous. Even the Stalinists have not dared to go this far: so far only the well-known Weber of the Communist League has spoken of the 'defeatist' position of the OCI.

At no time, under any circumstances, has any militant, any OCI publication been equivocal on this topic. On the other hand, unlike others (like Comrade Banda who saw in Ho Chi-Minh's party, the party who assassinated the Indo-Chinese Trotskyists, the reincarnation of the Bolshevik Party), we have never confused unconditional support with political support to its petty-bourgeois and Stalinist leaders.

If we emphasize this miserable accusation it is because Comrade Berg, due to the development of the AJS is now the target of a concentrated attack by the bourgeoisie, the Pabloites and the Stalinists. The fact that the SLL leadership joins these attacks at this time should be noted.

There is a secondary attack which deserves comment. The SLL is so anxious to find motives for its split that it must go back in time. This is their right. They vehemently denounce the policies of the French Trotskyist organization in the Algerian revolution. They say that the Pabloites supported a faction of the petty-bourgeois nationalists and the French Trotskyists supported another faction. This is a bit brief and would only be convincing if the SLL criticized themselves. In fact, if there was no difference between the FLN and the MNA why did they support as they explain, the MNA? It is true, as we are told, that this support was 'critical' which undoubtedly solves everything.

In any case the policy of the Trotskyist organization was false because it abandoned 'the fight to select a Trotskyist vanguard'. This is nothing new. This quote is from the pamphlet 'Some Lessons of Our History' published in May 1970.

We only hope—especially since the SLL finds it useful to accuse the POR and Lora of being a pillar of Pabloism in Latin America, which is false, while forgetting that the SLL and its general secretary were initially the hatchmen of Pabloism in Western Europe—that the SLL will be willing to learn a few lessons from its own history in

order to construct a vanguard in England and in the world.

The offensive against the workers' united front and its meaning

The trumped up charges against the OCI lead to a whole offensive against the workers United Front.

The workers United Front had already been a point of disagreement between the OCI and the SLL within the IC. But for the SLL, the differences seemed to be on one point (brought up again in the October 24 document) that the United Front is a 'tactic' while the OCI calls it a 'strategy'.

To counterpose strategy and tactics as absolutes is to ignore the dialectic that it is so much a question of. Of course, the terms strategy and tactics are not interchangeable; they are geared to different levels of revolutionary politics. But strategy only exists through tactics which are its expression. At the same time each tactical move has meaning only as part of a general strategy.

When we speak, in Marxist terms, of a strategical slogan, we mean a slogan which under different forms (tactics) is a constant factor in the revolutionary struggle. For example, the necessity to defend the social conquests of the proletariat won in the October Revolution and by its extension, today controlled and threatened by the bureaucracy.

But for Marxists, strategy and tactics are relative terms. To the extent that we say that the strategical line of the Fourth International is the fight for proletarian revolution, the defence of the Soviet Union is only a tactic following from this objective. Trotsky said on the defence of the Soviet Union (while showing that this defence is a major expression of the programme of the Fourth International and is a question of principle.)

'The defence of the USSR coincides for us with the preparation of the world revolution. Only those methods are acceptable which do not conflict with the interests of the revolution. The defence of the USSR is connected to the world socialist revolution in the same way that a tactical task is connected to a strategic task. A tactic is subordinate to a strategic goal and does not in any way contradict it.'

In this sense, the United Front is a tactic in relation to the socialist revolution which it prepares for as a way of mobilizing the proletariat. It is a strategic line in the sense that it

is always (that is, independent of circumstances, relationship of forces, tactical considerations in the strict sense of the word) present in a revolutionary policy, taking of course different tactical forms without which it would only be an empty principle ('government of united workers organizations' in France today; battle for 'a workers party based on the unions' in the United States, slogan of 'a Labour government on a programme of defence of the working class' in England, slogan of 'a break with the coalition and with a homogenous social-democratic government' in Germany).

The OCI's opposition to the implicit policy of the SLL, now explicit in the October 24 text, is therefore not a semantic quarrel.

No, the United Front, is not, as the SLL says, simply a 'temporary relationship between mass parties, in order to win the masses to the Communist Party'. To reduce the United Front to this is not the conception of Lenin and Trotsky as the SLL falsely claims. At best it is the conception of Zinoviev, or rather a caricature of it, a pale reflection of the way Zinoviev expressed the policy of the Communist International.

The axis of the Transitional Programme is the mobilization of the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The United Front 'slogan' of this programme is at the same time central to it. What is involved is the mobilization of the whole class, its unity based on its political independence against the common enemy. It is the concrete expression of the starting point of any revolutionary policy since the Communist Manifesto of 1847; class against class. And this policy takes the form of the United Front of all organizations of the working class under conditions where the working class is organized and controlled by distinct organizations.

As the text of the OCI September 1969 document states:

'The policy of class struggle is identical to the strategic lines of the united class front of workers' parties and organizations. It is alien to "peaceful co-existence" between the traditional parties and organizations of the working class and the revolutionary vanguard which builds the revolutionary party. It is impossible to build the revolutionary party without concretely defining at each stage, a policy which opposes the class as a class to the bourgeoisie, its state and its government. Without building the revolutionary party it is impossible to fight for the united class front for the workers and peasants government, for the destruction of the bourgeois state and for workers' power.'

This conclusion perfectly sums

up Trotsky's conception on the United Front in relation to Germany threatened by fascism and in France after the beginnings of the upsurge of the proletariat in the united demonstration February 12 1934:

'Why are the soviets necessary in the struggle for power? The answer to this question is the following: as the union is the elementary form of the United Front in the economic struggle so the soviet is the highest expression of the United Front under conditions where the proletariat is entering into the period of the struggle for power.'

(And now Leon Trotsky, 'Collected Works', Volume III):

'The natural apparatus of the United Front in the days of battle is the proletarian representation, the deputies of the factories and shops, of the workers' districts and the unions, the soviets.' (It is France's turn. For the Fourth International! March 1934).

The SLL is opposed to this conception of the United Front by criticizing the OCI policies during the May-June general strike of 1968.

The October 24 text includes this sentence which deserves to be preserved for posterity: 'The leaders of the OCI trailed behind the working class, restricting the political scope of the strike by demanding a central strike committee. This was a complete evasion of the political responsibilities of a revolutionary leadership.'

Thus, to the profound dialecticians of the SLL, the national strike committee was not a political question. This is a confession which reveals the meaning of their hostile indifference to the Popular Assembly of Bolivia, the absence of any reference, in a text which claims to begin with the world class struggle, to the formation of workers' councils in Gdansk in December 1970, the scorn heaped on the Irbid Soviet.

Were the strike committees merely formed for immediate demands? Was this then the whole character of the general strike to the extent that it was not given a governmental 'formula'? No, the general strike, 'the sharpest form of the class struggle' as Trotsky said, demonstrates 'the impossibility of separating the economic and political elements' as all those who are supposed to be Marxists know ever since Rosa Luxemburg wrote it in 1905. The general strike was inherently political because its demands led directly to the fight against the capitalist government and because the degree and form of the mass mobilization posed the question of working class power. As a political battle, the general strike could not achieve its goal unless the illusion

that the general strike was enough in and of itself to win was overcome and unless a governmental solution, a road to the struggle for power was opened up.

All the bureaucracies linked to the bourgeoisie blocked this solution. The fight for a national central strike committee was the political fight *par excellence*, at the heart of the general strike, because it was a fight for this solution: by centralizing the strength of the working class in struggle against the bourgeois state.

The words 'in struggle' must not be forgotten and this is why the centralization of the strike committee born in this struggle; a step towards workers' councils, elements of the United Front, was the concrete form of the perspective of a workers' government, a government of united workers' organizations.

But the SLL leadership, not content with understanding nothing about the dialectic of the mass mobilization in the general strike had another government solution—a CP-CGT government and not a workers' government. Or rather if the formula of a CP-CGT government could be considered synonymous with 'workers government,' then the Socialist Party, the CGT-FO, the FEN are not considered workers' organizations. The SLL has not yet written this. What then does the 'preferential' choice of the Stalinist bureaucracy over the reformist bureaucracy mean? Have not both of them gone over to the bourgeois order? Or is this a new analysis of Stalinism—not so new at that, for it has already been exposed in the theory and practice of the Pablos and Mandels who said that Stalinism, definitively, and despite its crimes, despite its counter-revolutionary aspects was the only political 'delegation' of the proletariat.

This discussion must be continued and is related to a number of other political oscillations in the SLL: its idealization of the leadership of the North Vietnamese Communist Party and the NLF, its serious uncertainties about the political evolution in Czechoslovakia where on the eve of the invasion, they gave the same importance as the demand for the withdrawal of the Warsaw Pact troops from Czechoslovakia, its discretion about the development of political revolution in Poland and its refusal to see the unity of the workers struggles in the USSR, China, and Eastern Europe against the bureaucracy with the struggle in the capitalist countries.

This discussion will also clarify the meaning of their criticism—which may seem minor and tactical — about the slogan of 'a

single candidate of workers organizations' during the presidential elections. This criticism shows once again the SLL's indifference to facts. The OCI is criticized for not having denounced the Social Democrats who refused on the second ballot to call for a vote for Duclos. The French working class has enough well-founded accusations against the reformist leaders without having to invent them: Duclos was eliminated in the first ballot. To make everything clear — we are dealing once again with a tactical application of the strategy of the United Front—this is what the position of the Trotskyists was during the presidential elections:

'After the fall of De Gaulle the perspective of a working class solution to the government and of the regime necessitated development of great struggles by the proletariat. This could only emerge from the United Front of labour and political organizations which had called for a "No" vote in the referendum. A single candidate of workers' organizations meant that confronted with the bourgeois parties, proposing a candidate of a government of united workers' organizations. Immediately all the leaders of the workers' organizations and particularly the Socialist Party and the Communist Party managed to disrupt the unity established for a moment in the "No" vote on the referendum. The candidate Deferre — supported by Mendes-France popped up as if out of a magician's hat. The CP before putting Duclos forward as candidate demanded "the elaboration of a common programme" as a condition for a common candidate of "the left". The "programmatic" concerns of the CP who supported the bourgeois candidate Mitterand in 1965 without any concern for a "common programme" barred the road just as much as the Deferre candidacy to a united candidate of workers, not of the "left" organizations. The fight for the workers United Front, the proletarian front against the voluntary and deliberate division that the Socialist Party and the CP imposed on the working class meant the development of a political campaign around the theme: single candidate of workers' organizations against the bourgeois candidates. (. . .)

'But the programme? Wasn't this necessary to the single candidate of workers organizations? What had become of it? In these precise circumstances, the development of a programme of a government of workers' organizations flowed from this candidacy. The fight for the defeat of the bourgeois candidates gave a class content to the single candidate of workers' organizations that the

revolutionary organizations had a duty to develop.'

(Stephane Just),
'Defence of 'rotskyism'.

To conclude

We are arriving at the end of this exposition. Its purpose has been to bring out the real differences, behind the petty manoeuvres, the blatant falsehoods and verbal terrorism.

These disagreements are serious and deep ones. They demand a clear discussion that the OCI is not in the least afraid to hold publicly before the international workers vanguard.

As the culminating point in its charges against the OCI the SLL leadership states that the capitulation to spontaneity had reached the point in this organization where . . . it did not even have a general secretary!

What can we say about the nerve and capitulation to spontaneity of a party like the Bolshevik party which dared to lead the proletarian revolution to victory without a general secretary and even without a political office?

This would be ridiculous—it is obvious that if democratic centralism is an integral part of the revolutionary party, the forms of the organization of the leadership is not a principled issue and the existence of general secretaries as well as their absence, is not a guarantee—if it was not related to something more serious. In the same paragraph the OCI is taken up for not seeing the 'Fourth International as truly existing'. This is a backhanded way of attacking the OCI's position that we must fight for the reconstruction of the Fourth International broken up as a politically centralized force internationally by the Pabloite liquidationists.

Therefore, on the one hand the revolutionary party exists by itself, a timeless metaphysical category, waiting to meet the class struggle and whose nature depends on whether or not one proclaims or one has attributes supremely deemed necessary to its functioning (a general secretary for example).

On the other hand there is the proletariat, its 'objective' struggle, its general strikes which are not 'political'. In defence of the Essen amendment the October 24 document states that: 'the fundamental struggle for dialectical materialism must be conducted against all the enemies of Marxism and developed in the fight against the spontaneous consciousness of the working class'.

The dialectic is most certainly misused. Independently of the fact that the idea of a 'pure'

spontaneous consciousness of the working class is an absurdity: the conception—completely false—of proletariats consciousness at any moment is a historical result, this sentence sums up a whole relations between the construction of the revolutionary party (this is the fight for dialectical materialism!) and the movement of the class.

The revolutionary party is not outside of or against the movement of the working class. The construction of the revolutionary party proceeds from the whole development of the class struggle; based on the struggle of the proletariat, but it is not an automatic product of it. It only exists and can only be built as a conscious activity.

Marxism is 'the conscious expression of an unconscious process'. The revolutionary party is the organized form of this conscious expression in the class struggle, but the very conditions of the proletarian revolution give it the decisive role in accomplishing the historic tasks of the proletariat.

Marxism, method of the proletarian revolution, the unity of theory and practice in the construction of the revolutionary party and expressing the historical interests of the proletariat is contrary to each of the limited moments in the formation of the proletariat's class consciousness as a class of bourgeois society but goes beyond them by unifying the whole process involved in forming the proletariat's consciousness and by ultimately determining it. This truth has been known since the Communist Manifesto without which Trotsky's sentence on 'the instinctive tendency of the proletariat to rebuild society on communist foundations' would only be a utopian formula.

As S. Just pointed out in 'In Defence of Trotskyism': 'considered as a historical and organic process, the formation of the proletariat's class consciousness is drawn from the analysis of the development of the class struggle and puts an end to metaphysical discussions about class consciousness brought in from the outside as well as those about the self-proclaimed vanguard'.

The dualism that the SLL creates between the party and the class is at the root of its incomprehension of the period that we are living in, of the dynamic of the advance of world proletarian socialist revolution expressed in the General Strike of May-June 1968, in the political revolution in Czechoslovakia, in the formation of the Irbid soviet, in the formation of workers councils in the Baltic, in the formation of the Popular Assembly.

The inevitable subjectivity is accompanied by a mechanical objectivism. We are told that the years of the 'post-war boom' were unfavourable to the development of Marxist theory (one wonders how the Transitional Programme was developed in the years of profound defeat and what Trotsky meant when he said that the Fourth International was born out of the deepest defeats!) but that the 'new conditions' are favourable to us.

Subjectivity and objectivism indissolubly linked together were the methodological roots of the growth of Pabloism within the Fourth International. Today the SLL leadership is paying the price for its refusal to make a real assessment of Pabloism and of its origins which is impossible without analysing its own history, without relating the problems of reconstructing the Fourth International to the construction of the revolutionary party in England.

But this is not automatic. Today because of precise political problems that the class struggles pushed to the forefront the problems of the struggle for power, these tendencies develop into a policy whose logic, through the break with the International Committee is the abandonment of the programme of the Fourth International.

Responsibly, we address our-

selves to all the organizations and militants affiliated with the International Committee but particularly to the SLL: to its leadership, to its militants because of the special place of the SLL in the formation of the IC.

We say responsibly: the SLL is at the crossroads. The position of an organization, its political character does not depend on good intentions. Politically undefined organizations do not exist. The place the SLL holds in the British class struggle was won as a Trotskyist organization; the SLL is taking the path of a break with Trotskyism which does not exist outside of the Fourth International, that is the fight to reconstruct it today. It is thus taking the road to its own destruction.

In any case, because the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International is an international process organically linked to the world struggle of the proletariat, the conscious fight for the construction of the revolutionary party finds its expression in England in the resistance within the SLL to its own liquidation as a Trotskyist organization. But, we say it firmly, political clarification is in the interests of the Fourth International and in the defence of its programme.

The International Committee must meet in plenary session at the earliest possible date with

the participation of all the member organizations especially to reply to the legitimate request of Comrade Lora.

The real flight from political problems, the amalgams, the gross manoeuvres cannot go far. There must be an end to the false prestige of leaders who—like everybody—have made political errors and have led positive actions. There must be no retreat from the discussion within all the sections of the International Committee, from the questions that the class struggle requires the Trotskyist movement to resolve.

We say, in any case, that this discussion will take place: no one has the power to prevent it.

In any case, the gain represented by the International Committee, the continuity of the Fourth International, its programme will be preserved, in the fight to reconstruct the Fourth International, by the preparation of the Fourth International Conference on the initiative of the International Committee according to the decisions of the 1966 conference all the organizations and groups who fight for the programme of the socialist revolution.

We repeat: For those who intend to defend the programme of the Fourth International it is a common demand: the International Committee must meet as soon as possible.

International Committee of the Fourth International (Majority) Statement of March 1, 1972



Break with Centrism! **Build the Fourth International!**

The split in the International Committee is not something accidental, but something necessary. It flows out of a history of political differences between the Socialist Labour League and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste.

We have fought to overcome these differences in joint work and discussion over many years. But under the impact of decisive changes in the objective situation—particularly since 1968—a split has become necessary.

The split is not the result of organizational questions or misunderstandings. And it is not about tactical aspects of how to build the Fourth International. It is a political split, going to the foundations of the Fourth International—Marxist theory.

A smokescreen

For this reason, the primary task is to explain the basic theoretical questions involved, and in this context to disperse the smokescreen of organizational inventions raised by the OCI document.

The IC meeting which adopted the October 24 statement was not valid according to the OCI because they were not invited. But the IC had already been split by the political actions of the OCI at Essen and on the Bolivian revolution.

It was the first responsibility of the IC majority to speak out for Trotskyism against this split. The OCI allege that they were excluded from the meeting as part of the SLL's avoiding of discussion on the principled questions of building the Fourth

International ever since the IC pre-conference in July 1970. The meaning of the differences at that pre-conference, and their subsequent significance, are dealt with in detail below. However, we must clarify one fabrication before going on to the basic differences. According to the OCI:

'Ever since July 1970, the SLL leadership has refused to call a second session of the pre-conference. On the contrary, it was to make approaches to the leading centres of the liquidators of the FI, to the Unified Secretariat of Mandel and company, and propose a joint conference in terms which were not only opposed to the decisions of the pre-conference, but also to the overall struggle of the IC: this was revealed in an article by its national secretary, Gerry Healy, in the Workers Press on September 8, 1970. A sharp and rapid reply from the OCI was, at this stage, to stop the development of this dangerous tendency . . .'

The author of these lines knows full well that Comrade Healy's approach to a representative of the Unified Secretariat was made with the full agreement of the OCI leadership. The purpose of it, like the Parity Committee for discussion with the Pabloites in 1962, was to carry the fight for the IC line into every section of their ranks.

We were convinced that the development of the capitalist crisis created conditions in which a thorough historical accounting could be made of the disputed questions in the Trotskyist movement since the split with Pablo. This discussion required the

participation of all the revisionists as well as of our own forces. We also were sure that such a wide discussion was the best framework for fighting out the differences exposed at the pre-conference.

This discussion, if it had proved possible, would have given the opportunity of winning any cadres who were moving into opposition within the Pabloite organizations. Not only the revisionists themselves, and particularly Hansen, rejected such a discussion, but so did the OCI leaders.

On both sides, they sensed the dangers to the course they were pursuing. The present discussion, in which Hansen and the Pabloites publish the documents of the IC majority and of the OCI, and make their own comments upon them, is in its own way confirmation of the necessity of the scope of the discussion which was proposed! Willy-nilly, all the parties are now engaged in the discussion of fundamental questions.

