

EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS

PREPARED BY THE NATIONAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

The Struggle to Reunify the Fourth International (1954-63): Volume IV

“Deep Entryism” and Pablo’s Anti-Unity Offensive

(Documents, 1958-1960)

Plus documents from India and Japan

Topics Covered in "The Struggle to Reunify the Fourth International" (All Volumes)

Section I: The First Parity Commission and Peng Shu-tse's "Pabloism Reviewed"
Section II: International Committee Documents
Section III: A Convergence of Views on the Khrushchev Revelations and the Hungarian Revolution
Section IV: Growing Interest in Reunification
Section V: The First Round of Reunification Discussions (1957)
Section VI: Pablo Rejects the Proposed Basis of Reunification
Section VII: Healy Voices Support for the Reunification Effort
Section VIII: Healy Tries to Torpedo Reunification
Section IX: Discussions at an Impasse
Section X: Healy is Paralyzing the IC and Blocking Reunification: Letter from Peng Shu-tse to James P. Cannon (April 20, 1958)
Section XI: Criticisms of the Ceylonese Trotskyists
Section XII: "The Truth About the Algerian Revolution": An Open Letter to the *Militant*," by Sherry Mangan
Section XIII: Tim Wohlforth's Initial Views on Reunification
Section XIV: The SWP Presses for a New Unity Effort
Section XV: Pablo's Anti-unity Offensive (1959)
Section XVI: Defending the Socialist Labour League
Section XVII: An Indian Trotskyist Assesses the Differences

Section XVIII: Reunification in Japan
Section XIX: The Movement for Unity Builds Up
Section XX: A Decisive Convergence—The Cuban Revolution
Section XXI: The Fight With Healy Opens Up (1961)
Section XXII: Letters to the Party Center, by James P. Cannon
Section XXIII: Peng Shu-tse and the SLL Debate Unity
Section XXIV: Differing Views on World Events and International Tasks
Section XXV: Letters from Latin America, by Joseph Hansen
Section XXVI: "The Permanent Factionalist Can Never Be a Party Builder": Healy Seeks Allies in the SWP
Section XXVII: Steps Toward Reunification (1962)
Section XXVIII: Divisions in the International Secretariat: Pablo Goes Into Opposition
Section XXIX: A Debate in the SWP
Section XXX: The Parity Committee Begins Functioning
Section XXXI: A Debate Among Adherents to the International Committee
Section XXXII: A Split Among Healy's American Supporters
Section XXXIII: The Political Basis of Reunification
Section XXXIV: A Final Effort to Forestall Healy's Split
Section XXXV: Reunification of the Fourth International (1963)