As for the flimsy arguments to 'prove' that the IC majority is not a majority, they are easily disposed of. Listing eight sections of the IC, the OCI acknowledge that four support the October 24 statement. But they omit the Greek section, commenting: 'At the moment there is no Greek section, for the latter which participated in the 1966 Conference split in two on the eve of the 1967 coup d'état and conditions have not allowed clarification of the reasons behind the split and an estimation of one group or the other. Consequently, on the suggestion of Comrade Slaughter, the IC decided to

treat the two groups as sympathetic to the IC.

This is untrue. The facts are these. In 1966 the Greek section was internally divided, but accepted the proposal of the IC that they would avoid a split until a Conference with IC participation. As the OCI knows, such a document of the IC is not something which can be enforced as discipline. The majority leadership considered that refusal of the minority to accept decisions endangered the section to such an extent that expulsion was necessary. After this (1967) the IC tried to bring together representatives of both groups for discussion.

If the IC was not able to take a position on the question of the expulsion of the minority by the Greek section, this is not because of the situation created by the 1967 coup, but because of the fact that the problems of the Greek Trotskyist movement were the problems of the IC itself and could therefore be resolved only through the resolution of those problems.

But there can be no question of the Greek section being excluded from IC membership because a majority of the IC want a discussion in the section reopened! It is not true that Comrade Slaughter made any proposal to recognize two sympathizing sections. There remains a Greek section on the IC; and the proposal to bring together the two sides for discussion, including both their participation in an international conference if no unification is agreed beforehand, remains on the agenda.

There remains the POR of Bolivia. All that was agreed at the IC was that Lora's application for membership of the Committee should be put before the next International Conference. This would give full opportunity for clarification of the present political positions of the POR, as well as of the record of Lora and the POR in the struggle against Pabloite revisionism. The SLL had severe reservations on both counts, and the OCI knows perfectly well that these were forcefully expressed in IC meetings.

Finally, on these preliminary questions, the OCI tries to justify the resignation of Stephane Just as 'secretary of the International Committee', on the grounds that the IC decided Comrades Just and Slaughter work as a 'co-secretariat', because of 'difficulties the SLL had in taking on the secretaryship'.

What happened (in 1969) was that, in order to facilitate closer working relations between the sections, given the prospect at that time of growing agreement, Comrades Just and Slaughter should meet briefly and more regularly, in Paris or London, to

prepare statements on behalf of the IC.

Centrism and the OCI

On the two sides of the split are two distinct political lines. The IC majority, supporting the position of the SLL, are for the building of independent revolutionary parties in every country as sections of the IC. This line proceeds from the fact that the Fourth International means precisely the cadres of such parties, fighting against all revisionism which has tried and still tries to destroy the parties of the FI. The FI means the struggle of these cadres to win the leadership of the masses in their own countries from the reformists and Stalinists.

Only the building of such independent parties and their successful winning of the leadership can ensure the victorious struggle for working-class power.

We live in a period where the break-up of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its parties, which inevitably reflect the capitalist crisis, and the sporadic occurrence of petty-bourgeois nationalist and protest movements, exert pressure on the working class and the revolutionary movement. This pressure is, above all, concentrated against the development of Marxist theory, against the building of independent Trotskyist parties whose cadres are based on this theory.

As against theory, these petty-bourgeois tendencies glorify activism and militancy. They pour contempt on those who start from the revolutionary theory and continuity of the movement built by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. They talk about combating bourgeois ideology, but refuse to take up any struggle for dialectical materialism against that ideology in the fields of philosophy and the historical and natural sciences. They revel in 'new' revolutionary tendencies, but pull back from any struggle against Stalinism.

The OCI, the LSPH, and the LOM are a centrist tendency. Behind Trotskyist phraseology and worship of the Trotskyist programme, they in fact represent the results of petty-bourgeois pressure on the revolutionary party. This is why they reject the essential continuity of the FI, represented by the IC cadres, today. They prefer the 'common-sense' formula that there was a Fourth International, but revisionism smashed it, and we have to 'reconstruct' it.

In this way they politically avoid the essential theoretical and practical struggle against those centrists who say precisely that experience has proved the correctness of their own centrist forefathers of the London Bureau who opposed the found-

ing of the FI in the first place, on the grounds that it was premature, not rooted in an upsurge of the masses.

The formula 'reconstruction of the FI' is the weapon with which a theoretical clarification of the struggle against Pabloism is avoided. It is converted into an organizational question.

Little wonder then that the OCI found its way back to international centrism at the 1971 Essen youth conference.

Outstanding amongst the centrist groups of the 1930s who rejected Bolshevism and opposed the very founding of the FI was the Spanish POUM (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification).

The utter failure of the POUM to provide any leadership or to win any independence from the Stalinists (for which they paid with their lives) was one of the most basic political lessons upon which the FI was established. The POUM continues to exist and was represented at Essen by its youth movement. The POUM's paper, 'Adelante' (December 1971) reported the Essen conference as follows:

'In the afternoon and evening, a meeting took place of an International Conference, where amendments were debated on the initial text which had been put forward by the various organizations. Only the amendment proposed by the English delegation of the Young Socialists, on the need to discuss the problem of Marxist theory was rejected in a vote after discussion (the JCI did not participate in this vote) . . .

'In its intervention, the JCI explained how the general framework proposed was in line with the struggle that the POUM and the JCI had been carrying on since 1936 . . .

In the 1930s, Andres Nin and his group sacrificed the organization of a centralized leadership based on Marxist theory for unity with the group of Maurin on the grounds that it commanded the allegiance of a large number of workers. This liquidationism led to defeat in the Spanish revolution. To repeat this type of mistake today, is to open the door to all the pressure from the petty-bourgeois tendencies which always denounce as 'sectarian' the Trotskyist insistence on theory and continuity.

That the OCI is prepared publicly to vote against the Young Socialists, youth organization of the SLL, with political support from the POUM, is a clear indication of the political nature of the split in the IC. No doubt the OCI will want to excuse itself on the grounds that there are possibilities of change in the POUM. This has been answered in advance by one of the POUM's leaders, writing in 1970 (published in Paris 1971):

' . . . almost 35 years after-

wards, the younger generations in Spain are asking questions and are interested in the role of the POUM in these circumstances (the Spanish Civil War), and internationally people still recall the hopes aroused by the party in the world of revolutionary socialists as a new concept of the desire for freedom in the working class against totalitarianism and the crimes of Stalin, who, at the time, was at the peak of power. On the other hand, Trotskyism can show no success in its record of activity in the different movements throughout the world, unless it is its breaking up into even more groups in all the countries where it exists, which are then enmeshed in an even more ferocious struggle against each other.'

(From the Preface to 'Los Problemas de la Revolucion Española', written by Juan Andrade, a leading member of the POUM as an introduction to a selection of the work of Andres Nin.)

The OCI leaders were perfectly aware that this was the position of the POUM. Their 'reconstruction' of the Fourth International is a rallying of centrist elements to whom they hand, as a concession, the formula: the FI was destroyed by revisionism, it must be reconstructed. They know that the centrists will interpret this to mean: in an international 'regroupment' we will all begin at the same place, with no compulsion to learn the lessons of past revolutions and past betrayals.

The OCI and its followers miscalculate. A thousand times more important than the ephemeral groupings thrown off by the Stalinist bureaucracy and the petty bourgeoisie because of the crisis of imperialism is the deep-going change forced on the life and activity of the masses by this crisis. Only the independent work of the revolutionary parties, based on Marxist theory, will penetrate to these changes in the masses, and in this way carry forward the construction of the Fourth International.

The OCI's political association with the POUM, and their opposition to the line of the SLL and the IC of the Fourth International on the fundamental question of the International quite naturally came to a head on the amendment proposed by the Young Socialists at Essen.

In order, so far as was possible at that late stage, to correct the completely anti-theoretical line of the document proposed by the AJS (youth organization of the OCI), the YS proposed the amendment drawing attention to the theoretical basis of the revolutionary movement. The OCI represents this as some sort of ultimatum. But, as the British delegation explained, what was actually required was a new

resolution based on these theoretical foundations, and an amendment could only attempt to preserve for the future whatever basis there was for agreement. There proved conclusively to be none. The split actually occurred on the question of the place of Marxist theory as the foundation of the revolutionary party.

The OCI, as well as all sorts of other people, will pay lip-service to Lenin's statement 'Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement,' but in the actual struggle to build the movement they reject the struggle for theory in order to preserve the centrist alliance they have been building up. They have 'prepared' for this public declaration against the theoretical foundation of our movement by years of failure to take up basic questions of theory in the French labour movement. We shall see where this neglect has led them in the revision of basic Marxist concepts.

And so the split is not a question of dozens of detailed points of organization, or even of political positions on various questions. Every one of these points must and will be answered, but the great advantage of the present split is that it occurs with the basic theoretical questions out in the open. At the point in history where the deepening of capitalist crisis actually opens the door for Trotskyist parties to be built and to lead the working class to power, a point where the conditions for development of Marxist theory by revolutionary cadres are better than ever before, and where all the lessons of the long struggle against revisionism in the Trotskyist movement can be capitalized—precisely at this point the OCI wants to devalue theory, to join the derision of the petty bourgeoisie against discussion on philosophy, to condemn the 'ultimatism' and 'sectarianism' of the SLL, and to accept the petty-bourgeois prejudice that the Fourth International, having in any case been misconceived, died long ago.

These are the fundamental positions behind the split. They are the basis of the differences on the united front, on Bolivia, and on the policies of the OCI in France, as well as on the historical and theoretical issues already raised in the discussion.

When a split takes place on the fundamental question of the relationship of Marxist theory to programme and to the building of revolutionary parties, it cannot be tackled by arguments, like those of the OCI, that 'There can no more be a "majority" of the IC than there can be a "minority"', since there has been no meeting of the IC! The OCI did not need a meeting of the IC to reveal at Essen that on

the question of the Fourth International they were prepared to write off some 35 years of history. It is not just that they returned, formally, to the position of 'for the Fourth International' instead of 'building the Fourth International'. They rejected the positions of the FI on those centrists who had opposed its very foundation.

The differences are not new

The political differences in the IC did not begin in 1971, nor in 1969, as the OCI suggests. In the two years before the Third International Conference of the IC in 1966 there was discussion, both at IC meetings and in written bulletins, on the differences between us on the nature of revolutionary leadership. The dangerous political implications of these differences were, in our opinion, most openly expressed (as early as 1964) in the assertion of a leading OCI member, that the meaning of certain expressions in the Transitional Programme has not been discernible in their objective significance until that time. According to him, only now were some of these phrases revealing their real content. He referred particularly to the last sentence of this paragraph:

'Is the creation of such a [workers' and farmers'] government by the traditional workers' organizations possible? Past experience shows, as has already been stated, that this is to say the least highly improbable. However one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.) the petty-bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists, may go further than they wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie.'

The real experience of the Trotskyist movement since these sentences were written had proved beyond any doubt that, as the Stalinists and reformists grow ever more open in their betrayals, in their counter-revolutionary role, revisionism seized on precisely this passage to justify liquidation of the revolutionary party. Pablo split the FI with his thesis that 'mass revolutionary pressure' and World War III would force Stalinism to play a revolutionary role.

Ignoring the deliberate warning given by Trotsky (that even if a workers' government were established by the traditional workers parties, 'it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat') Pablo predicted 'centuries of degenerated workers' states'.

The OCI was in danger of preparing the theoretical slipway for the same liquidationism in another form: to liquidate the independent programme and identity of the party in an all-embracing policy of 'united front for a workers' government'.

At this stage, we were prepared to fight for the clarification of these problems within the same International. At the 1966 Conference, the attack on Trotskyism by non-member participants, the US Spartacist (Robertson) group and the Voix Ouvrière (VO) group (France),* brought a united response from the SLL, the OCI and the other sections of the IC. Our opinion at that time was that the defence of the continuity of the Trotskyist movement against the opportunism of Robertson and Voix Ouvrière laid the basis for tackling some of our differences.

It is of great importance for the present discussion that the VO based their attack on the formulation in the IC documents that the FI had been organizationally destroyed by Pabloism and must be 'reconstructed'.

While it is formally true, as the OCI states, that the final resolutions in some places retained the terms 'reconstruction' and 'rebuilding', what is certain is that the content of these resolutions was above all the continuity of independent parties and of the FI fought for and preserved by the IC and based on Marxist principle and theory. Against the attacks of VO and Robertson, the SLL, the Workers' League and the Greek section fought for the continuity of the FI and in doing so compromised with the OCI on the wording of the amendment carried. There was no concession on principle.

What soon emerged was that the OCI's participation in the fight against VO and Robertson, rather than proving a basis for changing their wrong positions on the question of the independent revolutionary party, served as a screen behind which they proceeded on exactly the same road. By 1966 the OCI had agreed that, even while opposed to Pabloism, it had committed grave errors of precisely a Pabloite type in relation to the Algerian national movement. But it did not go any further, and this was fundamental.

The next step should have been to probe the unresolved theoretical question in the split with Pablo which had left the OCI vulnerable to such a mistake. Because this was not done, the OCI in its latest document can still say, on the lessons of the Algerian experience:

'The fact remains that the

*These groups attended as observers.

policy of the Trotskyist organization was wrong because it rejected "the struggle for the development of a Trotskyist vanguard".

Certainly! But when you say this, you are left precisely with the big question: how did it arise that a 'mistake' was made on the principal question of the epoch! And if this question is not posed, let alone answered, what dangers exist of liquidation of the revolutionary party in France itself, and in every country? The OCI's attitude towards the 'rebuilding of the Fourth International' through a 'regroupment' of all those claiming to support the Transitional Programme is the instrument for this liquidation.

That is why, in 1967, the OCI, having moved from its previous position of setting up some sort of 'League' consisting of a supposedly already existing 'vanguard' of the best organizers and militants in the working class focused its attack in the IC on all sorts of plans to create artificially a centre for the IC. Proposals were made for full-time workers and special financial schemes to attract forces internationally (such as dissident youth in E Europe) who were said to be only looking for somewhere to go. The SLL's opposition to these methods, its insistence on the central importance of the training of a cadre, was condemned as opposition to the need to build 'the International as such' (*en tant que telle*).

There was no resolution of these questions in discussion. We could get little or no agreement on our estimation of the growing economic crisis of capitalism as the objective source to which our comrades must be directed for their development as Marxists. Indeed, leaders of the OCI told us that our attention to Economic Perspectives at our Conferences was wrong, and that there could be no separation of economic from political perspectives.

The fact is that their own perspectives were not based upon this appreciation of the depth of the economic crisis, and they were left like all non-Marxists and revisionists simply to agree on the existence of a crisis when its effects could no longer be missed by the naked eye. Consequently the political manifestations of the crisis, and particularly the May-June 1968 struggles in France, took them completely by surprise.

All through 1967, the OCI had pursued their proposals on 'the International as such' and attacked the organization of the SLL (just as later they privately opposed the plans for a daily paper) on the grounds, fundamentally, that we were leaping too far ahead of the movement

and consciousness of the working class, the 'real movement' (see the letter of the OCI to the SLL and the SLL Reply, 1967).

These differences about the discipline, training and organization of the revolutionary party were obviously connected with the emphasis of the SLL on the fact that the advanced stage reached by the economic crisis would very soon pose the struggle for power in a number of countries, and that our parties would be called upon to take up leadership. At the International Assembly of Youth in Britain in August 1967, the SLL found itself having to exercise great patience and firmness in insisting on these perspectives on all the questions which they affected: security, organizational details, finance, and the whole problem of preparedness of the youth cadre.

Undoubtedly the May-June days in 1968 once again provided the opportunity for a struggle to clarify political differences. It was absolutely correct for the SLL to campaign, as it did, to win wide support, political and financial, for the OCI. A large fund was raised, and a broad movement of opposition to the repressions against the OCI was mobilized through the columns of 'The Newsletter' (predecessor of the Workers Press).

What is more important is that the rapid development of the objective situation, of the class struggle itself, had completely vindicated the political preparation fought for by the SLL. It was vital to bring home this indispensable lesson to the members and leaders of the OCI, and to the international movement. It was the responsibility of the SLL to fight to overcome previous differences on this basis.

The following months actually suggested the possibility of success, but behind formal political agreement, the OCI pursued its course and still the basic questions were not resolved. After May-June 1968, it was certainly impossible to avoid 'recognizing' the international crisis. Nor was it possible to escape any longer the direct and immediate way in which preparation for the struggle for power was posed. These conceptions found their way into the documents of the OCI, and in a series of discussions it was possible to win a certain degree of agreement on the way that the struggle for a workers' government was posed in France, by making specific demands on the Communist and Socialist parties.

The 1970 'Pre-Conference' of the IC

It was at this stage, when the immediate features of the objective situation seemed to have provided the basis for agree-

ment, that the basic differences became more clearly exposed. At the pre-Conference of the IC in 1970 this contradiction was first clearly identifiable. As soon as the formal agreement was probed, to the method behind it, we were faced with disagreement on the basic question of dialectical materialism as the theory of knowledge of Marxism.

Revisionists like Joseph Hansen think it clever to make the point: can the SLL explain how they stayed together with the OCI despite differences on such a fundamental matter. Of course, Hansen regards a 'correct' position on dialectical materialism and on questions of programme as something fixed for all time; the actual process is one of struggle for clarification as existing conceptions are tested against the objective developments.

The OCI document refers only briefly to this theoretical discussion at the pre-Conference, recalling that its delegates 'warned the comrades of the SLL against the serious political risks in any tendency to transform dialectical materialism into an ideology (philosophy), a system of ideas developing by itself, which is a complete break with the very essence of dialectical materialism: the unity of method, of form and content'.

Let us state what actually occurred in the discussion, because this was indeed the occasion on which there first came out clearly and openly the issues voted on at the Essen Conference. Delegates from the SLL showed from experience of building the revolutionary party in Britain that a thoroughgoing and difficult struggle against idealist ways of thinking was necessary which went much deeper than questions of agreement on programme and policy.

The Trotskyist movement had gone through a long period of isolation in which propagandism inevitably took a strong hold, so that it was difficult for comrades to be trained theoretically in an actual, developing relationship of revolutionary practice in the workers' movement. In these conditions, as was now being shown in the practice of trying to turn the movement to the working class and accept the responsibility of fighting for leadership, formal propaganda agreement, even to the extent of acknowledging verbally the basic theoretical premises of Marxism, actually served as a barrier to the real understanding of the unity of theory and practice. The same 'theory' which had rationalized a propaganda existence before, and which had never been called upon to guide a really revolutionary practice, now provided a screen of formal agreement to obstruct change, to obstruct understanding of the

living movement of the class struggle.

Formal agreement with Marxist principles in fact co-existed with failure to have challenged the deep-going ways of thinking and feeling (i.e., bourgeois idealist philosophy) which tied members of the revolutionary party to fixed ways of life under capitalism. Activism, no less than propagandism and abstract 'pure' theorizing had its roots in 'English' bourgeois tradition.

When, therefore, the SLL delegates spoke at the pre-Conference about the need to fight for a deepening of the understanding of dialectical materialism as the theory of knowledge of Marxism, it was precisely to direct the movement towards the fundamental questions involved in the nature of consciousness, of what is meant by a 'leap' in consciousness, and of what this means for the stage reached by the Fourth International and its parties in the new stage of the epoch of proletarian revolution which has opened up.

When the OCI and Hungarian delegates dismissed this discussion as irrelevant and even dangerous, then the SLL and other delegations realized that their fears of fundamental differences concealed by formal agreements on programme were only too well founded. If this happened at the international level, then there was every danger that in the building of sections, in France or any other country, our sections would react to the international crisis and the radicalization of workers by tail-ending the movement (though of course continuing to state their adherence to revolutionary principles) instead of, by a more intense struggle, selecting and training the best of the new forces in a fight to develop Marxism.