Contents

<p>Topics Covered in "The Struggle to Reunify the Fourth International" (all volumes) 2</p> <p>Contents 3</p> <p>Introduction, by Tim Wohlforth 5</p> <p>Section XIV: The SWP Presses for a New Unity Effort 7</p> <p>Introductory Note, by Fred Feldman 7</p> <p>1. "Political Statement Adopted by the International Conference" of the International Committee held in Leeds, England in June 1958 8</p> <p>2. "Functions of the International Committee," resolution adopted by the Leeds Conference 10</p> <p>3. "Reorganization of the Fourth International," statement adopted by the Leeds conference 10</p> <p>4. "The continuation of the split cannot be justified programmatically": a letter from Tom Kerry to Farrell Dobbs (excerpt—August 18, 1958) 11</p> <p>5. "To begin with a discussion of 1953 now would be to commit a sectarian mistake": letter from Gerry Healy to Tom Kerry (September 10, 1958) 12</p> <p>6. "Let us forget about actual or apparent force relationships between our organizations:" letter from T. Venturi for the Italian section of the International Secretariat to the SWP National Committee (October 22, 1958) 13</p> <p>7. Report on the National Committee Plenum: letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (December 2, 1958) 14</p> <p>8. "Reports on the Paris Meeting": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (February 6, 1959) 15</p> <p>9. "There is too much opposition in both camps": letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (February 15, 1959) . . . 16</p> <p>10. "The policy seems to assume a split in the Pabloite organization can be triggered:" letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (February 27, 1959) 16</p> <p>11. "My own section fully supports the Toronto decisions. If the comrades think that we should proceed without the others then I am prepared to . . . recommend such procedure": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (March 2, 1958) 16</p> <p>12. "Of course there are no differences between us": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (excerpt—March 11, 1959) 17</p> <p>13. "We have no choice but to continue the discussion with the IC, striving patiently to achieve a common policy": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (March 11, 1959) 17</p> <p>14. "There has been a great change in his standpoint": letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (March 13, 1959) 18</p> <p>Section XV: Pablo's Anti-unity Offensive 19</p> <p>Introductory Note, by Fred Feldman 19</p> <p>1. The International Secretariat on the Marcy Split: letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (March 20, 1959) . 20</p> <p>2. "Split and Continued Crisis in the Socialist Workers Party" (reprinted from the Spring 1959 issue of <i>4th International</i>) 20</p> <p>3. Letter from the International Secretariat to the SWP National Committee (May 5, 1959) 21</p>	<p>4. "To the Organizations of the International Committee": Open Letter from the International Secretariat (April 1959) 21</p> <p>5. "A savage and unscrupulous war against the British Trotskyist organization": letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (May 11, 1959) 25</p> <p>6. Excerpt from the minutes of the May 18, 1959 meeting of the SWP Political Committee 26</p> <p>7. "All the talk about 'unity' is a manoeuvre and a smokescreen": letter from Gerry Healy to the Italian section of the International Secretariat 26</p> <p>8. "I am ready to call a halt": letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (May 26, 1959) 27</p> <p>9. "Some examples of loose thinking reminiscent of Pabloite generalities": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (August 21, 1959) 27</p> <p>10. "In Defence of Trotskyism," editorial from the July-August 1959 issue of <i>Labour Review</i> 29</p> <p>11. "A Recall to Order: an Open Letter from the International Secretariat of the Fourth International to the Membership and Leadership of the Socialist Labour League" (reprinted from the Autumn 1959 issue of <i>4th International</i>) 36</p> <p>Section XVI: Defending the Socialist Labour League 49</p> <p>Introductory Note 49</p> <p>1. "This is revolutionary 'entrism' as Trotsky taught it": letter from James P. Cannon to Joseph Hansen (May 19, 1959) 50</p> <p>2. "Do not yield to the impatience of some comrades who may want to give up the Labour Party": letter from James P. Cannon to Gerry Healy (June 12, 1959) 50</p> <p>3. "What the Fight in the British Labor Party is About," by Joseph Hansen (reprinted from the June 29, 1959, issue of the <i>Militant</i>). 51</p> <p>4. "We must make sure that we do not facilitate this Pabloite game by abandoning our own policy of unification": letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (July 24, 1959) 53</p> <p>5. Letter from Michel Pablo to the editors of the <i>Militant</i> (reprinted from the February 1, 1960, issue of the <i>Militant</i>) 54</p> <p>6. Reply to Michel Pablo by Joseph Hansen (reprinted from the February 1, 1960, issue of the <i>Militant</i>) 55</p> <p>7. "You have succeeded in hooking him so completely on the witch-hunt question": letter from Gerry Healy to Tom Kerry (March 31, 1960) 56</p> <p>8. "I don't want to polemicize": letter from Michel Pablo to Joseph Hansen (February 29, 1960) 57</p> <p>9. "At issue is your failure to support the British Trotskyist organization against the witch-hunt": letter from Joseph Hansen to Michel Pablo (March 25, 1960) 57</p> <p>10. "The Witch-Hunt in Britain": editorial in the April 4, 1960 issue of the <i>Militant</i> 58</p> <p>11. "The Left Wing should not play [Gaitskell's] game by walking out": letter from James P. Cannon to Gerry Healy (July 13, 1960) 58</p> <p>Section XVII: An Indian Trotskyist Assesses the Differences 60</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Introductory Note	60	2. "Our sympathies are still with the SLL": letter from S.B. Kolpe to Joseph Hansen (excerpt—April 21, 1960)	79
1. "Organizational factors left no choice": letter from R.N. Arya to Ernest Germain (excerpt—January 2, 1960)	61	3. "A blot on the record of the Trotskyist movement": letter from Joseph Hansen to S.B. Kolpe (excerpt—June 2, 1960)	81
2. "A Political Estimate of the Split in the FI," by R.N. Arya (January 25, 1960)	61	4. "About the unity of the family": letter from Ernest Germain to Trent Hutter (excerpt—October 24, 1960) ...	83
3. "Democratic Centralism on the International Scale," by R.N. Arya (February 1, 1960)	64	5. "LSSP Policy in Ceylon," editorial in the October 5, 1960, issue of the <i>Militant</i>	84
4. "The Struggle for the Leadership of the Proletariat," by R.N. Arya (March 3, 1960)	68	6. "On Ceylon," declaration of the "Sixth World Congress" of the International Secretariat (reprinted from the Winter 1960-61 issue of <i>4th International</i>)	85
Section XVIII: Reunification in Japan	74	7. "Trial of Trotskyists in Holland," editorial in the October 26, 1960, issue of the <i>Militant</i>	85
Introductory Note	74	8. "Sincere, comradely thanks": letter from Pierre Frank for the International Secretariat to the SWP (December 6, 1960)	86
1. "Bring into the IS Congress the theory and policies of the IC": letter from Kyoji Nishi to Tom Kerry (received December 19, 1960)	75	9. "The IS warmly salutes the electoral campaign of the SWP": letter from Pierre Frank for the International Secretariat to the SWP (December 12, 1960)	86
2. "Statement on the Unification of the JRCL and JCFI" (received in New York December 19, 1960)	75	10. "Contradictions arising from the class-struggle lag": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (excerpt—December 12, 1960)	86
3. "We suggest they consult comrades Burns and Peng": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Kyoji Nishi (December 27, 1960)	77	11. "This is all part of the new unity offensive": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (December 22, 1960)	87
Section XIX: The Movement for Unity Builds Up	78	12. "An informal consultation among IC supporters": letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (December 29, 1960)	88
Introductory Note	78		
1. "Merger of Socialists in India," editorial in the February 29, 1960 issue of the <i>Militant</i>	79		

Introduction

by Tim Wohlforth

This is one of a series of volumes devoted to documentary material related to the reunification of the Fourth International, spanning the period from 1954 up to the successful conclusion of the reunification effort in 1963. These volumes constitute *Part 7 of Towards a History of the Fourth International*, prepared by the National Education Department of the Socialist Workers Party.

Previous volumes in this series have included articles on the postwar history of the Trotskyist movement and a documentary history of the 1953 crisis and split in the Fourth International.

This new series deals with the aftermath of that split, the period of the independent existence of the two factions that took shape in the struggle (the International Committee and the International Secretariat), and the various efforts to mend the rift.

Included is material on the first parity commission of 1954; political documents produced by components of the International Committee; the response of both world factions to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, to the Polish and Hungarian upheavals in that year, and other events; the effort to reunify the international in 1957 and the causes of the breakdown of that effort; and the successful drive towards reunification beginning in 1961.

The Struggle to Reunify the Fourth International includes correspondence, documents, circulars, and many other items—much of it previously unpublished. Material for this collection was made available by Karolyn and Tom Kerry, Tim Wohlforth, the Library of Social History in New York City, the archives of the Socialist Workers Party, and the late James P. Cannon.

Thanks are due to David Keil, among others, for translating several items published in this series.

The materials were selected and the introductory note preceding each section was written by Fred Feldman. Views expressed in the introductory notes are his own.

For the sake of historical accuracy the material has been subjected to minimal editing. Where comrades used pen-names in their international activity, the real name is inserted in brackets. For instance Gerry Healy used the names Burns and Preston, Dobbs used the name Smith, and Sherry Mangan used the name Patrick O'Daniel.

The term "section" appears frequently in these documents. This word was used in two different senses within the world Trotskyist movement. On the one hand, it refers

to those groups which are affiliated to the Fourth International. Secondly, it is used in reference to organizations that are barred from membership in the Fourth International by reactionary legislation, such as the SWP, but are in full political solidarity with the world Trotskyist movement and represent the continuity of Trotskyism in their countries.

This collection includes relatively little material from the French section of the International Committee (now the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste) or from Latin America. This was due to the limited amount of such material now available in the United States. It is hoped that the publication of this documentary collection will encourage others who participated in these events to help fill in these and other gaps remaining in the historical record of the Fourth International for this period.

Gerry Healy has issued a multi-volumed documentary collection, *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism* (London: New Park, 1974) which purports to cover the period from 1951 to the 1970s. The bulk of the items in that collection dealing with the years 1954-63 will also be found in this series.

However, there is much in this series that is not to be found in Healy's collection. It is hoped that this series will help in establishing the honest historical record of this period.

Gerry Healy's *Problems of the Fourth International*, to be found in Volume Four of *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*, as well as Cliff Slaughter's introductory material to the various volumes, present a grossly distorted and tendentious account of this period. The need to uphold these distortions may help to explain why so much relevant material is left out of Healy's collection.

The introductory notes to a number of sections in this series refer to some of Healy's falsifications, pointing out how they are refuted by the actual documentary record of what took place, including letters written by Healy.