The OCI delegates at the pre-Conference did not simply, as they now put it, 'warn us of a tendency to transform dialectical materialism into an ideology'. They told us that dialectical materialism was certainly not a theory of knowledge, and that Marxist theory did not exist except as concentrated and fought for in the form of the programme of the revolutionary party. They rested then, as now, on the remark of Marx and Engels in 'The German Ideology' that philosophy is surpassed by the extension of science, of revolutionary theory and practice, to the sphere of human activity.

On these grounds they dismissed the arguments of the SLL and other sections that a struggle on Marxist philosophy was the basic qualitative task confronting the revolutionary movement. This is a sophistic distortion of Marx and Engels. The OCI remain indifferent to the fact that Lenin, in his work

on philosophy in the early part of World War I, insisted that dialectics as the theory of knowledge of Marxism was not just a neglected 'aspect' of Marxism but was the 'essence' of the question.*

As for Marx and Engels, they regarded philosophy as 'surpassed' only in so far as it was practised as a system standing above the sciences.

There is no question but that Lenin's work on these questions was crucial to his break with Social-Democracy and the building of a new, communist, International, and for the October Revolution itself.

His enriched understanding of the development of consciousness breaks through decisively in the April Theses and the discussion around them, against the 'Old Bolsheviks'. His work on 'State and Revolution', incomplete when the 1917 Revolution demanded his return to Russia, is directly and decisively influenced by the methodological advances he was able to make on the 'Philosophical Notebooks' for the 1914-1916 period. Those who reject the thesis that dialectics is the theory of knowledge of Marxism, and that this 'essence of the question' is decisive for the period of proletarian revolution, where revolutionary consciousness comes into its own, will soon find themselves questioning all the basic tenets of Leninism. And this is precisely what emerges from the OCI's document on the questions of the united front and on the question of revolutionary class-consciousness.

Dialectical Materialism and the OCI

We are certainly not saying that the SLL has answered all the problems in this field; on the contrary, the first thing is to recognize that a long and continuous struggle is necessary in every section against the dominant bourgeois ideology, which inevitably takes a 'national' form. This was, of course, the meaning of Trotsky's deadly serious warning to the Socialist Workers' Party in the United States on the necessity of a conscious struggle against the dominant American philosophy, pragmatism.

The French Trotskyists have neglected to take up any fight against the school of 'Marxism'

* 'Dialectics is the theory of knowledge of (Hegel and) Marxism. This is the "aspect" of the matter (it is not "an aspect" but the essence of the matter), to which Plekhanov, not to speak of other Marxists, paid no attention.' (Emphasis in original.) Lenin: 'On the Question of Dialectics'. Collected Works Vol. 38, p. 362.

in France (actually a Stalinist compromise with 'national' traditions in the name of a revolutionary heritage from Jacobinism and the Enlightenment). This school is based, precisely, on playing down the decisive break from 18th century French materialism that was necessary for Marxism to be born.

Unless this philosophical struggle is fought out and deepened in the course of a battle against the way that bourgeois ideology today still strengthens the hold of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat, then 'Marxists' and 'Trotskyists' in France will continue to publish books, articles and resolutions which look like Marxism, which rehearse the 'programme' with great expertise and with the most impeccable Trotskyist phrases, but without making any development of Marxism in theory or practice.

Marxism—here we see it once again—is not seen from the standpoint of a theory of knowledge, of the contradictory development of consciousness in struggle, but as the ideological expression of the interests of the working class. This one-sided view of the relation between Marxism and the working class is in fact very little different in its basic conception from the theory of knowledge which the pre-Marxist French materialists held. These materialists, to the limited extent that they applied their theories to history explained ideology in terms of 'utility' in ensuring the interests or happiness of those who embraced the ideas.

If those who call themselves Marxists conceive of Marxism simply as the expression of the nature and struggle of the working class, they do not go beyond this. Roger Garaudy, for example, writing about the French materialists and Marxism, explained that the latter could be a more consistent materialism because of the collectivist and non-exploitative character of the proletariat and its need for an outlook free of mystification: 'Materialism is the ideological expression of the action and struggles of the working class.' This has nothing to do with Marxism. Garaudy expands his explanation:

'Here we discover at its very origin the fundamental weakness of all our precursors: not one of them, before Marx, set out his socialist or communist doctrine founding it consistently on the positions of the working class. For them, materialism was never the ideological expression of the action and struggles of the working class. What essentially distinguishes them from Marx is that they wanted to deduce materialism from this or that stage of the progress of the

sciences instead of seeing in it the necessary principle of the action and struggles of the working class. This attitude condemned them to leave idealism its share: it will always be the same if one tries to make of materialism a necessity arising from thought and not from action. To deduce materialism from an idea or system of ideas is to subordinate it to something not the same as it, to descend into metaphysics and finally into idealism.

'Marx gave to the working class and to philosophy the method necessary to escape from these illusions. Henceforth we have a measure with which to judge social doctrines and philosophical works: their value is a function of the weapons which they provide for escaping all mystification.*

The purpose of this quotation, let us say before the screaming starts, is not to make an amalgam of Garaudy and Stephane Just. They are, of course, politically different, opposed to each other, in their whole political course. But we are here talking about what Engels called 'the theoretical front' in one of its sectors, the vital sector of philosophy.

Garaudy manages to make of Marx a continuator of the materialists of the 18th century bourgeois enlightenment, but able to be consistent because he based himself on the specific interests of the working class. The French materialists of the 18th century prided themselves on tearing away the veils of illusion and unreason, particularly in their religious and political forms, but, according to Garaudy, only a philosophy based on the working class, which has no system of exploitation to introduce, can really provide the basis for destroying illusions.

Such explanations of class and ideology would not be out of place in the many books and magazines of 'sociology' from which 'Marxists' in France find it impossible to break, and which neither the OCI nor anyone else has theoretically challenged.

Stephane Just, writing for the OCI, in his own way speaks very similarly to Garaudy:

'Marxist method only exists through its content which integrates all the moments of the class struggle of the proletariat for its emancipation. It is in this sense that the programme of the socialist revolution concentrates Marxism and that the defence of Marxist theory can only be the defence of programme, i.e., the struggle to resolve the crisis of leadership.'

* Roger Garaudy: *Les Sources Françaises du Socialisme Scientifique*, revised edition, 1949, p. 277.

Certainly it is only in the struggle for the revolution that the fight for Marxism has any meaning, but this struggle demands a defence of Marxism in the realms of philosophy, sociology, etc. as well as at the level of politics as such. The youth in the AJS are being educated in the spirit of Just's distortions, and this is the meaning of the opposition to the Young Socialists' amendment at Essen. We have the representative of the AJS, discussing the Essen amendment at the subsequent meeting of the 'Liaison Committee' set up there, saying: 'There is no ideological battle in itself, no Marxist theory in itself, but a programme which is the expression, concentrated through the Marxist method, of the totality of the struggles of the proletariat, and upon which an organization fights.'

We are not saying, of course, that there is such a thing as 'ideological battle in itself' or 'Marxist theory in itself', as we have explained in describing the differences at the pre-Conference. But we are certainly fighting against those who seem to understand the unity of theory and practice as meaning that theory no longer exists. We are certainly saying that dialectical materialism is the theory of knowledge of Marxism, of the path of struggle from error to truth—not to a 'final' truth, but continually making advances through contradictory struggle to real knowledge of the objective world as we fight to change it and change ourselves as part of it. Because this is rejected by the OCI leadership, insofar as they are represented in the document before us and in the writings of Stephane Just, they leave out the conflict between the development of scientific consciousness in the revolutionary party and the spontaneous consciousness of the working class.

Stalinism Revisionism & the OCI

The excursions of the OCI into historical questions of the movement in this connection are very instructive. So anxious are they to refute the Essen amendment that they contradict even their own recent writings. According to the OCI document, the Essen amendment errs by saying that revisionism can be found behind the development of Stalinism. 'No,' they say, 'behind each development of opportunism in the workers' movement there is not "ideology" in the form of the revision (rejection) of Marxism, there is the reality of social forces in conflict, the class struggle expressed in the centre of the working-class movement itself, which is both the terrain and the stakes in the

struggle. This created justifications in the form of a revision of Marxism.' And, on the interpretation, Stalin's revision of Marxism 'expresses the interests of the bureaucratic caste which is taking over political power...'

Once again we have developments in ideas interpreted purely as expressions of the interest of 'social forces'. This *general* truth is used to deny any role to the conscious struggle for theory. Trotsky once compared the revolutionary party to a 'laboratory', in which there certainly was, and must be, a temporary but definite abstraction of certain elements of the changing reality, and definite theoretical effort, before understanding of the reality of the class struggle could be taken further in revolutionary practice, the results are to further enrich theory.

On the other side, revisionism, like any other idealist development, has theoretical roots, epistemological roots in unresolved theoretical traditions, etc., and only under certain conditions do these traditions get the chance to develop and become 'anchored', as Lenin puts it, in definite class interests.¹ Stalin's revisionism (the doctrine of socialism in one country) was the product of Stalin's (and others) limited theoretical outlook when encountering the intractable realities of the early 1920s. It became 'anchored' in the definite interests of the bureaucracy, and could have come to dominance only on the basis of this bureaucracy and the social and cultural conditions which sustained it. For this revisionism, and the bureaucratic caste whose interests it adequately represented, to succeed, it was necessary *first* to achieve what Trotsky called the 'inner corrosion' of the Bolshevik Party itself, and that process was above all one of ensuring the destruction of the theoretical basis of the Party (in the campaign against the theory of permanent revolution and the discrediting of Trotsky as a previous opponent of Lenin).

The dialectical relationship between ideas and the classes or fractions of classes whose interests they serve is entirely wiped out by the OCI's mechani-

¹ *'Human knowledge is not a straight line, but a curve, which endlessly approximates a series of circles, a spiral. Any fragment, segment, section of this curve can be transformed (transformed, one-sidedly) into an independent, complete, straight line, which then (if one does not see the wood for the trees) leads into the quagmire, into clerical obscurantism (where it is anchored by the class interests of the ruling classes.'* Lenin: Vol. 38, p. 363.)

cal and 'sociological' theory that ideological changes are simply 'justifications' of social interests. Revolutionary consciousness developed in a struggle to grasp the changes occurring through the struggle of opposites in the objective world; this struggle and change is fundamental, whereas the identity of opposites is temporary and transitory.

It should at least be recorded in this discussion that in Stephane Just's 'Defence of Trotskyism', published earlier in 1971, which contains many of the mistaken theories which recur in the OCI document, he did at least state a correct position on this particular matter. Answering the Pabloites, who 'explained' the rise of Stalin by 'objective' conditions, Just replied:

'It is not so-called "objective" conditions which lie at the origin of the isolation of the Russian proletariat and of the Bolshevik Party, of the degeneration of the workers' state and of the Bolshevik Party, but so-called "subjective" conditions which lie at the origin of these so-called "objective" conditions.'

Even though the use of the adjective 'so-called' reflects extraordinary confusion (as we shall see, Just obliterates the opposition of subjective and objective), this quotation is quite correct about the origins of the degeneration of the workers' state. At this point, since the OCI promises another document on the disputed questions, we will make one specific request: let them say categorically, is dialectics the theory of knowledge of Marxism or not? And if it is not, what were the consequences, in Lenin's theory and practice, of his mistaken conceptions on this score. We do not expect this request to be favourably considered, and yet the author of the OCI document has in fact already embraced a formulation by Stephane Just which, without referring to Lenin as such, directly challenges his basic idea.

Stephane Just corrects Lenin

The OCI document tells us:

'As S. Just recalls in his "Defence of Trotskyism": Considered as a historical and organic process, the formation of the class-consciousness of the proletariat depends on the analysis of the development of the class struggle and ends the metaphysical discussions on whether class-consciousness is brought in from the outside or not, and on whether the vanguard is self-appointed or not.'

Here we have arrived at the crucial link between the philosophical and methodological errors of the OCI, on the one hand, and their centrist political

tendency on the other. Stressing the unity of the opposites, Marxist theory and exploited working class, they ignore the struggle of these opposites in which the unity consists. Just's 'organic' conception serves very well to help recognize any emerging 'allies' as more or less legitimate expressions of this organically developing consciousness. An extended quotation on this question from Just's book shows how, by a series of rationalistic formulae to 'integrate' all the different aspects of the class struggle, the actual dialectic of how consciousness is achieved is abolished.

'But it is abstraction to consider the struggles and organization of the proletariat outside the totality of the social, political and ideological relations in society. They are born and develop as one of the components of the whole history of humanity. They are fed on all this history whose mainspring they become. The struggle of the proletariat against exploitation, the forms of organization which it adopts, concretize the basic contradiction in bourgeois society, but this is expressed in many forms within all classes and social layers in bourgeois society, through contradictions which derive from the production relations of that society.

'The struggles of the proletariat and its organization feed in their turn the social, political and ideological contradictions and antagonisms within bourgeois society. The proletariat maintains complex relations with all the other classes in bourgeois society, their struggles, their antagonisms, their political and ideological relations. There is nothing more stupid than these symmetrical views: Class-consciousness brought into the proletariat form outside its struggles by "good prophets", bourgeois intellectuals, or the class-consciousness of the proletariat monopolized by horny-handed workers who produce surplus value, with the "good" petty bourgeois or bourgeois having to put themselves humbly at the disposal of these workers and to imitate them.

'Basically, these systematic points of view reveal the contempt of the petty-bourgeois for the proletariat: they make the working class a present of their consciousness and the others imagine a mythical working class made up of workers who are incapable of going beyond the narrow horizon of their immediate exploitations. Fighting against exploitation, trying to break the social relations based on their exploitation, in search of ways and means of organizing, the proletariat builds and develops its consciousness in an organic historical process fed by all its previous history and the relations it maintains with all the other social classes, their contradictions,

their antagonisms, the political, social and ideological struggles developed there. Thus petty-bourgeois and bourgeois intellectuals can break with their class, join the proletariat, participate in the formation and development of its class-consciousness, by bringing the acquired knowledge of other classes and social layers. But the latter are radically transformed when they are integrated into the struggle of the proletariat which they enrich. The struggles of the proletariat give them a new content and a new historical dimension.'

Because the proletariat's role is related to everything else that happens in bourgeois society, and because its existing consciousness is dependent on the end-result of all the interconnections, Just forbids any study of the living struggle whereby the contradiction between the working class as object and the working class as subject is overcome! No wonder then that he dismisses the central idea of Lenin's 'What is to be Done?' as a 'metaphysical discussion'!

It was precisely against the type of 'organic' theory of consciousness put forward by Just that Lenin insisted very firmly on the fact that Marxism as a science was developed on the basis of a conscious theoretical effort by bourgeois intellectuals to grasp reality at the level of the relations between all the classes, and not at the level of the experience or existing consciousness of the working class. If Just's 'organic' point of view were correct, why would Lenin want to insist that left to itself the proletariat can achieve only trade union consciousness, and that this is bourgeois consciousness? Because, although

In their anxiety to oppose this insistence on the fight for Marxist theory, for dialectical materialism, and to make themselves acceptable to others who dismiss the basic importance of this question, the OCI are forced back on to the use of quotations from Marx in a way which deliberately counterposes general statements of the principles of historical materialism against the specific developments of this theory by Lenin. The document quotes 'The German Ideology', attempting to show by this that it is nonsense to talk about fighting for socialist class-consciousness because only the revolution itself can produce from some god's eye view, or from the point of view of pure reason which has gathered into itself all the determinations (or 'moments' as Just has it), the beautiful whole can be seen as integrated, nonetheless from the standpoint of revolutionary practice the task is precisely the struggle for political or socialist consciousness against the ideology imposed by the bourgeoisie and its agencies.

such consciousness. ('A massive transformation of man is necessary for the mass creation of this communist consciousness . . . such a transformation can only be wrought through a practical movement, through a revolution. . . .') This is another sophism.

The fight to build the revolutionary party on the basis of Marxist theory is the struggle for conscious leadership of the 'practical movement' of the proletarian revolution. Nor did our original formulation suggest that the fight for consciousness was some abstract one taking place entirely separately from the class struggle. That is a distortion. What we said was 'What was most essential in the preparations of the sections was to develop dislectical materialism in a struggle to understand and to transform the consciousness of the working class in the changing objective conditions.' (emphasis added). What a shameless distortion to quote this and then make jokes about people who want to 'develop' dialectical materialism on the model of exercising the muscles.'

These thoroughly anti-Marxist views on the character of dialectical materialism and on the nature of the relation between theory and class-consciousness cannot but be associated with a revision of the Marxist positions on the revolutionary party and the relation to the working class. Lenin's argument on the question of theory being 'brought from the outside' was directed to laying the foundations of the revolutionary party in Russia. Just's rejection of this as 'metaphysics' is directed towards the liquidation of the positions of the International Committee, which have been fought for against revisionism in the Fourth International.

In 1967 the SLL warned the OCI on the political implications of failure to build on the gains of the 1966 Conference. The OCI has now reaped the political harvest. Already by 1967 the OCI presented once again the formula 'the FI was destroyed under the pressure of hostile social forces.' (15.5.67)

The SLL Central Committee replied (19.6.67):

'The OCI delegates voted [at the 1966 Conference] for the SLL's amendment that the FI was not destroyed. It is not possible to go forward and build revolutionary parties except on this basis. Those who left the Conference on this issue joined the attack on the SLL by those who have gone over to the camp of bourgeois pacifism and they will never return. We tell the OCI: You cannot separate the return to this formula, together with your attacks on centralized organization and the supposed "ultimatism" of the Socialist Labour League, from the line-up

of revisionist forces on exactly these questions.

'In the preparation for the Fourth Conference of the International Committee, as our SLL 9th Conference resolution makes clear, we will fight to reaffirm the decisions and gains of the April 1966 Conference. Having insisted there on the continuity of the Fourth International, rejecting the formula "The Fourth International is dead" as a middle-class, pessimistic rejection of the revolutionary role of the working class and of revolutionary consciousness, we went on to formulate in the Commission on the tasks of the International Committee, the central principles of the type of Party we build, a Bolshevik party.

'We stressed that all trade union work, youth work, etc. was subordinated to this task. We specifically rejected all "spontaneity" and syndicalist theories of the "organic" or "natural" emergence of revolutionary parties through struggle.'

Further, we drew the attention of the OCI to the implications of these differences for the developing situation in France itself. It is necessary to quote this section in full, because it shows the continuity in the positions the SLL has taken on the political questions involved, in contrast to the OCI's caricature of the SLL position as one of abstract theorizing on philosophy:

'Now the radicalization of the workers in W Europe is proceeding rapidly, particularly in France. The election results there, the threat of a return to the political instability of the ruling class in the Fourth Republic, the mounting strike struggles, the taking of emergency powers—all these place a premium on revolutionary preparation. There is always a danger at such a stage of development that a revolutionary party responds to the situation in the working class not in a revolutionary way, but by adaptation to the level of struggle to which the workers are restricted by their own experience under the old leaderships, i.e., to the inevitable initial confusion. Such revisions of the fight for the independent party and the Transitional Programme are usually dressed up in the disguise of getting closer to the working class, unity with all those in struggle, not posing ultimatums, abandoning dogmatism, etc.'

The indications here for the policy of the OCI in the May-June events, only 12 months later, discussed in our statement of October 24 last are obvious.

The 'working-class united front'

The OCI's turning its back very deliberately on the theoretical foundations of the building of the revolutionary party, particularly in respect of the youth, is the necessary companion of its

distortion of the Leninist policy of united front. The capitulation to spontaneity is the link between these two aspects. Whereas just wipes out the distinction between spontaneity and revolutionary consciousness, calling it 'meta-physical', Lenin very deliberately insists on this distinction:

'The working class spontaneously gravitates towards socialism: nonetheless, the most widespread [and continuously and diversely revived] bourgeois ideology spontaneously imposes itself upon the working class to a still greater degree.

'Hence our task, the task of Social-Democracy, is to **combat spontaneity**, to divert the working-class movement from this spontaneous, trade unionist striving to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of the revolutionary social-democracy.' (Lenin: 'What is to be Done?')

Once this fundamental distinction is obliterated, and the conscious struggle for the development of Marxist theory through conflict with spontaneously developing consciousness (inside as well as outside the Marxist party) is dropped, then the party's cadres, above all its youth, are raised entirely in a spirit of adaptation to existing centrist and opportunist forces, no matter how much this is hidden behind a screen called 'working-class united front'.

In the last four years, the OCI has staked all its policy on this 'working-class united front'. In the name of moving forward from abstract proclamations on the united front towards taking into account the actual development of the working class, they have in fact subordinated the building of the independent revolutionary party to the general truth that the working class in struggle first tests out its traditional mass organization. Taken one-sidedly, without concentration on the independent role of the revolutionary party, this can only result in becoming a hand-maiden of the existing leadership of the working class.

In conditions where the contradiction between the needs and demands of the masses and the reformist and Stalinist bureaucracy becomes extremely acute, then the first consideration is the theoretical preparation of the cadre against all adaptation to spontaneity.

At every vital stage of his struggle against Stalinism, Trotsky returned to the essential theoretical preparation of the youth. After explaining the lessons of the anti-Trotskyist campaign of the Stalinists, and outlining the tasks of the opposition, Trotsky concluded: 'Today the theoretical education of the younger generation is our supreme task.' (Feb. 7, 1930). Five years later, in the midst of many discussions about the

united front and the relations between the centrists and the building of the Fourth International, Trotsky wrote:

'The task at present is to prepare the cadres of Leninist youth, to raise them to the level of the tasks of our epoch. In this sphere, the requirements are special theoretical clarity, ideological honesty and an irreconcilability to opportunism and to diplomacy.

'The conservative centrist apparatuses inherited from the past must be prevented from checking the revolutionary development of the proletarian vanguard; that is the task!' (April 24, 1935.)

At Essen we had a clash between this conception on the one hand, and a conception of playing down theoretical preparation and ideological independence of the revolutionary vanguard for the sake of alliances with the remnant of international centrism on the other. Essen was the extreme limit of the attempt of the Socialist Labour League and the IC majority to fight this centrist tendency within the same international organization. Again Trotsky's words are perfectly apposite:

'The Bolsheviks have no reason for uniting with the centrists. Hollow international parades are of no use to us. Revolutionists do not flirt with centrists at conferences but carry on tireless day-to-day work against them in their own countries, and they participate in their own revolutionary international conferences, where they do not blow soap-bubbles but discuss and decide the questions of the class struggle.' (April 24, 1935.)

The OCI has fallen into the trap of converting the tactic of the united front into its whole policy. This can only mean that the independent programme of the revolutionary party, while repeated on suitable solemn occasions, becomes no longer the actual guiding line of the party, fought for by an independent cadre which constantly deepens its theoretical understanding of the historic significance of this programme through participation in the class struggle and study of the living movement. It is clear from all the publications and campaigns of the OCI (as well as from the theoretical positions we have already discussed) that the youth in the OCI are being trained exclusively around this mistaken conception of the united front; they are trained to believe that by campaigning consistently as the only principled fighters for the unity of all working-class organizations against the bourgeois government, and for a government of these workers' organizations, they will win the best elements in the working class and in this way build their party.

Is this policy sufficient to build

the revolutionary party? On the contrary: precisely at a time when the sections of the FI are emerging in struggle from a generation of isolation and the dominance of propaganda methods, all the well-known dangers from the necessary tactic of united front come to the fore and must be consciously guarded against.

Only theoretical training can do that, a theoretical training fought for in the building of our independent resources, our independent political line.

What are these dangers? We already know their manifestation at Essen, in the international youth movement. We have already indicated their results in the failure to go beyond the demand for a 'central strike committee' in 1968. These results could have been avoided. The warnings against these dangers abound in the theoretical work of Lenin and Trotsky. The fact that they went unheeded is a sure indication of the weight of hostile class pressures behind the line of the OCI leadership. Trotsky, writing and speaking at the time of the Third and Fourth Congresses of the Communist International, (often specifically about the French Communist Party) devoted many thousands of words to the question of the united front, but never once went beyond describing it and advocating its use as a tactic. ('First Five Years of the Comintern', Vol. II). Nor was this tactic applicable in all cases or at all stages in the development of the revolutionary movement.

'In cases where the Communist Party still remains an organization of an insignificant minority, the question of its conduct on the mass-struggle front does not assume decisive practical and organizational significance. In such conditions, most actions remain under the leadership of the old organizations which by reason of their powerful traditions continue to play the decisive role. Similarly, the problem of the united front does not arise in countries where . . . the CP is the sole leading organization of the toiling masses.'

Lessons of history

We cannot simply take phrases from the history of the communist movement about the necessity for the united front, and transplant them as timeless truths into the present. It is always a question of understanding definite and necessary stages in the development of the revolutionary party in relation to the development of the working class and its needs. This is what Lenin explained in the discussion on tactics at the Third Comintern Congress (1921):

'The first stage in our struggle

was to create a genuine communist party, so that we could know with whom we were talking, and in whom we could have complete confidence. At the first and second congresses we said: "Out with the centrists!" . . . But now we have to go a bit further. The second stage, after we have created the party, must be to learn how to prepare the revolution. In many countries we have not even begun to learn how to win the leadership . . .

The sections of the International Committee are not, of course, at the same stages of development as the parties of the Comintern. These sections, as part of the Fourth International, have had their own specific evolution, with its own specific stages, in the fight against Stalinism and revisionism, in objective conditions different from those of the years after World War I.

But we can certainly say that these sections have defended Trotskyism and have developed as revolutionary parties, and will continue to do so, **only** on the basis that the building of independent revolutionary parties is the central task of our whole epoch. These parties must indubitably work out the way to use the united front tactic in each country.

But the OCI is making the united front a principle to which the independence of the vanguard and the development of Marxist theory are subordinated. Under today's conditions this is equivalent to a new and more sophisticated form of the liquidationism which has been the main content of revisionism in the Fourth International.

The history of the struggle for the Fourth International is strewn with warnings against these dangers which exist in the united front tactic, and for good reason. Representative are the following extracts from Trotsky's writings in Germany in 1931-1932, writings in which he deals fully with the question of the united front, and indeed where the main emphasis was on the necessity of the united front. His warnings therefore carry special weight:

'That a workers' party is compelled to carry out the policy of the united front—that is not to be gainsaid. But the policy of the united front has its dangers. Only an experienced and a tested revolutionary party can carry out this policy successfully. In any case, the policy of the united front cannot serve as a programme for a revolutionary party. And in the meantime, the entire activity of the SAP is now being built on it. As a result, the policy of the united front is being carried over into the party itself, that is, it serves to smear over the contradictions between the various tendencies.

And that is precisely the fundamental function of centrism.

'To reduce the whole policy of the proletariat to agreements with the reformist organizations or, still worse, to the abstract slogan of "unity", is something that only spineless centrists of the stripe of the Socialist Workers Party (SAP) can do. For the Marxists, the united front policy is merely one of the methods in the course of the class struggle. Under certain conditions this method becomes completely useless; it would be absurd to want to conclude an agreement with the reformists for the socialist revolution. But there are conditions under which the rejection of the united front may ruin the revolutionary party for many decades to come . . .'

There could be no clearer warning to the OCI: ' . . . the policy of the united front cannot serve as a programme for a revolutionary party . . . the entire activity of the SAP is now being built on it.' And this is centrism. The extent to which this process has gone in the OCI is graphically illustrated by the following extract from their latest policy statement:

'What government deserves confidence of the workers?' (Extract from the political report for the conference of February 5-6.)

'In a political situation where the struggles of the workers, which are necessary for the improvement of their wages and pensions, against the worsening of their living and working conditions, against unemployment, do not bring the anticipated results, increased prices, super-exploitation in all its forms imposed by the government on behalf of the employers, inevitably wipe out every success.

'In a situation where every serious action, even if, we repeat, its point of departure is a partial demand, leads to the posing of the fundamental question of power, each organization is obliged to formulate and to present to the workers the governmental solution which corresponds to the interests of the workers. The will of the working masses and the youth to win satisfaction of their demands and hopes cannot be doubted, but in order that this will can be realized, an immediate objective is necessary: replace the Pompidou-Chaban-Delmas government with another government. A government which would respond positively to the aspirations of the masses, because it would rest for support on the mobilization of the workers in struggle against the employers and the state.

'The working class expects clear answers from its organizations, the conquest of governmental power cannot consist only of a change of ministerial per-

sonnel. It is not general phrases against the monopolies, but only through a political and organic break with the French capitalists and all their bourgeois parties that an orientation can be made in deeds and not just words towards a change of government. We shall not tire of saying this over and over again, of repeating it afresh, certain of expressing the will of the working masses.

'It is necessary to define clearly the political content and form of the government corresponding to the aspirations of the workers, because it is this government, leaning on the masses in struggle against the employers and the state, which will decide what measures to take. If it is not said clearly: 'not one capitalist minister, not a single representative of the bourgeois parties will sit alongside us in the government,' then we would be accepting class-collaboration, and nothing would be done to advance along the road struggle against the high cost of living and unemployment, for the true satisfaction of demands.

'The only politically responsible thing to do is to say to the leaders of the mass organizations who claim to speak for the interests of the workers: 'To accept the presence of representatives of the bourgeoisie in the government, even in limited number, is to reject any prospect of making any inroads into property rights in the major means of production, to open the door wide for runaway deterioration of living and working conditions, to leave untouched the police state constructed by Marcellin to defend the interests of capital.

'It is only on this basis that the government of united workers' organizations, for which the workers are ready to fight, can meet the needs of the workers and the youth. The necessity of the common struggle for the workers' government flows from the decisions taken by the government, the consequences of which will be to reinforce the general offensive of capitalism against the working class. The workers' government is an economic necessity because the struggle of the working class to defend itself against exploitation has become a political struggle for its demands.

'It is necessary to drive out, and with the utmost speed, the bourgeois government and the bourgeois ministers. The unity of all workers wanting to fight capitalism, of the organizations which bring them together and of the leaders who speak in their name, must impose the workers' government. For this objective, it is necessary to

combine and unite in a powerful united front of workers' organizations, which must undertake to carry out a real struggle against the bourgeois government. Socialism is not in some distant and obscure future; the will to fight for the workers' government represents today the immediate step to be realized, for the lessons which great masses are assimilating more and more consists in this: if the power of capital is not overturned, exploitation cannot be abolished.' ('Informations Ouvriers', January 5-12, 1972.)

These are questions which French Trotskyists cannot avoid. Is the policy of united front sufficient for the building of the revolutionary party? The history of the Fourth International gives an unequivocal No! What is the content of the united front? It must not be simply a matter of expressing generally the aspirations of the masses for unity, but must state firmly the area of united front agreement in relation to the programme of the revolutionary party, which expresses the revolutionary interests of the working class.

The OCI advances no such programme, and confines itself to the general slogan of a workers' government formed by the existing workers' organizations. Without such a programme the door is opened for the social democrats and Stalinists to arrive at a false 'united front' which is nothing more than reformist treachery. Again this is not a new question in the history of our movement. Trotsky wrote in the summer of 1934, in France:

'We criticized Naville for not concretizing the revolutionary

content of the united front, thus permitting the two bureaucracies to seize upon this slogan without great risk.'

With this distortion of the tactic of the united front, the OCI goes over to the essence of the revisionism which has for 20 years attacked the Fourth International. The difference here is not one of emphasis but of principle. Trotsky, writing on the ILP in 1933, condemned '... a united front made not for one single practical action but for collaboration in general...'. There cannot be the slightest doubt about where Trotskyists place their essential concentration. Every day of the history of our movement, especially in the fight against Pabloite revisionism, has reinforced Trotsky's warning:

'The policy of a united front with reformists is obligatory, but it is of necessity limited to partial tasks. There can be no thought of making the socialist revolution in a united front with reformist organizations. The principal task of a revolutionary party consists in freezing the working class from the influence of reformism.' (September 1933.)

The 'government of united workers' organizations' in which the OCI wants to participate is clearly a government of the bourgeois state. Revisionism opens the door to reformism.

If this point has had to be explained at length, it is because the consequences of error on this score are truly enormous. For the sake of a practical 'alliance' with Lora of the Bolivian POR, the OCI leaders 'reconstructing' the Fourth International in Latin America after their own prescriptions chose to

forget even their own criticisms of the POR's capitulation to Stalinism in 1970. They adopted a position on the Bolivian revolution which totally liquidates the independence of the working class and the revolutionary vanguard, not merely into the trade union bureaucracy and the Stalinist apparatus, but into the bourgeois nationalism of Torres.

All the demagogic talk from the OCI about the 'universal republic of Soviets', with the Bolivian Popular Assembly as its first manifestation, all the talk about the permanent revolution, is disguise for the awful reality that the working class was placed under the domination of bourgeoisie. Because of this the counter-revolution was able to isolate and repress the working class without the Popular Assembly being able to carry out any real mobilization of the masses.

Lora and the Assembly supported the Torres regime, they did not prepare for its overthrow in any way; and finally, with the counter-revolution at the gates, the POR itself appealed for the arming of the masses... by Torres!

There could be no more fitting end to this reply. Lora's party took to its logical and practical conclusion the opportunistic opposition to theory entailed in the positions of the OCI. It is time to draw all the lessons of this experience, in line with those of the Belgian General Strike, of the Ceylon coalition and of Algeria. With such policies and programmes, a split in the International Committee of the Fourth International was shown to be absolutely necessary and inevitable.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL



Fourth International Conference

**APRIL 10-15
1972**

LONDON

THE INTERNATIONAL Committee of the Fourth International held its fourth international conference from April 10-15. Delegates from eight countries participated, some of them travelling many thousands of miles.

First concern of the conference was the urgency given to its proceedings by the transformed economic and political changes in the months since the August 15 measures of United States President Nixon.

In the US and in the capitalist countries of Europe, the working class have moved into struggle under conditions where the question of taking power cannot be avoided.

Only the forces of the International Committee have fought, all through the 1950s and 1960s, to prepare for these changes. Every other 'socialist' and 'Communist' tendency — including some falsely claiming the name Trotskyists—based themselves on the theory that the capitalist boom had made it no longer possible for the workers of the advanced countries to achieve the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

As the conference resolution on international perspectives points out, this theory of 'neo-capitalism', a capitalism without fundamental contradictions, was only the surface impression of middle-class opponents of Marxism.

With this theory they turned to other social forces — the Stalinist bureaucracy, the colonial middle-class nationalists, the peasantry, and finally, in 1968, the students—as the basis for the overthrow of capitalism. This was really the politics of protest and radical propaganda in the capitalist countries.

Since May-June 1968 in France, the working class itself has thrown into chaos and confusion all those who based themselves on these revisions of Marxism. Consequently, only the International Committee is able to put forward a revolutionary international perspective at this stage.

The conference Manifesto (printed tomorrow in Workers Press) urges revolutionaries in every country to recognize and to act upon their historic responsibilities, to fight in every struggle of the working class for the building of revolutionary Marxist parties.

Now the full fury of the crisis has been unleashed by Nixon's measures, it is necessary to prepare for the most explosive economic and political consequences, says the Manifesto. Trade war becomes massive slump.

Great industrial and financial concerns quake and crash. Whole national economies face break-

down. War tempts big business as the solution, and at the same time frightens them. Revolution and counter-revolution appear first in one country, then in another.

The reformist and Stalinist bureaucracies, tied to imperialism, can only lead the masses to disastrous defeats.

These same bureaucracies assist the imperialists who are driven by intensified competition to turn upon the working class in their 'own' countries to destroy their basic rights and organizations.

Never was it more urgent to build working-class revolutionary parties based on the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International. This period now brings out the full meaning of the long struggle, since 1953, of the International Committee against Pabloite revisionism, which abandoned the building of such parties.

In this overall perspective, the conference proceeded to discuss in detail the work of the national sections. It is a question, in each country, of working out a concrete programme of struggle to enable the working class to emerge as a politically independent force, by breaking it from the present domination of the Stalinists in countries such as Greece, France or Italy, and from the social democracy in other countries, such as Britain.

CONFERENCE also discussed the work of Trotskyists in the United States, although the Workers League, which works in sympathy with the IC, is prevented by US law (the Voorhis Act) from joining the Fourth International.

In this presidential election year, the conference considered that the long-term fight for a US labour party based on the trade unions could be and must be taken forward decisively.

Not only are US trade unionists being subjected to the internal measures — pay freeze, legal restrictions—flowing from August 15, but the presidential candidacy of the ultra-right wing George Wallace is the spearhead of a big attack by the capitalist parties on the unions.

It was the strength of the American working class, particularly in the steel and automobile industries, which made Nixon's August 15 decision inescapable.

It had become impossible to continue with both domestic inflation and dollar convertibility at fixed prices and parities.

In this situation, a campaign to mobilize trade unionists for the formation of a labour party, to defend the unions and the independent interests of the working class, is the correct path for US Marxists.

Within this fight for a labour

party, the Workers League must battle independently for the socialist programme which it proposes for such a party, and at the same time come forward as the only consistent fighters for the labour party.

This central theme, the fight to lead the working class to political independence, was the basic orientation of the discussions on the work of the sections. On this basis, plans were made for the International Committee to help directly in the work in each country.

IN GREECE, for example, the most effective way to break the working class from the counter-revolutionary influence of Stalinism is to demand in every struggle that the Stalinist parties break from their treacherous alliances with capitalist parties. Particularly, the Partsafides-Theodorakis Stalinist tendency must be exposed and fought for its extreme turn away from the working class and its demands.

FOR IRELAND, the conference discussion emphasized the importance of the revolutionary unity, not only of the workers of N and S Ireland, but of Ireland and Britain in struggle against the Tories in both countries.

In a situation such as that prevailing in Ireland, the essential emphasis must be on the recruiting and training of revolutionaries, particularly among the young workers, who are able to break from the nationalism and syndicalism which have always dominated in the Irish working class, neither of them able to challenge the basic ideological grip of the church on the one hand and Protestant Unionism on the other.

THE CONFERENCE main resolution and Manifesto draw attention to the heroic revolutionary struggles of the colonial countries.

After bearing the brunt of imperialist exploitation, repression and war ever since the 1940s, the oppressed peoples are now able to mount an offensive, especially in Bangla Desh and Vietnam, which shakes imperialism to its foundations, and now combines with the struggle in the advanced countries.

All those who dismissed Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution as outdated now find it confirmed on an international scale.



Discussion on the United States, centred around the need for a labour party

In these colonial countries, the qualitative task of building Trotskyist parties founded on the fight to develop Marxist theory presents itself with equal urgency to the situation in Europe and America.

CONFERENCE discussed the work of its section in Ceylon (the Revolutionary Communist League), where the degeneration and revision of Marxism in the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (which joined the capitalist coalition in 1964 while still affiliated to the Pabloite 'United Secretariat')

had led to open betrayal to imperialism.

Conference carried unanimously a resolution condemning the imprisonments in Ceylon, carried out by a government in which renegade ex-'Trotskyists' participate with Stalinists and capitalist parties.