The factionally-motivated falsifications exposed in these pages were part of a process of degeneration that eventually led to Healy's current campaign to frame up Joseph Hansen, George Novack, James P. Cannon, and other SWP leaders on charges of complicity with or covering up for the Stalinist secret police.

Above all, however, this series demonstrates how principled revolutionaries approached the extremely difficult but vitally necessary task of reuniting the world Trotskyist forces. It will also help to deepen our understanding of how important this reunification was for the future development of the Fourth International.

SECTION XIV: THE SWP PRESSES FOR A NEW UNITY EFFORT

The conference of the International Committee held in Leeds, England in June 1958 produced some tension among IC supporters. In a September 17, 1957, circular, Healy attempted to dub this gathering a "Fourth World Congress" but was dissuaded from this step.

The documents approved by the gathering failed to provide any guidance for the sections on the key political questions of the day. They focused on the IC's well-established positions on now-outdated conflicts with the IS (self-reform of the Stalinist bureaucracy, inevitability of World War III).

SWP leaders in the United States were disturbed by the vague concept of "reorganizing" the Fourth International that was put forward, instead of a clear endorsement of the previous IC position favoring reunification based on parity in the leadership. Tom Kerry made his objection known in an August 18, 1958, letter to Farrell Dobbs, who had attended the conference as an observer in the course of a six-month visit to Europe. Kerry feared that reunification was being shunted aside in favor of a new strategy without adequate consultation, and proposed that Farrell Dobbs return to the United States for discussions. After Dobbs returned, it quickly became evident that there were no important differences within the SWP leadership on the problems of the world movement.

In reply to the objections stated in Kerry's letter, however, Gerry Healy denied that he had dropped the demand for reunification on the basis of parity in the reunified leadership. While stressing his support for reunification efforts, he claimed that Pablo had blocked this road, requiring the adoption of new tactics. He suggested a meeting in Toronto in November 1958 to discuss this further.

This meeting with the SWP delegation appeared to resolve the differences. Both Healy and the SWP leaders agreed on a more aggressive and positive approach to reunification, including collaboration on common projects with the IS and its sections, and a further effort to press the parity proposals.

The value of such an approach was indicated by the attitude of the Italian section of the IS, which sought direct contact with the SWP and the British. Its representatives noted the closeness of views on current issues, and the difficulties caused by the unjustified continuation of the split. Unlike Pablo and Germain, it rejected any effort to debate which faction had "corrected" its "errors," and unlike Pablo they rejected any tendency's claim to dominate a reunified international on the grounds of "relationship of forces." The Italian Trotskyists expressed willingness to reorganize the leadership of a united international. Their posture made it clear that unity sentiment was continuing to grow in the IS.

After the Toronto meeting, Healy met in Paris with representatives of the PCI (Majority). To the surprise of the SWP leaders, they suddenly issued a "unity" proposal that contradicted the approach agreed to in Toronto. They proposed the calling of a conference by the IC which would

then be built on a parity basis by the IC and any IS sections that were willing, in effect, to break their ties with the IS.

When Dobbs and Cannon noted that this would undercut reunification, Healy hurriedly wrote to reassure them.

While he was pessimistic about the prospects of winning unity through the SWP proposals, he wrote that "my own section fully supports the Toronto proposals. . . . we will go ahead with yourselves and the Canadians if you think that is necessary."

Despite Healy's expressed willingness to run the risk of a conflict with Lambert in order to support the SWP unity proposal, the SWP leadership were convinced that there was too much confusion and opposition on the question to justify such a course. Replying to Healy, Dobbs stressed the need for further discussion to get political clarity and unity in the IC on the issue of reunification.

It appeared at this time that the IC was divided between the SWP which favored reunification, the PCI (Majority) led by Lambert which opposed it, and the British who seemed to be wavering between the two poles.

At this point, Pablo launched an attack on the British Section (now the Socialist Labour League) and the International Committee that was transparently aimed at torpedoing reunification once and for all.

Following his break with the Fourth International in 1963, Healy embarked on a massive effort to rewrite the history of the Trotskyist movement. This was codified in the pamphlet, "Problems of the Fourth International" which appears in Volume Four of the Healyite collection, *Trotskyism Versus Revisionism*.