ANOTHER resolution concerned the struggle in Argentina. It condemned the campaign of kidnapping and individual terrorism which culminated in the shooting of the hostage Fiat representative, Sallustro.

Carried out by a tendency claiming to be Trotskyist (actually affiliated to the Paris Unified Secretariat), this action completely contradicts the programme and methods of struggle of Marxist parties, the principles fought for by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Right at the point where the industrial workers of Argentina are building up mass actions, this middle-class individualist terrorism avoids the fundamental problems of leadership and mobilization of the class, substituting for it personal heroism and 'propaganda by deed' and opening the door to savage repressions.

IN CONSIDERING the future work of its youth commission (set up in 1966) the conference drew attention to the split which has occurred in the International Committee after the international youth rally which met in Essen, W Germany, last June.

The AJS (Socialist Youth Alliance, youth organization of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste [OCI], then the French section of the IC) at that rally put forward the programme of setting up a centrist international youth organization.

This involved their rejecting an amendment from the Young Socialists, which called for the fight to develop dialectical materialism as the only basis for a revolutionary Trotskyist youth movement.

THE CONFERENCE dealt at length with the political lessons of this split. Essen had been followed by the dispute over Bolivia. There, the counter-revolutionary coup which overthrew the nationalist regime of Torres and bloodily repressed the working class had cruelly exposed the descent into centrism of the POR (Revolutionary Workers Party) led by Guillermo

Lora and sharing the political conceptions of the OCI.

At this point, the OCI, far from pulling back from its dangerous positions, persisted in them and solidarized with Lora against the International Committee. The conference endorsed the positions taken by the IC in breaking from the revisionist leadership of the OCI. It would be impossible for revolutionary Marxists in this period to co-exist in the same international organization as those whose false theories and opportunist actions prepare defeats for the working class.

IN PLANNING for the future, commissions at the conference gave guidance to comrades struggling to establish new sections in places as far away as Australia. The international summer school was planned, in which several hundred comrades from many countries will participate.

One of the main issues at this school will be the history of the Fourth International and the International Left Opposition.

A special commission was appointed to begin this work. They, and the individual sections, will bring together the preliminary results by the summer. This

is no academic pursuit: the history of the International embodies the theoretical lessons of all the vital experiences of the working class in our epoch.

Another resolution on future tasks instructed the International Committee to draft rules for its functioning founded on the original statutes of the Fourth International (1938) which would facilitate centralized work and guidance to the national sections.

IN THE five days of the conference, delegates worked together, not in an atmosphere of mutual compliments and abstract schematic formulations, but rather in an intensive struggle to examine every problem to its roots, by relating it to the great historical transformations in the objective situation and the theoretical struggle made urgent by these changes.

In this sense, the Fourth Conference of the International Committee ended on a note of high revolutionary optimism, an optimism tempered by determination, above all else to devote every nerve and every muscle to the task outlined by Leon Trotsky: to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the working class, the only road to resolving the historical crisis of humanity caused by decaying capitalism.

MANIFESTO

FROM THE FOURTH
CONFERENCE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE
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The Fourth Conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International, meeting on April 10 to 15, 1972, calls upon revolutionaries in all sections of the world movement to take up with every resource they can command the great historic tasks now posed before the Fourth International.

Entirely new conditions have opened up for resolution of the crisis of revolutionary leadership which has held back the working class since the rise of Stalinism.

The struggle for working-class power, for the socialist revolution enters a new and decisive stage with the crisis of world capitalism precipitated by the August 15, 1971 measures of US President Nixon.

With the collapse of the financial agreements of Bretton Woods, the end of dollar convertibility, and the open declaration of trade war, the foundation of all economic and political relations between imperialism and the working class in the metropolitan capitalist countries since World War II is smashed.

In every major capitalist country, the ruling class is forced to set out to destroy all the positions won in the past by the working class, to destroy it as a class, break up its organizations, and reduce it to mass poverty. Only in this way can the capitalist class of each country hope to survive the world recession and trade war.

Above all, the conditions under which the revolutionary movement works are changed qualitatively. Trotskyism faces its greatest challenge since the formation of the Fourth International in 1938. Having successfully defended the programme of the Fourth International and the theory of Marxism against all the physical repressions and political betrayals of Stalinism and reformism and having defeated the attempts of revisionism to liquidate the Fourth International, the forces of the International Committee and its sections must now take up the challenge of fighting for leadership in the struggle for power.

Beneath the 'liquidity' and currency crises of the late 1960s lay the ever-deepening contradiction between the productive forces—first and foremost among these the working class itself and the system of monopoly capitalism. Concentration of these historical contradictions in the crisis of the dominant world currency—the dollar—gives a universal character to the economic and political character of the effects of the crisis. Trade war is only the foretaste of

international slumps, collapse of great monopolies and banks, even of national economies, revolutions and counter-revolutions, and the ever-growing threat of world war.

As Marx explained: '... capitalist production moves in contradictions which are constantly overcome, only to be, again, constantly re-established. Still more so. The universality towards which it is perpetually driving finds limitations in its own nature, which at a certain stage of its development will make it appear as itself the greatest barrier to this tendency, leading thus to its own self-destruction.' (Grunderisse pp. 313-314.)

Mass unemployment; attacks by the state machine and fascist mobs on the organizations of the proletariat; colonial repression and conquest; war with other powers; military attack on the deformed and degenerated workers' states: these are the 'solutions' to which capitalism in decay always turns in crisis.

Nowhere will the working class be able to defend itself except by the building of revolutionary parties for the conquest of power. The final blow was struck against all reformist solutions by the August 15 measures. For the first time since the early 1920s, the working classes of the advanced capitalist countries are driven to confront the ruling class face to face, class against class, in a struggle for power. The most basic needs of the masses can be defended only by revolutionary methods.

When Nixon announced the decisions of August 15, the basic contradictions of capitalism burst asunder the compromise relations established in 1944-1945. For hundreds of millions of workers the basic conditions of life are now thrown into question, and the established relations for dealing with these problems are suddenly without foundation. Here is the basis for the struggle for revolutionary consciousness, for the development of Marxist theory.

However, the post-war economic settlement was a result not of any strength of capitalism but a decision by a capitalist class weakened by depression and war to attempt to contain the strength of the working class rather than to enter upon a decisive confrontation.

Keynesian inflationary policies were built into the international monetary settlement. The relative stabilization and expansion of capitalism which followed was made possible only by the treacherous class-collaboration of international Stalinism and of the Stalinist and reformist parties all over the world.

The collapse of the gold-dollar standard and the fixed parities of Bretton Woods, and the new stage of class war opened up in

each country are therefore blows just as mortal for the Stalinist bureaucracy as they are for the imperialists.

Stalinist and reformist parties still dominate the consciousness and organization of the working class in each country, but the foundation of this domination has now been removed. No longer will capitalism rule through the ability of these apparatuses to impose treacherous partial concessions in response to the strength of the working class; it will require the destruction of that strength.

This brings the working class, in the essential fight for its political independence, into life and death conflict with the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies. The Trotskyist movement must take up its responsibility of building an alternative leadership, the only alternative to bloody defeat through the class-collaboration of the traditional leaderships.

Only the Fourth International can arm the working class against the Stalinist bureaucracy, the principal counter-revolutionary force in the world. The Stalinists work consciously to repair those defences which they built jointly with the imperialists in 1944-1945.

They will aim to bloodily suppress the political revolution in the USSR and the deformed workers' states, as well as the revolutionary workers in the capitalist countries. They will strive to repeat in every country the role of the Polish Stalinist strike-breakers in Spain and the Maoist bureaucracy in Bangla Desh.

As the capitalist class moves to impose new totalitarian forms of rule, it does not confront a defeated working class. On the contrary, the first outbreaks of the economic crisis—1967 devaluation of sterling and the 1968 gold crisis—were answered by the action of the French working class in May-June 1968.

Since then, the metal-workers' strike in Germany, the general strikes and political crisis in Italy, the upsurge of the Spanish working class, and the radicalization of the working class in Britain and Ireland, have shown that the workers of the advanced capitalist countries are undergoing a fundamental development as the crisis makes its impact, and this strength reveals itself as the main source of its extension and development.

Nixon's measures of August 15 were made absolutely unavoidable by the wage settlement in the US steel strike and the other impending wage battles. It became impossible both to contain the strength of the US working class and to continue with the international role of the dollar. This is the very heart of the crisis.

Nixon's international measures were, therefore, linked with new preparations against the US working class.

The institution of the Pay Board, the rejection of the longshoremen's settlement, preparations for anti-strike legislation, combined with Nixon's conscious unemployment policy have brought the trade unions into direct collision with the government.

This crisis is shaking all the old relationships of class collaboration between the trade union bureaucracy, the government and its two parties. This is what forced Meany to walk off the Pay Board.

Every struggle of the American working class for wage increases, against speed-up and unemployment must now be a political struggle, a struggle for power.

American workers built the most powerful trade unions in the world but these unions have been tied politically to the Democratic Party through the trade union bureaucracy's collaboration with the aid of Stalinism.

The only way the American working class can defeat the attacks of the employers and the government is through the break with the Democratic and Republican Parties and the formation of a labour party based on the unions and on socialist policies.

The 1972 elections now take place in an entirely new period since August 15, which places the labour party immediately on the agenda now. The emergence of Wallace raises the greatest dangers to the labour movement. Behind the racist and populist demagoguery of his campaign is Wallace's real programme—the destruction of the unions, the destruction of every right and gain the unions have won.

Wallace is the right-wing spokesman for the capitalist class that now must above all destroy the unions if their system is to be preserved. Behind Wallace are gathering all the racist and fascist forces.

Nixon and the Republican and Democratic Parties stand with him. Wallace is putting forward today what the capitalist class as a whole is preparing for the working class in the future. Wallace cannot be defeated today, as the trade union bureaucracy claims, by supporting politicians in the Democratic Party.

The only way that Wallace can be defeated is through the construction of this labour party, through the break with the two capitalist parties.

The fight for the labour party is the central responsibility of the Workers League. This must be fought for in the unions with the call for a congress of labour to establish this party on a socialist programme. It is to this

struggle that the youth and the students must be turned in a fight against the Stalinists, who openly support capitalist parties, and revisionists who seek to sidetrack the struggle for a labour party, proposing Black and Chicano capitalist parties.

Only through the building of the labour party can the American working class be broken from the reformist illusions built up in the past and the road prepared for power.

The Nixon measures have confronted the ruling class of the European capitalist states with the inescapable necessity of going to war on their own working class. By thrusting the burden of the dollar crisis on to these countries, Nixon imposes the need for the break up of the compromise relationships and unstable equilibrium which have prevailed since 1945. This blow comes just at a time when, following the events of 1968 in France, the working class enters the scene, strong and undefeated, in a combative way with its own demand.

The new militancy of the working class passes at first, in a spontaneous way, through its traditional organizations and takes the old forms. The reformist and Stalinist leaderships strive everywhere to prevent it coming forward as an independent force. The task of the Fourth International sections is to establish leadership in the working class and to expose and drive out the treacherous bureaucracies. Only in this way can the working class take the power.

This alternative leadership must be established on the programme and with the perspectives of the International Committee of the Fourth International. There is no other way. Failure to resolve the crisis of leadership in the present period will mean defeats for the working class which will throw mankind back into a new era of barbarism.

The economic situation of European capitalism since August 15 has become truly desperate and the bourgeoisie itself has not fully grasped, even eight months later, the full depths of its crisis. But, in the political as well as in the economic sphere, it has not been slow to demonstrate its reaction. In every country it shows that it understands that it must defeat its own working class and impose more authoritarian forms of rule. This means that all the democratic rights and conquests of the working class come under intensified attack as the bourgeoisie takes up stations for a decisive round of class battles.

A ruling class with its back to the wall, pressed into desperate measures by the weight of US imperialism; a working class staking out claims of its own which challenge the bourgeoisie's

right to rule; leaders who combine to break up and betray the struggles of the working class; this has now become the rule in every European country.

First France, where the storm-signals of the European revolution appeared in 1968. In the General Strike of May-June 1968. The mobilization of the entire working class threatened the bourgeois social order. The grip of the Stalinists was weakening day by day as workers manifested their determination to go beyond the limits imposed by the bureaucracy and demand a workers' government.

The Trotskyist movement in France, the OCI, at that time a section of the International Committee, was unable to grasp the revolutionary opportunities which presented themselves. The situation in May-June 1968 caught it by surprise and unprepared. This was no accident; nor was it a question merely of numerical strength—the smallness of the vanguard', as the rationalization went.

It was a question of method which left the OCI unarmed and carried it through the events with a series of empirical adaptations which never, at any time, permitted it to call upon the Communist Party to take the power. This demand is the essential path to their exposure before the working class and the establishment of Trotskyist leadership.

Although the French bourgeoisie was able to retain power with the help of the Stalinists and the reformists, the foundations of its rule were irrevocably shaken by the power of the working class and nothing in the relations between the classes has been the same since. The defeat of de Gaulle in the referendum in 1969 struck a further blow. The French bourgeoisie hangs on grimly behind Pompidou in an atmosphere of scandal and corruption which recalls the worst days of the Third Republic.

The German working class, written off by the revisionists as 'integrated' or 'reformist', emerges as the major factor in the crisis of German capitalism. The 1969 movement could still be contained through formation of a Social-Democratic-Liberal coalition and big concessions in wages. This revived reformist illusions in the working class and in particular the youth but the metal workers' strike of December 1971, after Nixon's measures, spelt the end of reformism, which is now breaking up.

The working class has been able to build up an unprecedented strength within the unions in West Germany and within the framework of the deformed workers' states of the Democratic Republic. It is this strength which the bourgeoisie has now to confront with the

help of the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies and all the old relations have to be changed.

German capitalism was rebuilt after the war as the spearhead of imperialism against the Eastern European countries and the October Revolution. Today the role of the Social-Democratic-Liberal coalition is to help the bourgeoisie prepare the reconquest of East Germany and the Eastern European countries and to pave the way in West Germany for a reactionary CDU/CSU government to tie the unions to the state.

This is where the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism comes out most clearly. Within the radicalization of the working class they try to subordinate this movement to the coalition government.

Just as the German working class remained relatively isolated from the world class struggle even after the defeat of fascism and in the period of the post-war boom, so the collapse of German capitalism after the Nixon measures opens the way for the German working class to find its way back to its revolutionary traditions.

This requires establishment of the independence of the working class through a consistent struggle against Stalinism and revisionism, through the building of the revolutionary party. This resurgence of the German working class opens the door for a reawakening of the Soviet proletariat's hopes for world revolution and for the political revolution against the parasitic Kremlin bureaucracy.

The break-up of reformism after the Nixon measures is throwing social-democracy into a deep crisis. The task of the German Trotskyist movement is to establish the independence of the German working class in a fight for Marxism and in a struggle to break the German working class from the control of reformism by exposing it in the fight for the demand that the SPD breaks with the Liberals in the coalition and forms an exclusively Social-Democratic government, based on the trade unions with a socialist programme.

In Italy the boom showed itself to be even more fragile. Since the 'hot autumn' of 1969, which was a direct continuation of the 1968 May-June events in France, the country has been in the grip of an economic, social and political crisis unprecedented since the pre-Mussolini years.

Only the heavy weight of Italian Stalinism's apparatus has prevented the working class from asserting its claim to power in opposition to the debile Italian bourgeoisie and its main political expression Christian Democracy.

The betrayals of Togliatti's heirs have given the bourgeoisie

time to prepare new attacks which will be struck after the forthcoming elections, whatever their outcome. The panic-stricken petty bourgeoisie are attracted into the orbit of the neofascists to whom the monopolists are now turning as an alternative to the increasingly-discredited and impotent parliamentary regime.

The Stalinists are the last line of defence for this rotten political system. It is absolutely necessary to place the demand on the Italian Communist Party: break from all forms of coalition with the bourgeoisie parties; take the power. Along this road, the Stalinist hold on the working class will be broken.

The bonapartist dictatorship in Greece is a regime of crisis which is an expression of the world crisis of the capitalist system. It portrays the future that capitalism has in store for the working class in this period of its death agony, where the bourgeoisie is forced everywhere to pass to the most severe forms of state repression, having no other way to defend its rule.

At the same time, the seizure of power by the Colonels was the advance warning of the fact that the class struggle, in the whole capitalist world, has developed to its most crucial point, posing on the agenda the proletarian revolution for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

The colonels cannot solve the problems of Greek capitalism. They are unable to gain popular support or to stabilize their power. On the contrary, their regime is constantly undermined by the deepening crisis of imperialism. Particularly since Nixon's measures on the dollar and the declaration of trade war with Europe, an explosive charge has been placed under the foundations of the dictatorial regime.

The closure of a series of basic industries, which employed thousands of workers, and the last big increases on the basic price of food are the first products of the crisis in its new stage.

Similarly, the split inside the junta which came into the open with the sacking of the Regent Zoiakis and the taking of his post by the arch-dictator Papadopoulos, is the manifestation of this crisis in another sphere.

Intensification of the crisis following the August 15 measures has created conditions for a confrontation between the working class and the dictatorial regime. The Greek Trotskyists fight for independence of the working class, opposing the Stalinists who would drag it behind the liberal bourgeoisie, and to establish the revolutionary party to lead the struggle of the working class for power.

In the epoch of imperialism in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the most elementary

demands for national independence and democratic rights can only be granted if the struggle in these countries is carried over into the socialist phase.

We warn the workers and peasants of these countries not to put any confidence in bourgeois nationalist leaderships.

The experience of Bangla Desh demonstrates the danger of such a step. With the suspension of the Constituent Assembly on April 11, the ruling bourgeois nationalist Awami League has demonstrated that it is an obstacle to the granting of full democratic rights, and the voluntary and revolutionary reunification of India on a socialist basis.

In Ireland bourgeois nationalism expresses itself through IRA terrorism. Far from leading to real independence and liberation, their exclusive reliance on terror, and opposition to Marxism and the revolutionary party, have now resulted in a compromise with imperialism, reminiscent of the 1921 agreement.

The imposition of direct rule from Westminster, welcomed by a section of the IRA leaders, threatens the rights of Protestant and Catholic workers alike.

Partition, religious divisions, low wages and unemployment will remain, through a coalition of Republican and Orange capitalism, backed by the Tory government at Westminster.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, as in all other countries, the only guarantee of success for the masses in their struggles for national independence and democratic rights is the building in these countries of sections of the International Committee, dedicated to the central strategy of establishment of political independence of the working class, and the overthrow of imperialism.

In this period of unprecedented crisis for European capitalism the European Common Market takes on a new meaning. Its extension to include Britain and those countries grouped with her in the European Free Trade Area emphasizes its character as a counter-revolutionary coalition aimed at the working class and intended to create conditions in which European capitalism can find a basis for survival in conflict with the United States and Japan.

The Heath government in Britain, supported by a section of the Labour Party, has hastened to join the Common Market in preparation for civil war and in the hope that ailing British capitalism will be given an injection of strength. Competition and rivalry between the European capitalist states will not disappear with the entry of Britain but will only reach a new pitch of intensity, driving each government to strike even more decisively against the working class.

In Britain, the Industrial Relations Act, the strengthening of police forces and changes in the law affecting legal rights are part of this preparation.

At the same time, British finance capital prepares to take advantage of the new opportunities for profit which it hopes to find within the Common Market. Whole sections of industry in Britain which can no longer be competitive when tariff barriers come down will either be closed down or production will be shifted to the continent. Speculators and financiers are eagerly looking for fresh pickings, regardless of the long-term consequences. In the Common Market, as in the whole market, it is capitalist anarchy which prevails.

In its own way, through the Common Market, capitalism tries to overcome the contradiction between the productive forces and the constricting limits of the historic national states within which bourgeois rule expresses itself. But the Common Market does not in fact transcend these limits of result in any merging of interests of the European ruling classes. It opens up a more bitter struggle for hegemony inside the so-called European Community in which the weakest will go to the wall.

The revolutionary movement opposes and fights in every way the sinister 'new order' represented by the European Common Market, which constitutes the main counter-revolutionary strategy of European capital against the working class, aiming to destroy its conquests. Brezhnev's declaration that the Soviet bureaucracy will modify its attitude to the EEC is a declaration of willingness to collaborate in this counter-revolutionary strategy.

Against the capitalist Common Market, the Fourth International calls for the taking of power by the working class in the perspective of the United Socialist States of Europe. That is the only answer which accords with the historic interests of the working class.

The upsurge of the workers' movement in the advanced capitalist countries now joins with the revolutionary struggles of workers and peasants in the colonial countries. In Vietnam, US imperialism is fought to a standstill, despite the international betrayal of the Vietnamese revolution; and in Bangladesh the masses herald an entirely new stage of the revolution in South-East Asia, despite the blows struck against them by the Stalinist bureaucracy in Peking.

Mao Tse-tung's approach to Nixon is the desperate response of imperialism and the bureaucracy to these revolutionary struggles.

The IC of the Fourth International affirms its solidarity with the national liberation struggles of the Arab people against world imperialism and its agents in the Middle East—the state of Israel. It warns, at the same time, against the perfidious policy of the Soviet bureaucracy which is using the situation to bring about a deal with imperialism to crush the revolution.

These are the transformed conditions in which Trotskyism fights for revolutionary leadership. The starting point for every Fourth International section can now only be this: after August 1971 we work in qualitatively transformed conditions which hold out the highest possibilities, and at the same time the greatest dangers, the most intense struggle; conditions in which the political decisions of revolutionaries involve the whole future of the working class.

The nature of the crisis in the relationship between the classes means that the task now before the revolutionary movement becomes that of winning the leadership of the working class and taking it to power. The International Committee has fought a tenacious and thoroughgoing theoretical struggle against all conceptions that the political consciousness of the working class can be developed spontaneously out of the experience of the class itself, or out of the struggle only for its immediate demands.

In every country, the capitalist state aims to destroy the trade unions. It is possible to defend the unions only by fighting for revolutionary leadership of the unions, based on a struggle for Marxist theory against trade-union consciousness.

The urgency of the preparations now required could not be understood just from bringing together the struggles and experience of the working class itself. It is necessary to make a Marxist analysis of the developing crisis of the capitalist economy and its penetration into the objective relations between the classes at the level of state power and politics, as well as economically, and in the relations within the ruling class itself.

Such an analysis is inseparable from a struggle for Marxist theory, of dialectical materialism, against all conceptions of spontaneous development of revolutionary consciousness, against all propaganda conceptions of simply fighting on a programme of demands. In every country, the sections of the Fourth International fight above all to develop the political independence of the working class, to intervene in every partial struggle in order to bring the class face to face with this question of its own power, which involves a complete break with the Stalinists and reformists,

and the building of mass revolutionary parties.

SECTION II

The Fourth International exists only through a continuous and uncompromising struggle against every misleadership of the working class and, in particular, the Stalinist bureaucracy and its agencies throughout the world.

Stalinism as always plays a doubly reactionary role. It holds back the harmonious development of the productive forces in the workers' states through its greed, corruption and parasitism. At the same time it disarms the working class in the capitalist countries and facilitates betrayal by its reactionary brainchild of 'peaceful co-existence' and 'peaceful transition' to socialism.

Stalinism is counter-revolutionary through and through. By its brutal intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and suppression of the Gdansk uprising in December 1970, Stalinism demonstrates its mortal fear and hatred of the working class fighting against bureaucratic privilege and dictatorship. The continued harassment, exile and torture of Soviet intellectuals, scientists and writers is a grim reminder of the fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy, to preserve its usurpatory regime, must repress every expression of artistic and literary dissidence. In doing so it stimulates new expressions of anti-bureaucratic revolt in the youth and the working class.

The International Committee of the Fourth International fights for the unconditional release of these dissidents as an integral part of the fight to construct a Trotskyist party which alone can carry out the political expropriation of the bureaucracy and restore proletarian democracy and intellectual freedom in the USSR.

At the same time the International Committee of the Fourth International will fight to combat Stalinism's treachery — Peking and Moscow alike — which has condemned entire communist parties and hundreds and thousands of workers in Indonesia, Sudan, Iran and other countries to extinction.

The collapse of the French General Strike of May-June 1968 constitutes the most decisive test to date of the correctness of the Trotskyist characterization of Stalinism as counter-revolutionary. Initially opposing the students' struggle, the CP leaders suddenly switched their line in order to more effectively control the General Strike and — in the absence of a revolutionary leadership — steered the movement back to 'normality and order'.

The Fifth Republic and French capitalism were saved, not because of any intrinsic strength of the regime, but because of the Stalinist collaboration. Refusal of the revisionists of the

OCI and the Ligue Communiste to raise political demands and post the question of power before the Stalinist bureaucracy contributed powerfully to the subsequent betrayal of the Stalinists and the retreat of the masses. As in the Belgian General Strike of 1961, revisionism played an important role in preserving the grip of Stalinism on the European working class.

The reformist counter-revolutionary policies of international Stalinism not only help perpetuate imperialism, but by the same token accentuate the isolation of the USSR and China and intensify the social contradictions within them.

Stalinism cannot be reformed. It must be smashed, overthrown through the mobilization of the working class under the leadership of parties of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

But this struggle requires patience, tactical resourcefulness and a clear dialectical understanding of the present crisis and the nature and origins of Stalinism.

No successful struggle can be carried out against the Stalinist leadership outside the USSR, Eastern Europe and China by groups or individuals who base themselves on a one-sided analysis and preconceived ideas.

Stalinism is the political expression of the interests of a bureaucracy transmitting the pressures of world imperialism on the working class. But the interests of the working class which supports the Stalinist parties, thrown into ever more violent struggle by the crisis of imperialism, demands that these parties go forward for power.

In the epoch of the intensified crisis of imperialism these conflicting interests and mutually exclusive aspirations of the working class and the bureaucracy come into conflict and precipitate crisis after crisis in the Stalinist movement.

The Stalinist-imperialist collaboration after World War II was part and parcel of the monetary arrangements which permitted inflationary policies to be pursued by the capitalist powers; now however the termination of the Bretton Woods agreement disrupts completely this relationship. This provides the Trotskyist movement with unparalleled opportunities to recruit from the Stalinist parties and destroy the political credibility of their leaders.

To ignore these opportunities is to condemn the working class to defeats greater than those of the 1930s. The International Committee of the Fourth International urges all its sections to engage in this task with revolutionary optimism and audacity. Every blow struck against Stalinism intensifies the death agony

of the imperialist system.

The policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy, by turning the working class away from its revolutionary tasks and exposing it to the imperialist drive towards counter-revolutionary dictatorships, constitute the gravest danger to the conquests of the October Revolution itself. As the crisis deepens, imperialism is inexorably driven to seek ways of reconquering the areas lost in the Russian Revolution and after World War II.

The danger of a third world war threatens the working class more menacingly with every step towards reaction by the imperialists. The only answer to the threat of war is the united struggle of the working class for its own power, achieved through the building of revolutionary parties.

The International Committee stands for the unconditional defence of the USSR and the other workers' states in a war against imperialism. Preparation for the proletarian revolution in every capitalist country is the only effective road to such defence.

The crisis of imperialism affects every section of society and, in particular, compounds the agitation and insecurity of the petty bourgeoisie in the developed and colonial countries alike. Unable to express their hatred of capitalism in a really revolutionary way, these social groups express their despair and political impotency by individual terror as well as by pacifist non-violence.

The International Committee of the Fourth International warns the working class against the dangers of petty-bourgeois adventurism which leads to the blind alley of terrorism and the diversion of the working class from its historic goal — the seizure of state power and the replacing of private property by social property. None of these aims can be achieved by the methods of the 'urban guerrilla' — revisionist or anarchist — or the rural 'foco' of the Guevarists and Maoists.

The Pabloite revisionists, by encouraging this trend as well as by their adventurist attacks on the traditional parties of the working class, display, in the most criminal way, their contempt and hatred for the working class and Marxism. The International Committee of the Fourth International will continue its irreconcilable struggle against this reactionary tendency.

Only the mobilization of the working masses, in independent actions, under the leadership of parties of the Fourth International based on Marxist theory, can win workers' power. This has been the consistent stand of the International Committee against all revisionism in the Fourth International.

The struggle to found the Fourth International against Stalinism and its betrayals was at the same time the struggle to construct new revolutionary parties on the basis of Marxism. Since 1953, the International Committee has constantly fought the tendency, originally led by Michel Pablo, which declared that the working class was no longer capable of independent struggle, and that therefore the construction of Marxist parties must be abandoned in favour of pressurizing Stalinism.

This adaptation to Stalinism was the result of abandonment of the Marxist method and thus capitulation to the pressures of the capitalist class. In 1963, the US Socialist Workers' Party, which originally supported the formation of the International Committee, broke from the International Committee to support a reunification with the Pabloites, forming what is known as the Unified Secretariat.

This reunification took place without any discussion or assessment of the fundamental questions involved in the original 1953 split. Instead the Castro regime was uncritically supported as the new way to make revolutions without constructing Marxist parties, the opportunist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) of Ceylon was held up as a model Trotskyist organization, and the programme of political revolution was completely thrown out for China.

The SWP, having always refused to take up a struggle for the Marxist method, ended up supporting what it broke from in 1953. The Unified Secretariat stands today in complete opposition to everything Trotsky stood for.

The fruits of the reunification of these revisionists was soon expressed in Ceylon, where a party calling itself Trotskyist, the LSSP, actually entered a bourgeois coalition government, accepting cabinet posts. The unprincipled nature of the reunification was the political preparation for this betrayal in Ceylon. In 1971, the LSSP again entered the government, this time to participate in a bloody campaign against rebellious youth, ending up jailing Trotskyists and banning the press of the Trotskyist Revolutionary Communist League, Ceylon Section of the International Committee. This is the real expression of the role of revisionism in this period of the sharp capitalist crisis.

The Unified Secretariat today is racked by a fundamental internal crisis, being torn apart by the movement forward of the working class internationally. All the questions it refused to face in 1963 now come up—but no section is capable of providing any answers. The majority faction preaches 'neo-capitalism' and

'structural reforms' in the advanced countries, while encouraging the wildest guerrilla adventures in colonial countries.

It bears political responsibility for the assassinations by the ERP which occur precisely at the moment when the Argentine working class is going into decisive battles. The minority, supported by the SWP, collaborates with Stalinism in the anti-war movement, basing itself on all manner of middle-class protests when the American working class is forced to confront Nixon and the Democratic Party is being ripped apart in the process.

After a long struggle within the International Committee to change its course, the French OCI has decided to follow the path of the SWP by breaking from the International Committee. The break has taken place over the most fundamental issue of all. What was at the root of the degeneration of Pabloism—the Marxist method.

At the Essen conference in the spring of 1971, the OCI and its youth organization, the AJS, voted down an amendment, put forward by the majority of the International Committee. This amendment stated that the struggle against bourgeois ideo-

logy among the youth was central to the construction of the international Trotskyist youth movement. This struggle required a study of the Marxist theory of knowledge and the actual training of the youth cadres in the struggle for this understanding.

Following this action the OCI openly supported Lora's POR which contributed to the defeat of the Bolivian revolution, by forming a broad front with Stalinism and the bourgeois nationalist regime of Torres and refusing to call upon the working class independently to arm itself against counter-revolution. Lora has since entered a popular front formation with Torres, the Stalinists and the Pabloites while the OCI remains silent.

This political course, which duplicates the Ceylonese events, is the direct result of the refusal of the OCI to take up the struggle to educate its members in the Marxist method and in this way to be able to develop a real orientation towards the working class in France and towards the construction of the Fourth International.

There is only one revolutionary tendency in the world and that is the International Committee of the Fourth International, fighting for independent revolutionary

parties in every country. What Trotsky said of the Fourth International in 1938 has even greater force today: **The Fourth International exists; it has neither to be proclaimed, nor created, nor reconstructed.**

What must now be done in each country is to develop the cadres of the movement through a serious struggle for dialectical materialism as in each country the Trotskyist movement takes up the fight for the political independence of the working class, its preparation for taking the power.

It is in this way that revolutionary parties will be built and the world socialist revolution prepared. The Fourth Conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International calls upon working-class revolutionaries everywhere to accept the challenge of the crisis opened up since August 15, 1971, to rally to the banner of the Fourth International in every country, and build the revolutionary parties which will lead the working class to the conquest of power.

Adopted unanimously by the Fourth Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

April 14, 1972.

USA

RELEASE JUAN FARINAS

JUAN FARINAS has been jailed. The decision of the New York District Court Judge to reject Farinas' motion for modification of sentence and his return to a Federal prison is a vicious attack against workers' rights and the revolutionary movement.

Farinas, a member of the American Workers League (Trotskyist), who has been framed on charges of violating the Selective Service Act, is to continue serving his sentence of two years' imprisonment in a Federal prison in Danbury, Connecticut.

The motion for modification of sentence asked that Juan be allowed to go into the army, or to work for two years in a court-approved job. His 'crime' is that he dared to distribute anti-Vietnam war leaflets in an army induction centre.

The rejection of this motion is fully in keeping with the policies of the Nixon administration. This is to stifle every expression of revolutionary socialist activity against the Vietnam war and the wage freeze, anti-union policies of the Republicans.

Farinas gets two years for expressing his opinions on the war whilst the organizers and perpetrators of the My Lai and Kent State University massacres go scot-free.

At the same time the entire Republican administration reeks with the stink of corruption and scandal as the monopolists scramble to gouge the exchequer by buying off sections of the state apparatus.

The court decision, far from deterring any further opposition to the war and the reactionary two-party system, will only stimulate the growing resistance—seen in the collapse of the Pay Board and the strike wave—to the Nixon regime and put an end to the Republican-Democrat political pendulum.

Farinas' courageous stand and his principled struggle can no more be smashed than Nixon's stooges in Indo-China can halt or defeat the victorious National Liberation Front offensive.

It is not Juan Farinas who is guilty, but the US capitalist class and its state machine, which is, trying to suppress, exploit and conquer the working class everywhere.

The International Committee of the Fourth International adds its protest to the thousands of US trade

unionists and students who have supported the campaign of Juan Farinas and fought this unprecedentedly vicious example of class justice.

The IC urges European and British trade unionists to support this campaign and demand that Farinas be released immediately.

Free Farinas: Political prisoner

THE International Committee of the Fourth International condemns the jailing of the Trotskyist militant Juan Farinas for his opposition to the war in Vietnam as an attack directed against the working class and the youth.

This attack is part of the Nixon Administration's campaign to destroy democratic rights and crush the trade unions.

Juan Farinas is jailed precisely at a time when the offensive of the N Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front brings US imperialism to the brink of defeat in SE Asia.

This jailing indicates the fear of US capitalism for the power of the working class and is aimed at preventing the development of revolutionary leadership.

The International Committee of the Fourth International calls on the international working class to campaign for the immediate release of Juan Farinas.



LIFT PRESS BAN

The International Committee of the Fourth International demands immediate suspension of the Bandaranaike government's ban on 'Kamkaru Puvath', paper of the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL), Ceylon section of the International Committee.

The banning of left-wing papers, the introduction of photo identity cards, continued censorship and imprisonment without trial of 14,000 rural youth following the JVP uprising constitutes a monstrous violation of the Ceylonese people's basic

democratic rights.

These actions, together with the brutal terror unleashed against the peasantry by the state's repressive forces, in alliance with world imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracies of Peking and Moscow, mark the initial steps towards a one-party police dictatorship in Ceylon.

By acquiescing to these measures the Stalinists and the renegade Trotskyists in the Sri Lanka Freedom Party-Lanka Sama Samaja Party (SLFP-LSSP) coalition are opening the door to a colossal betrayal of the working class and the smashing of the trade unions by an even more reactionary regime

than the present coalition—in the not too distant future.

Without the support of these reformist traitors, neither the bourgeois SLFP nor British imperialism can exploit the Ceylonese working class and peasantry.

Neither the ultra-left adventures, like the uprising of the JVP, nor the fake trade-union leftism of the revisionist forces, led by P. B. Tampoe of the LSSP (R), can defeat the coalition and restore working-class rights.

The International Committee of the Fourth International calls on all dissident workers and youth in the left-wing coalition parties to support the campaign of the RCL for democratic rights and to demand of their leaders that they break from the the SLFP immediately.

Release the political prisoners now!

Lift the ban on left-wing papers!
Halt the repression!

Fight to end coalition For basic democratic rights

THE COALITION government which came to power in Ceylon in May 1970 was a crisis government.

The devaluation of the Ceylon rupee, just after sterling devaluation expressed the insoluble crisis looming in world imperialism which threatened the very basis of Ceylon's colonial economic setup.

The insurgent movement of the radicalized students and the rural youth in April-May 1971 was the first sign of the out-

burst of mass struggles against the bourgeois coalition.

This counter-revolutionary coalition government could retain power only through the treacherous policy of its Stalinist and renegade Trotskyist partners who barred the working-class movement's independent development by joining hands with Mrs Bandaranaike's capitalist party.

But these parasitic bureaucracies cannot curtail the development of the class struggle, which is unfolding today as a direct result of the new stage of economic crisis since August 15, 1971.

The Emergency Powers imposed on the workers and peasants and the ban imple-

mented on the Trotskyist publications of the section of the International Committee are the government's conscious attacks on the working class which is on the verge of massive struggles.

We demand the lifting of all emergency powers and the granting of democratic rights of free assembly and free publication, immediately.

We demand that the Stalinist Communist Party and the Lanka Sama Samaja Party leaders break away from the coalition to fight for these basic democratic rights of the masses. It is only this way that a workers' and peasants' government can be fought for in Ceylon.

CRUCIAL STAGE FOR CYPRIOT WORKERS

Statement of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Hands off the democratic rights and the right for self determination of the Cypriot people!

World imperialism, and particularly American imperialism, with the Greek dictatorship as its executive instrument, is stamping on the right of the Cypriot people to self determination and is turning Cyprus into a NATO base policed by Greek and Turkish troops.

The imperialists intend to transform this Mediterranean island into a military base against the USSR, the Balkan countries and the Arab peoples.

This is why the colonels' junta in Athens has sent to Cyprus General Grivas, an old Nazi collaborator and hangman of the Greek working people. He is gathering all the island's reactionary forces for the military overthrow of President Makarios' government.

By abolishing the working masses' democratic rights and by extending the Papadopoulos dictatorship into Cyprus, the imperialists intend to impose application of the old 'Acheson plan' whose aim is the dismemberment of the island between the Greek and Turkish bourgeoisie, and the transformation of the island into a logistic base for US Sixth Fleet.

The International Committee is the only organization that has, from the beginning, revealed the plans for a coup d'etat by the Athens dictators: the only organization that had denounced—contrary to the Stalinists—Makarios' long and disastrous collaboration with the Greek junta, which resulted in control of the Cypriot National Guard by Greek officers.

The International Committee is the only organization that has fought and is fighting for a socialist solution to the Cypriot

problem, i.e. for a workers' and peasants' government in Cyprus. This is the only government capable of solving the problem of national minorities and of uniting Greek and Turkish working people against the Cypriot bourgeoisie and imperialism, and for the defence of democratic rights and for self determination.