In this article, Healy commented on the Toronto conference. He asserted that the purpose of the conference was to enable Healy to aid the SWP in resolving an internal crisis. The SWP was being riven by factionalism, according to Healy, and "the one thing that did emerge from all this squabbling was the undoubted right-wing revisionist orientation of all the factions." By 1958, therefore, Healy claims to have regarded the SWP as entirely "right-wing revisionist" in composition. This, Healy tells us, was "undoubted." If Healy is correctly describing his own views of 1958, his actual performance at the Toronto conference and afterwards appears truly astonishing.

Healy continued his version of events:

"It was agreed also that a comrade should travel to Canada late in November 1958 to see if it were possible to assist the leading members of the SWP to overcome this crisis.

"Dobbs returned to the USA and things more or less stayed as they were until the visit of a member of the International Committee.

"At this meeting Cannon proposed to the English comrade who was the delegate that they, the British, should join the Americans and break from the French comrades who led the fight, on the grounds that they were 'sectarian.'

"We told them that this was not our conception of how an international movement should be educated and built.

"Just as we refused to line up with Dobbs against Cannon, so we now refused to line up with Cannon against the French section.

"We had made up our minds not to be the pawns in the SWP pragmatic game with the international movement as the board.

"The time had almost certainly come for the Socialist Labour League to split openly from the SWP. Since the split with Pablo in 1953 we had utilized every available means to fight his revisionism. Now that it was clear that the SWP had capitulated to Pabloite revisionism, our task was clear—we had to organize the split from Cannon, Dobbs and Co. who had betrayed Trotsky and the Fourth International."

The falsifications in this version begin with Healy's assertion that the Toronto meeting was convened to enable Healy to solve an internal "crisis" in the SWP. Healy's letter of September 10, 1958, leaves no room for doubt that the purpose of the Toronto meeting was to discuss tactics in the effort to reunify the international. Even Healy's falsified version of the events at the conference ("Cannon proposed. . .") indicates that the subject matter was the world movement rather than the internal life of the SWP.

At this meeting, the SWP proposed to Healy a more aggressive approach to unity. Healy clearly confirms in his letter of March 2, 1959, that he agreed to these proposals. No document or letter available to us indicates that anyone even *suggested* a "break from the French comrades."

After the conference, however, Healy offered to proceed with the Toronto agreements without the French comrades in his March 2, 1959, letter. Farrell Dobbs, however, declined this offer on the grounds that further effort was needed to unite the IC forces before proceeding with unity discussions.

In November 1958, Healy informs us, "The time had almost certainly come to split openly from the SWP." Perhaps the use of the word "openly" is intended to imply that Healy had already split *secretly*. This would flow logically from Healy's statement that he regarded all currents in the SWP as "undoubted right-wing revisionist" in orientation even prior to the Toronto gathering.

However it was not until *January 1961*—more than two years later—that Healy first informed the SWP of some of his views, indicating the existence of important differences. According to his own version of history, Healy had concealed grave differences with the SWP—differences sufficient to place a split "*on the agenda*" (italics in "Problems of the Fourth International") as early as 1954—for six years.

Healy's "Problems of the Fourth International" is an expression of Healy's drive—reminiscent, with all proportions guarded, of Stalin's frame-up methods—to prove that his current political opponents have always been "revisionists" and "agents of the enemy." From that point of view, his current slander campaign against Hansen, Novack, and others as "agents" and "accomplices" of the GPU and FBI qualify as the most extreme expressions of a long-established pattern. —Fred Feldman

1. "Political Statement Adopted by the International Conference" of the International Committee held in Leeds, England in June 1958

1. This Conference of orthodox Trotskyists, meeting on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Fourth International, reaffirms the basic ideas of the Transitional Programme; that the historical crisis of mankind is now reduced to the crisis of working class leadership. Our central strategic line remains as it was in 1938; to overcome the contradictions between the objective conditions which are ripe for the social revolution, and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard.

2. The rising revolutionary wave towards the end of the war broke out of the grip of the Kremlin bureaucracy in China and Yugoslavia. In its defensive measures against imperialism, the Soviet bureaucracy was forced to overturn the capitalist property relations in Eastern Europe by bureaucratic-military means. The colonial revolution developed with increasing intensity. But this did not resolve the decisive questions of the world revolution.

The world revolution cannot take a decisive leap forward until it breaks through in the metropolitan countries. The treachery of Stalinism and Social Democracy preserved European capitalism and, in consequence, American capitalism—immediately after the war.

3. In 1938, we forecast revolutionary explosions in the metropolitan countries, and an impulse afforded by these

developments, to the political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy. We predicted that the crisis caused by the imperialist war would enable the Fourth International to win the leadership of the revolutionary masses.

4. Events followed a different path. The revolutionary upsurge generated by World War II was halted in Europe by the betrayals committed by the working class leaderships. U.S. imperialism was able to launch its preparations for the counterrevolutionary Third World War. Today the threat of nuclear destruction hangs over the working class as a warning of the urgent need to resolve the crisis of leadership.

5. But while the revolutionary tide has not risen fast enough to enable us to build our cadre as rapidly as we forecast in 1938, the orientation of the Founding Conference has been confirmed in its main essentials. The necessities of class struggle cannot but come into conflict with the bureaucratic apparatus which stands between the proletariat and the social revolution. The expression of this historic necessity will be the creation of a revolutionary leadership of the toiling masses—the Fourth International, organizing the workers and the colonial peoples to smash through that apparatus in their struggle against imperialism.

6. Capitalism faces growing problems of economic recession, added to the strain of its militarization and its inability to crush the colonial revolution. In its desperate efforts to preserve the property relations by which it exists, the ruling class of every country is undertaking an

offensive against the living standards and organizations of the working class and the masses generally. In every country, however, the ruling class is confronted by a working class whose will to struggle is far from having been broken. The resistance and the inevitable counteroffensive of the workers in the metropolitan countries will spur the colonial revolution forward to new heights. It will also open up a new stage in the world revolution in which the struggles in the advanced capitalist countries will play a central role.

7. From the United States of America, the citadel of capitalism to the older capitalist countries, imperialist attempts to crush the working class can bring nothing other than tremendous class battles. The decline of French capitalism has brought about the crumbling of the institutions of the bourgeois-democratic state, and the betrayals of the Stalinist and social-democratic leaderships have opened the road to De Gaulle. But even in France the proletariat has not been crushed in struggle, and has within itself a great potential for resistance and revolutionary advance.

8. In the new and sweeping revolutionary movements the working class will collide sharply with the bureaucratic apparatus in a manner not seen in the postwar years. We can foresee the acuteness of the crisis of bureaucratic leaderships, not only because of the objective conditions but also because there already exist sections of the Fourth International, which have succeeded in establishing links with the mass movements in their countries.

9. The struggle to resolve the crisis of leadership is immeasurably aided by the deepening crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy since 1953. Events have revealed the gulf between the workers and the bureaucracy in the Soviet sphere. The new upsurge of the Soviet masses and its reverberations in the bureaucratic apparatus create great possibilities for our intervention to remove the Communist parties as obstacles to the world revolution, and to win their best cadres to build parties of the Fourth International. The crisis in the Soviet bureaucracy contributes also to mobilizing the forces which are developing in opposition to the reformist bureaucracies in the capitalist countries.

10. We reject all conceptions that mass pressure can resolve the question of leadership by forcing reform of the bureaucratic apparatus. Involved in that conception is the false idea that this apparatus is a brake but not a barrier, and that the role of the revolutionary movement is simply to hasten what is an inevitable process in any case. With these conceptions, the struggle for clarity, programme, and leadership is undermined.

11. In order to preserve its rule, the bureaucracy has been forced to make concessions to the masses. These concessions the bureaucracy advances in order to defend itself in face of the rising tide of discontent. Such concessions as have been made, however, in no way lessen its monopoly of political power. Further, Hungary showed that the bureaucracy, in severe danger, will be capable of the most brutal crushing of the working class. Within the development of the political revolution coinciding with the rise of the masses in the capitalist world, the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy can very well unite at a given moment against the revolutionary movements that threaten their rule.

12. We can distinguish two stages in the development towards the revolutionary overthrow of the bureaucracy,

that have taken place in the last five years. First, the stage which started out at the beginning of 1953 (Vorkuta, Eastern Germany) and continued in Poland and Hungary. The smashing of the Hungarian revolution and the control of the revolution in Poland by Gomulka marked the second stage, a temporary check to the advance of the masses. The bureaucracy has been able to carry out the counteroffensive measures, developed at the same time as the counteroffensive of the bourgeoisie against the masses in the capitalist countries. But concessions and repressions alike in the long run feed the fires of mass revolts. The crisis of Stalinism can lead to nothing other than the abolition of bureaucratic rule. However, the march of political revolution will not be an uninterrupted one leading in a direct line to final victory. The interplay of the contending forces can go through a series of stages until a revolutionary party arises during the struggle to lead the masses in smashing the bureaucratic regime.