The Cypriot people's struggle has now reached the most crucial turning point in its history as the attack of the Athens military junta reaches its climax.

Archbishop Makarios, defending the interests of the Cypriot clergy and the Cypriot bourgeoisie, opposes the junta and defends in his own way the independence of the island. But the only force that can prevent the prevalence of the military junta is the workers and peasants.

Makarios, however, cannot summon the masses to a struggle. He fears the masses more than the junta.

The IC warns the Cypriot working people to place no confidence whatsoever in Makarios. He is ready to become the Papandreou of Cyprus and to compromise with the junta.

Makarios has imported arms from Czechoslovakia in order to defend himself. But because he gave in to the ultimatum from Athens, he did not give arms to the people, but to the UN forces, imperialism's Trojan horse. He has taken no measures whatsoever for disbanding Grivas's armed gangs.

Now Makarios is ready to resign, giving in to the junta's demand stated only through the three Cypriot bishops.

Leading the struggle of the working masses in defence of their rights is the obligation of the Cypriot Communist Party (AKEL). But its Stalinist leaders stand behind Makarios and refuse to take the initiative and organize independently of the bourgeoisie.

The AKEL falsely reassures

the people till the last moment that Makarios will fight on the ramparts and that he is going to defeat the imperialist conspiracy.

This Stalinist policy, which does not take into account either the bourgeois nature of the Makarios government or the recent Greek experience, bears the most deadly threat for the Cypriot working masses. It is disarming them politically before the enemy. It is paving the way for dictatorship and dismemberment.

Under these conditions, the perspective of a victorious defence against the Athens junta and its imperialist patrons, can only be realized in the struggle for the building of an alternative revolutionary leadership in the working class—in the struggle for the building of the Cypriot section of the IC of the Fourth International.

This can be done only through a struggle against the rotten AKEL leadership, whose central slogan must be a call to its members to demand that their leadership break from Makarios and that they defend the democratic rights of the masses.

Hands off the democratic rights of the Cypriot people and their right for self determination!

Down with the Athens military junta. Disband the armed gangs in Cyprus.

No confidence whatsoever in Makarios and the other leaders of the bourgeoisie.

Arms to the people not to the United Nations!

Forward to a socialist government in Cyprus!

Unity of Greek and Turkish workers against imperialism and the Athens-Ankara conspiracy!

Clear out the British bases! Revoke the 1960 Geneva Agreement!

The kidnapping of Oberdan Sallustro

THE International Committee of the Fourth International condemns the abduction and execution of Dr Oberdan Sallustro in Argentina.

We reject the capitalist press allegation that these terrorists were acting in the name of Trotskyism. This allegation is designed to discredit Trotskyism in Britain and Europe and facilitate the witch-hunting and persecution by the capitalist state of the working class and the revolutionary party.

The programme and policy of Trotskyism is aimed at the complete material and spiritual liberation of the working class through the revolutionary struggle of the overwhelming majority of the class led by a Marxist party. The tradition, policy and method of Trotskyism is implacably opposed to the conspiratorial-terrorist method of ERP, which tries to substitute individual terror and the actions of disoriented middle-class youth for the mass action of the working class and the construction of revolutionary parties on Marxist theory.

The execution of Sallustro is doubly indefensible because, first, it is based on the fallacy that the ruling class will concede the demands of the kidnapers and, secondly, because it diverts the working class precisely at a time when the Lanusse regime is being shaken by massive strikes and demonstrations in all the major cities of Argentina.

Individual terror, far from raising the consciousness and self-confidence of the working class, can only lead to political passivity and a mystical belief in a liberator with a gun.

Marxists do not reject violence

and terror on principle like the pacifists. As the Vietnam war proves, all historical progress is determined by the violent resistance of the oppressed majority against the violent oppression of of a reactionary minority. But this is the antithesis of individual terror.

The Lanusse regime is based on the counter-revolutionary violence of the bankers, landlords and capitalists — admirals and generals against the working class. The arbitrary imprisonment and torture of political opponents of the regime is an indispensable condition for the continuance of the dictatorship — and the winning of the next 'general election' by Lanusse supporters.

The ICFI condemns this dastardly repression of democratic rights and demands the unconditional release of all political prisoners, but we do not condone the substitution of individual terror for a mass campaign in the working class internationally to secure the release of prisoners and the downfall of the dictatorship.

The ERP's bankrupt tactics are the logical and ultimate product of the petty-bourgeois revisionism of the Unified Secretariat led by Ernest Mandel. It is no accident that Mandel's followers reject the method of the proletarian revolution and resort to the method of bourgeois individualism. It is also instructive that Mandel's supporters deplore the kidnapping of a Renault executive in France by the Maoists but applaud a similar action in Argentina.

These revisionists long ago abandoned the working class and the construction of independent Trotskyist parties based on Marxist theory and have subordinated themselves to the bour-

geoisie and the labour bureaucracy.

That is why the co-thinkers of the ERP in Bolivia—led by Moscoso — have capitulated completely to the patriotic front of General Torres and their ex-supporters in the Ceylon coalition lead the repressive campaign against the rural youth with the direct support of imperialism and Stalinism.

As the crisis of imperialism intensifies, these revisionist groups express clearly the abject prostration and disorientation of the petty-bourgeoisie before monopoly capitalism. Thus their terrorism in the colonial and semi-colonial countries is complemented in the advanced countries by sectarian abstention in the political struggles of the working class.

In Britain the International Marxist Group refused to critically support the Labour Party in the General Election of 1970 and assisted the return of the Tories.

In France the Ligue Communiste advocates abstention in the referendum on British entry into the Common Market and facilitates the victory of Pompidou and the European monopolies.

The ICFI appeals to all those workers in Latin America as well as members of the Unified Secretariat who are critical of this adventure to reject the road of individual terror and join the ICFI in its struggle to build the revolutionary alternative to petty-bourgeois terrorism and bureaucratic reformism.

DOWN WITH THE LANUSSE DICTATORSHIP!

RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ARGENTINA!

April 14, 1972

Statement by the International Committee of the 4th International

THE PROCLAMATION of a ceasefire by the IRA Provisionals is the culminating point in the betrayal of the Ulster workers by the middle-class representatives of nationalism and republicanism in Ulster.

Despite the heroism and self-sacrifice of hundreds and thousands of Catholic workers, their struggle in defence of democratic rights and against imperialism has been consciously betrayed.

The International Committee warns all sections of the Irish working class to place absolutely no confidence in the secret and public negotiations being conducted between Whitelaw, representative of British imperialism, and the Republican and reformist leaderships in Ireland.

Ulster workers were among the very first to experience the regime of torture, imprisonment, destruction of democratic rights, and death by shooting, which the capitalist classes of Europe have in store for their subjects as the only solution to their international economic crisis.

In 1969 the build-up of 16,000 British troops began, under the Labour government of Harold Wilson. Foremost in the 1968-1969 demonstrations of Catholic youth and workers were the radicals, Liberals, Stalinists, revisionists and protesters of all kinds. Together with the Republicans they had channelled the pent-up feelings of hundreds of thousands of oppressed working men and women into the blind alley of the 'civil rights' movement.

The 'People's Democracy' group, built around students at Queen's University (Belfast), became the focus for members and sympathizers of the International Socialism (state capitalists) and New Left groups. From it emerged Bernadette Devlin.

It took only a few months for the British imperialists to act on

their understanding that not 'civil rights' but civil war was at stake. After the sending of troops came eventually internment without trial, torture, martial law, shooting on sight.

Now, nearly three years later, every one of these 'civil rights' enthusiasts is a supporter of direct rule.

They have acquiesced to the imposition of a Bonapartist administration which balances between the army and the nationalist opposition. This regime is completely reactionary and is not a whit different in its class aims from the regime of Brian Faulkner.

They go further. They are all involved in plans to help Whitelaw impose a 'permanent' settlement for the Tory government. Having called up the forces of the working class, thinking to turn the pressure on and off like a tap, in the manner of all radical protesters, they recoil in horror from the real strength of the working class.

It is this strength, in Britain as well as in Ireland, which has forced the Tories into an insoluble crisis.

Now these 'leaders' revert to the traditional role of the centrist. Themselves running in fear from the struggle, they blame their own cowardice on the working class.

They make heartfelt speeches about the desire of the masses for peace, right at the time when the first requirement is a lead which will enable the fighting strength of the masses to go through to victory!

In the South, workers in the trade unions are moving into a big struggle against the National Wage Agreement proposed by

the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, and are condemning the way in which the Irish Labour Party betrayed the fight against the Common Market. These are important steps for the political independence of the working class.

Far from retreating, the working class is pressing forward.

Bernadette Devlin, who once, for a few short weeks, made some very principled statements against British imperialist policy and called for the bringing down of the Tory government, has now added her voice to the pathetic middle-class wailing for 'peace' with Whitelaw. She was among those who asked the IRA for a seven-day ceasefire to facilitate talks with Whitelaw. She speaks along the line of the International Socialism revisionists.

Together with Miss Devlin goes the 'Official' IRA.

And the 'Provisional' leaders are making their own overtures to Whitelaw, this time through the intermediary of the well-behaved Social Democratic Labour Party of Fitt and Hume. These same gentlemen, no doubt preening and grooming themselves for office under Whitelaw, are acting the part of a future government by holding consultative talks with the executive of the ruling Fianna Fail party (the 'green' Tories) in the South.

The IC condemns in particular the thoroughly opportunist and craven role of the revisionists of the International Marxist Group and its theoretical inspirer, the Unified Secretariat in Paris.

It is not an accident that these revisionists have not issued a declaration on where they stand in relation to direct rule and the capitulation of the IRA to Whitelaw.

It is because for over three years they have actively collaborated and given theoretical cover to the reactionary and opportunist ideology of the Republican petty-bourgeoisie.

Their struggle against Marxist theory and the revolutionary party finds its most malignant and clearest expression in Ulster. Under the slogan of 'Solidarity with and Victory to the IRA' these opportunists paved the political road for confusing countless numbers of Irish Catholic youth and alienating those Protestant workers who were sceptical of Unionism and hostile to the Orange Order.

By bowing to the spontaneous struggle of the Catholic workers, by glorifying individual terror and consistently opposing every attempt to criticize the false theories and Utopian bourgeois policies of the nationalists, this group has branded itself as a conscious participant in this betrayal.

At the same time its members refused to link the struggle of the Irish workers to the anti-capitalist struggle in Britain. They refused at all times to call

for a campaign to force the Tories to resign and for its replacement with a Labour government pledged to fight for socialist policies.

This policy—or lack of it—led them consciously to play down the danger of direct rule. And when it arrived they ignored its sinister political implications for the Irish workers.

The abolition of Stormont was the touchstone of Tory policy in Ulster. Stormont was a political anachronism and a serious embarrassment to Westminster in its search for an agreement with the Catholic petty-bourgeoisie in the North.

The longer it remained the greater was the danger of the democratic struggle for votes and equality being transcended by demands affecting British and native capitalist property.

It was in British imperialism's interest to abolish Stormont and to alternately use and repress the Republicans. The following extract from the Irish 'Sunday Press' reveals with absolute clarity the cynical game of the imperialists and, by implication,

the bankruptcy of the Republicans and their revisionist supporters.

'Indeed since the involvement of the British army in Northern Ireland since 1969 there have been innumerable contacts between the establishment and the IRA. At first, these were frequent and most informal between army officers and Provo leaders—indeed it was a British army intelligence officer who inspired the original bombing campaign. This was in a conversation with perhaps the most successful IRA leader in the North, Mr Billy Kelly.

'Right up to February 1971, Provisional leaders and army officers were meeting on a regular basis and they discussed ways and means of curbing rioting and generally cooling the situation.

'Even the anti-terrorist campaigner, Brigadier Kitson, sought contact with the Provisionals, though, in fact, no such contact was arranged as far as is known at this stage. ('Sunday Press' June 25, 1972. Vincent Browne's article 'Heath's part in final move for ceasefire'.)

ONLY the Socialist Labour League and the International Committee opposed direct rule from a class standpoint. We based our analysis on the scientific and historically verified theory of Trotsky's Permanent Revolution whose central idea is that the petty bourgeoisie is nowhere capable of leading the democratic revolution to victory because a victorious democratic revolution can only be conceived in the form of the dictatorship of the working class.

Between the dictatorship of the working class and the dictatorship of the capitalists there can be no intermediate political power. The struggle for this dictatorship is the struggle for the Marxist party.

Ulster—and the consequences of direct rule—have once again shown that no other class and no other party can substitute itself for the proletariat and that any attempt to do so must result in defeat and the re-imposition of capitalist rule. Stormont has gone, but imperialism remains. Those who stand with the Republican policy must fall with it.

It was in no way accidental that in 1969 the revisionists of International Socialism and their democratic friends in Ireland, including the Stalinists under Miss Betty Sinclair, welcomed the British troops as protectors of the Catholic workers.

Events like Bloody Sunday made the revisionists shamefacedly wonder if they had made a 'mistake'. But now they have returned to what was undoubtedly their real position—reformists within the service of British imperialism.

That they stand together with the Republicans should come as no surprise. These nationalists long ago accepted the Stalinist demand that the British troops be returned . . . to their barracks!

Only the International Committee and its sections came out unequivocally against the intervention of British troops in Ireland from the very first minute. Against every other tendency we asserted that this was a basic question of principle: the forces of the capitalist state were there to enforce the protection of property and bourgeois order, and on no account could they act in the interests of the working class.

And when direct rule was imposed, and all the revisionists and opportunists were caught in the trap regarding the removal of Stormont as a progressive step, the International Committee, in its statement of March 25, came out in sharp condemnation, saying:

'Support for direct rule has an inexorable and sinister logic. If the Tory government decides to suppress the Protestant workers with the same means

that were used in Derry by the Paras, what will the Republicans, Nationalists, revisionists and Stalinists do then?'

And:

'What the imperialists could not preserve with baton, bullet, CS gas and noise machines they now hope to keep by a negotiated political solution, conducted under the mantle of "direct rule". Under the convenient subterfuge of replacing the hated Stormont regime, the Heath-Wilson gang are preparing an even more sinister attack against Irish workers' rights, through a coalition of Republican and Orange capitalists, backed by the armed forces of the South and Britain.

'Partition will stay, sectarian divisions will be exacerbated and the hated system of low wages, unemployment and speed-up will continue—if direct rule is effected.'

The Republicans, Stalinists and revisionists are working might and main to bring into full operation this Tory strategy. Since March, the Ulster Vanguard movement of William Craig, drilling tens of thousands of armed men, has been built

up under the noses of the authorities as a bludgeon to soften up the 'civil rights' opposition.

This is a gross betrayal of the workers of Ireland by men who have asked for their allegiance. The Protestant workers, victims of a 50-year confidence trick by the Tory Unionists, now feel themselves exposed to the full force of the effects of the economic crisis. The questions of security which they were always told (lyingly) could be solved by loyalty to Britain through Stormont now appear to them insoluble. They are angry and frustrated, and temporarily they lash out in the reactionary direction opened up for them by Craig.

The great crime of the Devlins, the official IRA, the Stalinists, the IMG, the IS group and others, is that instead of placing before the Catholic and Protestant workers the prospect of a united political struggle with the British workers to end the Tory government and implement socialist programmes through the election of a Labour government, they turn over at this critical stage to help the Tories out of their crisis.

The unbroken resistance of the British workers, and the definite possibility of forcing the Tory government in Britain to resign, is the greatest asset of the workers of Ireland, both Protestant and Catholic once again. 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity!'

It is absolutely typical of the anti-revolutionary politics of the IS and IMG self-styled friends of the Irish workers that they do not raise the bringing down of the British Tory government as the first task in solidarity with the working class of Ireland. Instead, they collaborate to the hilt with the Stalinists in their protest campaigns.

As our March 25 statement insisted: 'By separating the struggle against internment and democratic rights from the struggle against the Tory government, these reformists act as a political rearguard for imperialism.'

It is absolutely criminal for these reformists and Republicans to sell Whitelaw as the representative of a future democracy in Ireland. He is quite the opposite!

British Toryism's complaint about Stormont was not its lack of democracy but its inability to preserve capitalist law and order. Without the ending of Toryism through mass political struggle of the working class, then the future, in Britain as well as Ireland, is Bonapartist dictatorship.

That the 'democratic capitalism' should be peddled in Northern Ireland of all places, where this Bonapartism is already well on the way, speaks volumes for the extent of the degeneration of the revisionists.

The trade union leaders in Ireland, North and South, and the Social Democrats in the Republic, should not go unmentioned. Not a word comes out of the trade union leaders against the reactionary demagogy of the Vanguard spokesmen such as Hull.

These unions should be fighting with their English comrades against the National Industrial Relations Court, against unemployment and for the resignation of the Tories. A consistent campaign on these real problems affecting the life of every Protestant and Catholic worker would soon begin to change the situation.

Meanwhile, Corish of the Irish Labour Party (in the South) excels himself by approaching the reactionary Fine Gael party with proposals for a coalition to replace the Lynch government.

The Irish section of the International Committee has rightly called for a massive rejection of this proposal by all trade unionists in the Republic.

There are conclusions of international significance from the political record of revisionism in Ireland. Centrist politics which congenitally waver between revolutionary Marxism and outright opportunism, becomes an open support for the policies of imperialism in a period such as this.

The retreat of the Republicans and revisionists along the line is no cause for pessimism. Only by rejecting and going beyond these false leaderships and their supporters can the working class go forward. The conflict between the objective struggles and requirements of the working class, on the one hand, and the bankruptcy of nationalism and reformism on the other, provides the necessary conditions for de-

velopment of revolutionary consciousness.

There is absolutely no substitute for the building of Marxist parties of the Fourth International, waging a constant battle against every variety of revisionism and centrism, exposing at every turn their subordination to the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies, which only prepares them to directly serve the imperialist enemy.

In the British working-class movement, effective solidarity can be brought to the Irish workers by fighting for the mobilization of the trade unions and all those fighting Tory policies into Councils of Action, with the aim of making the Tories resign and returning a Labour government, and demanding this government withdraw all troops.

In Ireland, North and South, the revolutionary leadership will only be trained and built in a fight for a programme which unites the working class to strike mighty blows together with those being struck by the workers in Britain.

The fall of Heath will enormously facilitate the fall of all those who help him to maintain imperialism in Ireland, from Lynch and Cosgrave to Whitelaw, Faulkner and Craig. And this same struggle will defeat and foil the opportunist conspiracy of the Republicans, the Stalinists and the revisionists.

As nationalism more and more shows its true colours in collaboration with the imperialists, so the alternative leadership, built through a struggle for Marxism and against nationalism and idealism, can and must be built.

The International Committee of the Fourth International calls on all class-conscious militants in Ireland, North and South, to build on the invaluable lessons of the last four years' struggle, to continue the fight for Marxist principles against revisionism, to reject the bankrupt and treacherous reformist and nationalist leaderships, to heed one of the calls to suspend the struggle and give time to the enemy, and to build the revolutionary Marxist leadership in Ireland, the Irish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

June 25, 1972

WHAT MANDEL SAID TO 'DER SPIEGEL'

On March 6 this year the W German weekly magazine 'Der Spiegel' published an interview with Ernest Mandel, a leading figure in the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. Here we reproduce that interview, plus a comment by Cliff Slaughter of the Socialist Labour League Central Committee.

Spiegel. Mr Mandel, are you a revolutionary?

Mandel. Yes.
Spiegel. And yet as a revolutionary you wanted to become a professor, and consequently a lifetime functionary, in Germany?

Mandel. I didn't want anything. The Berlin students and assistants in economic sciences approached me and invited me. I accepted their offer. The W Berlin Senate's rejection of my professorship testifies to their renunciation of the principles of constitutional government.