13. The social revolution in the capitalist world and the political revolution in the Soviet sphere do not develop as a separate process. Each affects and nourishes the other. The crisis of Stalinism aids the building of parties of socialist revolution in the west. Revolutionary events in the west and the building of revolutionary parties there, will develop and stimulate the possibilities for political revolutions in the Soviet sphere, and for the building of the revolutionary leadership which is indispensable to the political revolution. We reaffirm the words of the Transitional Programme: "there is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses to insurrection—the Party of the Fourth International."

14. The continued existence of capitalism results in a grave threat of counterrevolutionary war, with its consequent atomic slaughter. We repudiate, however, the idea that a Third World War is inevitable. Revolutionary events have already slowed down the imperialist war-drivers, and given precious time to revolutionaries in the metropolitan countries. The choice before the working class remains that of social revolution or war. All efforts must be directed to the building of a proletarian leadership capable of organizing and leading the working class along the road of social revolution and preventing nuclear catastrophe.

15. The task of the revolutionary movement in the struggle against capitalism and imperialism is to defeat the bureaucratized traditional parties on the class struggle arena and to replace class collaboration with class-struggle methods and policies.

16. The revolutionary movement seeks to unite, in action which raises the independence of the masses, all those tendencies which are breaking with the bureaucracies or are in struggle with capitalism. It proceeds with tactical flexibility on a principled basis. Its regroupment of forces which are moving in a revolutionary direction is coupled with an ideological offensive against Stalinism, social democracy, centrism, trade union bureaucracy and the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaderships of national movements in colonial and semi-colonial countries.

17. In the colonial and semicolonial countries, our central task is to build revolutionary proletarian parties. Armed with the theory of the permanent revolution, these will participate in united anti-imperialist fronts with the aim of establishing proletarian leadership of the masses. We reject all conceptions of subordinating the programme of the social revolution to the limited aims of the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie.

18. The construction of revolutionary vanguard parties as part of the Fourth International is the only key to a unified and successful strategy for the colonial revolution,

the revolution in the metropolitan countries and the political revolution. **ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY**
5th June, 1958

2. *"Functions of the International Committee," resolution adopted by the IC Conference held in Leeds, England in June 1958*

The International Committee shall function as an ideological centre of the Trotskyist forces in order to further their political integration and to prepare in this way the reorganization of the Fourth International.

For this purpose, the Conference gives the following tasks to the International Committee:

1. To report the deliberations and decisions of the Conference to all IC sections, to discuss them as necessary with the sections unable to have representatives present, and, where possible, to secure nomination from these sections of representatives to the International Committee.

2. To publish an internal bulletin to print the views of the different sections. The bulletin to be published on a monthly basis if possible. Undertake, so far as may be practicable, to translate discussion material into the various languages.

3. To organize, implement and expedite a democratic political discussion, starting among the IC cadres; to arrange distributions for the guidance of the IC sections, the Conference views on Pabloism and the world capitalist crisis, and, at a later stage, extend to the Pabloite members the opportunity of participating in the construction of orthodox Trotskyist parties throughout the world.

4. Basing itself on the resolutions and general lines of

this Conference, to elaborate within three months, a document on the international situation and on the strategy and tactics for the Trotskyist forces which flow from this situation, and to submit the document to the sections.

5. To adopt positions on important political events, and to submit these positions to the sections requesting their approval, amendments or rejection within the shortest possible time.

6. To prepare for the middle of 1959 another world conference and to submit to this conference concrete steps for the formal reorganization of the Fourth International.

7. Until this conference, to represent the Trotskyist forces in all general questions concerning the world movement, e.g., relations with the Pabloites, help with the creation of new sections, etc.

8. The International Committee does not have the right to intervene in the life of the sections. In any discussion on the national policies of the sections it shall act in loyal collaboration with the established national leaderships.

9. The International Committee shall be composed of one representative from each participating section. In carrying out its tasks, the Committee shall organize its functions as required by practical circumstances. To facilitate its political work, and to help in preparing the next World Conference, the Committee shall enlist the support and practical collaboration of the leaderships of the various sections.

3. *"Reorganization of the Fourth International," statement adopted by the International Committee conference held in Leeds, England in June 1958*

1. The death of Trotsky produced severe problems of ideological leadership within the Fourth International. In the following years the world cadres began to make important progress toward a solution of these problems. Then a new crisis of world leadership was precipitated by the revisionist-liquidationist policies of the Pabloite tendency, which caused the world split of 1952-53.