Spiegel. You were rejected on the basis of the German regulations for officials because of your political activities. Can Marxist science be carried out only from the lecture podium? A Marxist professor would certainly not be just a faculty hack but would also use his teaching for political practice.

Mandel. Neither can a Marxist physician separate his profession from his political convictions. Nevertheless, in the operating theatre he does not practice the permanent revolution. It was not my intention to give lectures on the permanent revolution at the Berlin university. There is a certain difference between teaching and political activity . . .

Spiegel. For a physician, of course. There is no such thing as a Marxist, as opposed to a bourgeois, appendectomy. But you wanted to teach social politics, in which for a Marxist there is a unity of theory and practice.

Mandel. No, a Marxist realizes no political practice through teaching school. I am no Utopian. A socialist revolution cannot be made by college students. It was also not my intention to lecture on the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary party at the Free University.

Spiegel. Then wherein lies the revolutionary practice of a Marxist scholar?

Mandel. Simply in the merciless criticism of reality. Unlike bourgeois scholars, we have no need to defend or protect the existing society. For Marx and all real Marxists, the severe, objective, scientific analysis of society is a precondition for conscious revolutionary action. We do not deny facts just because they may not fit into our models.

For that reason I am also in favour of plurality of opinion at the university. Neither bourgeois nor revolutionary scholars should be excluded. Beyond that, I have my political convictions. I belong to a revolutionary organization, and along with my professional activities I want to extend my political action—the two are not identical.

Spiegel. Which organization?

Mandel. I work for the building of the Fourth International.

Spiegel. You are a member of the Secretariat, the highest body of this Trotskyist Fourth International. What are your activities?

Mandel. I write articles, take part in meetings, draft resolutions and submit them for votes. I hold open meetings and educational classes. The Fourth International is not a conspiratorial organization. I am not a weapons-dealer; I am not a bomb-carrier; nor am I a counterfeiter. Our activity is not secret.

Spiegel. Doesn't the Fourth International also work secretly?

Mandel. Only in countries where there is no democratic freedom

for the workers' movement.

Spiegel. In the Federal Republic . . .

Mandel. . . . our work is absolutely open, because this freedom for the workers' movement exists.

Spiegel. The Federal Ministry of the Interior, which declared you a dangerous subversive and barred your entry into German territory, charges that you have worked in conspiracies. For example, that you have been repeatedly active in Germany under fictitious names.

Mandel. This is complete nonsense. Until now I was allowed to enter legally. For several years I wrote some newspaper articles under the name Pierre Gousset, that's all.

Spiegel. Just a pen name?

Mandel. That's all.

Spiegel. That was not the only one. You also published under another name . . .

Mandel. Not any more.

Spiegel. Germain?

Mandel. Yes, yes. Also a pen name. But in any case, I never travelled under this name.

Spiegel. Did you intend to transfer the Secretariat of the Fourth International to Berlin after your appointment?

Mandel. No. That is a fabrication from start to finish. The Secretariat is composed of many people, not just me. I did not even intend to move to Germany myself.

Spiegel. When you wanted to give a speech to the business managers of the Duttweiler-Gesellschaft in Switzerland last year . . .

Mandel. . . . even former Chancellor Erhard was invited . . .

Spiegel. . . . you were not allowed into Switzerland on the grounds that in classes you gave earlier in Lausanne you had called for revolution.

Mandel. Nonsense. The official charge was that I had held a closed lecture that had not been previously announced. I replied that I did not realize that the

innumerable bankers, for example, report to the police before they come to Switzerland to hold their evening chats about important political questions. The themes of my lectures were purely historical.

Spiegel. Mr Mandel, in your books you claim that 'the bourgeois state must be overthrown through centralized political action . . . and replaced by a workers' state.' Is that still analysis, or is it practical direction?

Mandel. Naturally I don't confine myself solely to scientific analysis.

Spiegel. As a scholar, or are you now a political activist again?

Mandel. Those are two completely different things.

Spiegel. This schizophrenia . . .

Mandel. . . . this is not schizophrenia, but a question of method. You cannot equate the moon-landing with astrophysics, which created the scientific prerequisites for it. If you analyze the universe, it doesn't mean you have the conspiratorial intention of landing on the moon.

Spiegel. Back to the earth. What does Mandel the revolutionary do in order to bring down bourgeois society?

Mandel. An interesting question. Now we come to the neurotic attitude of defenders of the present society toward people like me. The socialist revolution will not be set in motion by conspiracy or agitation, but is possible only through the conscious participation of the masses of wage-earners, who in the Federal Republic are the absolute majority of the population.

Unless neo-capitalist society is crisis-free. In that case the activities of people like me, whether in education, propaganda, or daily political action, will be limited, and could not go beyond the framework of this society.

Spiegel. Then the revolutionary would be a Social Democrat?

Mandel. No, Social Democracy is the attempt to strengthen the existing society through reforms. We want to alter society fundamentally, even if in the far future. Thus, when objective revolutionary crises break out, like May 1968 in France, or fall 1969 in Italy, the revolutionary organization must create the preconditions for the workers to use this crisis to alter society.

Spiegel. And you want to lead the proletariat as a vanguard?

Mandel. We cannot set the workers in motion to change society or the state. We see ourselves as the yeast in a dough that must be there to start with . . .

Spiegel. . . . but you hope to stir it a little. As a member of the conscious vanguard, how do you prepare for the overturn?

Mandel. Given an existing mass

revolutionary movement, our task is only to lead it to success. Thus, in the factories, in the universities, we must broaden consciousness, so that the masses will be prepared for the decisive act.

Spiegel. And then what should the masses do?

Mandel. In the midst of a broad mass movement, hold general meetings and elect democratic collective bodies, like councils, to take state power.

Spiegel. Employing parliamentary democracy?

Mandel. Ah, you know I am a more consistent democrat than the advocates of the bourgeois-parliamentary state order. There is a contradiction in the bourgeois constitution between the guarantee of private property and the general rights and freedoms—freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of opinion, freedom of movement freedom to organize. So long as private property in the means of production exists, the majority of people can exercise these rights only in a limited way. Therefore, I am indeed for bringing down capitalist property . . .

Spiegel. Private property is not a constituent element of the Federal Republic. If anything, even full socialization is compatible with the basic law.

Mandel. Well in that case my political activity is not in contradiction with the basic law.

Spiegel. Doesn't the soviet republic for which you propagandize mean a restriction of political freedom?

Mandel. On the contrary. For the masses of people, only then would these rights become really meaningful.

Spiegel. Would you say that the soviet system is compatible with the liberal-democratic basic order, being even more free and democratic? In the soviet republic, for example, would the principle of division of powers still hold?

Mandel. Sure, that is in our programme.

Spiegel. Not at all. Your programme calls for the unity of the executive and the legislature.

Mandel. That has nothing to do with the principle of division of power. We think of it much more broadly.

Spiegel. It is not a question of breadth. Division of power means separation. Should judges be independent or—as in the model of the Paris Commune—be subject to recall on any occasion, if they make an unpopular decision, for example?

Mandel. Not on every occasion, but from time to time.

Spiegel. Over what intervals?

Mandel. Not every ten days, but also not every ten years. We would rather let that be determined by the practical work of the German soviet republic. We

have worked out a model for the division of powers in a soviet republic. We are, to give just one example, in favour of written, as opposed to arbitrary law.

Spiegel. Who isn't?

Mandel. We are for the independence of the unions, and naturally for the right to strike, even in a workers' state; and we are for full separation between party and state institutions.

Spiegel. Should the people's representation flow from general, equal, free, secret, and direct choice?

Mandel. On that we are agreed. The question is how this choice should be carried through, how this representation should be put together.

Spiegel. Indeed it is. Should only workers have voice?

Mandel. In the W European countries it would be senseless to exclude the bourgeoisie from elections.

Spiegel. In your soviet Utopia . . .

Mandel. . . . in the soviet model . . .

Spiegel. . . . is there room for democratic essentials like people's sovereignty, accountability of the regime, legality of the administration . . .

Mandel. . . . all granted.

Spiegel. Are you for a multi-party system?

Mandel. Absolutely.

Spiegel. Would non-socialist parties be permitted in your soviet republic?

Mandel. No party would be banned because of its views. But if we could prove in court proceedings that people had violated the law, that conspiracies had been organized, weapon-stores accumulated, and alliances made with foreign powers, then we would ban such a party.

Spiegel. That's just how Husak argues in Czechoslovakia.

Mandel. And also just how the constitutional court of the German Federal Republic argued when it banned the Communist Party.

Spiegel. You make it sound like the Trotskyists have become completely domesticated—they no longer want a conscious overturn, but a parliamentary majority.

Mandel. We have always held the view that under the existing socio-economic relations, parliamentary bodies cannot (or can only in exceptional cases) give expression to the interests of the wage-earning population. The possibilities of choice are small, the differences between the big parties that support this state have lessened so much that parliamentarism increasingly degenerates into an empty formal mechanism. Real democracy is direct decision-making by the masses, and thereby is nearly identical with what I mean by revolution.

Spiegel. Revolution is the applica-

tion of violence.

Mandel. What do you mean by violence?

Spiegel. Doors broken down, people beaten, barricades built, machine guns posted.

Mandel. For a long time now there has not been a revolutionary mass mobilization in a western country that did not begin peacefully. Violence has come from the other side, being used to suppress the movement. Against this we must protect ourselves.

Spiegel. As counter-violence you consider violence legitimate?

Mandel. If by violence you mean

the occupation of factories—good, then I say, right on, I'm for violence. Only I call it something else: the workers taking their own rightful property—that which they have built themselves. That is the affair of the workers themselves. We will not lead a revolution behind the workers' backs, and we will also not make them happy against their will. We are not conspirators. I am not a putschist. But my ideas are feared. I am not allowed to present them to Berlin students.

Spiegel. As a champion of a

soviet republic could you take the official oath of the liberal-democratic order?

Mandel. I would probably make an additional statement. Never in my life have I disavowed my convictions.

Spiegel. Either you take an oath or you cannot be a professor in Berlin. You cannot attach a letter containing reservations to the oath.

Mandel. Must I then read the basic law before I can be a professor?

Spiegel. Mr Mandel, we thank you for this interview.

COMMENT BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER

Ernest Mandel is one of the leading spokesman of an international tendency (Pabloism) which broke from the basic programme of the Fourth International in 1952-1953. This tendency now goes under the name of the 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' and is supported by the US Socialist Workers Party.

Mandel is always presented by his own supporters as an eminent expert on economic affairs, a 'well-known' exponent of Marxist theory, a man of impeccable academic qualifications.

He appears at innumerable international seminars and colloquia and his articles are published in journals of the 'new left' type which like to appear very open-minded by having an occasional 'Marxist' flavour to their general revisionist output.

Indeed, Mandel's political identity is nowadays entirely a matter of his impact as some sort of celebrity descending on various capital cities and university campuses. This is undoubtedly connected with his own theory that capitalism has been replaced by 'neo-capitalism', requiring a very different political 'style'.

Essentially, it is a matter of appealing to the middle-class intelligentsia and not to the working class.

As imperialism (not 'neo-capitalism'!) moves rapidly into its worst-ever economic and political crisis, it must desperately suck away these middle-class elements to some centrist political force to deal with that phase of the crisis when new masses are thrown into political struggle.

Such centrist forces cannot be sucked out of nothing as it were. Mandel is hatching out the kind of politics to fit the bill. Of course, imperialism uses the centrists in this way only as a short step on the road to the eventual fascist and dictatorial repression.

Mandel's latest moves show how far Pabloism has gone in this rightward process from revolution to bankrupt reformism. Pabloites everywhere are campaigning against a decision by the W Berlin Senate which bars Mandel from taking up a professorial chair in Economics at the Free University of W Berlin. He was invited to take up this post by the students and assistants there. Further, they are campaigning against the action of the W German authorities in refusing Mandel permission even to enter W Berlin when he recently tried to attend a 'teach-in' there.

Now, of course, the Socialist Labour League is for the defence of the rights of all persons to travel without restriction, and against all arbitrary actions by the authorities in excluding individuals from universities. But we attack these infringements of elementary democratic rights by mobilizing the working class, behind whom the support of other elements can be rallied.

Mandel and his friends approach the matter quite differently, and in a manner with reactionary implications.

For example, Mandel has, since his exclusion, given interviews to the German capitalist magazine 'Der Spiegel' (March 6) and even to the fascist 'National-Zeitung' (March 17).

The latter is particularly despicable. The issue of 'National-Zeitung' concerned has a front-page banner headline: 'Revolution in Germany? Interview with Professor Mandel, Leader of the IV International' and on the back a full-page, call to a 'March on Bonn' under the slogan 'Unity against Communism!' organized by the 'German People's Union'.

Quite apart from the fact that Mandel does not use this interview to expose those who interview him, nor does he give the slightest analysis of the policy of the W German government and its relation to the struggle of the working class in Germany, it is an abomination that the inter-

view should ever have been given. Its purpose is only to confirm the anti-communist hysteria of its few thousand readers in the 'Volkunion'.

We can see from Mandel's agreement to give this interview what is his conception of a struggle on democratic rights. For him, it is only a question of 'maximum publicity' and speaking to as many individual 'citizens' as possible, and not of making the issue one on which the organization and consciousness of the working class can be advanced in a revolutionary way.

Perhaps a 'public relations' expert would be a good idea for this 'celebrity'.

One of Mandel's answers in the interview, however, is extremely informative, and forms the background to the opinions expressed in the 'Der Spiegel' interview also:

National Zeitung: Herr Professor, you have been prevented from entering the W German Republic. How do you understand this action by the Minister of the Interior?

Mandel: I consider this action by the Minister of the Interior as an attack on the basic democratic rights and freedoms of European citizens, and as a blow against the preparations for the political integration of Europe.

Here we have Mandel apparently wanting to defend his democratic rights, but at the same time accepting the main strategy of the European monopoly capitalists—the 'political integration of Europe', i.e., the development of the Common Market, entry of Britain, etc.

The very development of the European monopolies, which constitutes the threat to the democratic rights of all workers, is appealed to by Mandel as something which will suffer if he continues to be attacked. We can only assume that the 'preparations for the political integration of Europe' would be enhanced if Mandel were to

become Professor of Economics in W Berlin!

No doubt this is at one with his remark in the 'Der Spiegel' interview: 'We want to alter society fundamentally, even if in the far future' (my emphasis, CS). In other words: no challenge to the present development of monopoly capitalism (Mandel's 'neo-capitalist society'), but simply a general demand for the democratic right to advocate some far-off socialist solution.

Here we have the true content of the Pabloite attack on Trotskyism. General lip-service is paid to the idea of a workers' revolution and socialist solutions, but there can be no question of the working class today having any revolutionary significance.

In this context Mandel tries to persuade his readers that really the Fourth International (i.e., his own spurious 'United Secretariat') is not revolutionary vanguard at all but simply a missionary society.

Spiegel: And you want to lead the proletariat as a vanguard?

Mandel: We cannot set the workers in motion to change society or the state. We see ourselves as the yeast in a dough that must be there to start with...

Spiegel: ... but you hope to stir it a little. As a member of the conscious vanguard, how do you prepare for the overturn?

Mandel: Given an existing mass revolutionary movement, our task is only to lead it to success. Thus, in the factories, in the universities, we must broaden consciousness, so that the masses will be prepared for the final act.

Pabloism's political essence has always been to reject the Trotskyist theory of the need to build independent revolutionary parties which can defeat the existing leadership of the workers and lead the masses to state power.

This relationship of struggle, the central notion of the crisis of revolutionary leadership as the key to mankind's crisis, is entirely missing from Mandel's interviews.

On the whole fundamental question of state power, Mandel unashamedly distorts the positions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We see it summed up in his sentence:

'Real democracy is direct decision-making by the masses, and thereby is nearly identical with what I mean by revolution.'

Mandel, seeking bourgeois-democratic support for his campaign to travel and work freely

in Germany, makes a complete continuity between bourgeois democracy and workers' power!

Marxism, however, insists first of all that the bourgeois state must be smashed, as an organ of capitalist oppression, and that parliamentary democracy is a deception and a fraud, an essential part of this oppressive state machine.

No wonder, having thrown out these basic Marxist concepts, Mandel can mouth the complaint—impossible for a Marxist—that his exclusion from Germany contravenes 'the rule of law! What law? Whose law?

So concerned is Mandel about his respectability in the eyes of the bourgeoisie and its law that he proposes to allow bourgeois parties complete political freedom under a proletarian dictatorship.

'In the W European countries [why only there] it would be senseless to exclude the bourgeoisie from elections.'

So Mandel has finally come round openly to the Stalinist 'parliamentary roads to socialism'.

The nature of the campaign of Mandel and the Pabloites on this question fits in with these political conceptions. Against the reactionary tendencies flowing from the interests of the monopolists, Marxists fight in the working-class movement on a programme of socialist expropriation of these monopolies. Only the boldest initiatives against capitalist property can stem the reactionary tide. In such a period, it is fatal to make the appeal to democracy in general.

The middle class who are fondly supposed to respond to such a 'democratic' programme (as in the Popular Fronts of before World War II) are in fact being shaken out of their democratic illusions by the same crisis which pushes the monopolies to the right. They will respond only to the strongest and most resolute lead from the working class... or to the fascists.

Instead of building support around such a workers' mobilization, the Pabloites are distorting the Marxist tactic of united front by talking about a united front of all those who will defend democracy.

Such an alliance of protesters is nothing to do with the Leninist united front, but is very similar to the Stalinist 'popular fronts' of the 1930s, behind which the murder of Trotskyists and the betrayal of the working class were prepared.

Let us return, finally, to one point we made earlier in passing. Mandel nowhere attacks Stalinism, and has only a historical rebuke for the Social-Democratic majority party in the German government.

Quite apart from anything else, the present division of Germany, and of Berlin, and the restoration of German capitalism after Hitler's fall, let alone the earlier victory of fascism, were the consequences of the Stalinist and Social-Democratic betrayal. Mandel wants to campaign on 'democracy' in Germany without conflicting with the Stalinists!

He will not find it so easy! Brandt, the Social-Democratic Chancellor of W Germany, has staked his whole future in the service of the bourgeoisie on his 'Ostpolitik', i.e., agreement with the USSR and E German Stalinism.

If Mandel's previously unhindered travels in W Germany have suddenly been stopped by the Social-Democrats, it is because even the mention of Trotskyism is too sensitive an issue for the Stalinists, and the Social-Democrats do not wish to offend them.

Behind this sensitivity is the fear of the resurgent working class of Germany and all Europe. Mandel's conduct of his campaign without any reference to this working class and its independent interests is a capitulation to the Stalinists and Social Democratic apparatuses.

Brezhnev went out of his way in March to make overtures to the European Common Market, i.e., to the monopolists of W Europe. Instead of exposing this treachery, Mandel falls in with it, bemoaning 'blows against the preparations for political integration of Europe'.

The fact that he himself is in a small way the victim of the measures flowing from these latest Stalinist manoeuvres produces in him only an even more craven and cringing subservience that he had already shown in his work for Pablo in 1952-1953 and in the Belgian General Strike of 1960-1961.

The principal requirement of the working class today is the building of a party which will win for the class its political independence. That means an implacable struggle against counter-revolutionary Stalinism and reformism. Mandel and the United Secretariat are moving rapidly in the opposite direction.

BOOKS - PAMPHLETS - PERIODICALS

GENERAL

Stalinism in Britain by Robert Black (paper)	1	12½
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Ten Days that shook the world (John Reed)		35
Revolution and counter-revolution in Spain (Felix Morrow) (Paper)		75
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