2. The test of events since 1953 has confirmed the basic positions of the orthodox Trotskyists, who rallied around the International Committee to defend the basic principles of the Fourth International and to maintain its existence as the world party of socialist revolution.

3. Realistic prospects are now open to reorganize the world party along principled lines, and to begin steps towards a solution of the crisis of leadership. If the effort is to succeed, the real situation within the movement must be frankly faced and the cadres must be guaranteed fully democratic means whereby they may arrive at a principled solution.

4. The Conference rejects all centrist conceptions of international organization. A world party worthy of the name cannot be constructed along the lines of a loose

federation of autonomous national parties. It must base its structure and its methods of functioning on the Leninist concepts of democratic centralism. The question is how to arrive at this solution?

5. The conference rejects the vulgarized concepts of a centralized world party advanced in the theory and practice of Pabloites. Rigid centralism at the expense of internal democracy leads to dictatorial bureaucratic practices. Excessive intervention in the life of the national parties stultifies the growth of major decisions and leads to serious political mistakes by the leadership.

6. In applying the concepts of democratic centralism, the leadership must act in conformity with the present stage of development of the Fourth International. The leadership's role must be primarily to give ideological guidance to the movement rather than to be excessively preoccupied with organizational interventions. Before launching any new political orientation, or initiating any major political action, the leadership must consult the cadres.

7. Functions of the international centre can be realistically enlarged only as the growth and experience of the movement permits the rise of representative executive bodies with earned authority. These international bodies must arise from among the leading elements in the national parties. They must be composed of leaders tested

in struggle, known and trusted by the membership. The selection must take place in normal, natural and voluntary fashion.

8. As a concrete step to advance the efforts in this general direction, the Conference directs the International

Committee to organize, implement, and expedite a democratic political discussion within the world movement and, after the necessary period of discussion, to initiate proposals for another world conference to reorganize the Fourth International.

4. *"The continuation of the split cannot be justified programmatically": letter from Tom Kerry to Farrell Dobbs (excerpt—August 18, 1958)*

Dear Farrell,

Morris and I are drafting this preliminary letter in response to your urgent request for comment on developments in the world movement since your departure and more specifically for comment on the documents of the IC in the recent period.

The delay in submitting such comment before this has been occasioned by the fact of our uncertainty as to what was happening. An almost imperceptible shift appeared to be taking place in the axis of our approach to the problems of the world movement from what we had agreed upon before your departure. We were not sure whether this was due to some misunderstanding or to a lack of knowledge on our part of facts which were not available to us at the time of our pre-departure discussions.

Assuming that you would return some time in August, we thought it would be preferable to await your return for a full discussion to clarify whatever misunderstanding may have arisen and to resolve what appeared to be a change in our orientation and perspective. Your recent note stating that you may remain abroad until the latter part of October impels us to submit this preliminary letter recapitulating our views on the problems under consideration and voicing our thoughts on post-departure developments based on the information at our disposal.

First to recapitulate: When we first received the announcement that the IC was calling a congress for June 1958 we interposed the objection that such a project would be too pretentious and not representative of the tasks and perspectives required by the orthodox Trotskyist tendency at this stage of its development. As against the concept of a congress which presumably would adopt programmatic documents and launch a programmatic discussion we counterposed the much more modest and realistic aim of a tendency conference of a limited character. We viewed the task of the conference to be that of dealing primarily with the two-fold problem immediately confronting all tendency sections namely:

1. The world crisis of Stalinism and the struggle for regroupment.

2. To arrive, if possible, at a uniform approach to the problem of unification of the international, based on the parity proposal of the SWP.

On the first, we felt it imperative that a discussion take place on the concrete approach by each section to the crisis of Stalinism and regroupment based upon a report of activities in this sphere in their own localities, and the character of their intervention in this crucial aspect of world politics.

On the second, we hoped to convince the British and French that the parity proposal for unification constituted the only effective political approach to the problem of

unifying the world movement in order to make more effective our intervention in the crisis of the world Stalinist movement.

Proceeding from the above considerations, it must be said that the character of the documents issuing from the IC conference and its aftermath, gave rise to certain apprehensions here.

1. Instead of grappling with the above listed tasks the documents of the IC seemed to be concerned with long-ago settled generalities in which the specific tasks are dissolved if not entirely negated.

2. What we deduce from the character of the documents is that they involve a projection of the discussion around the 1953 issues which have been long superseded by events upon which there has been essential political agreement with the one important exception of the nature of the international organization and its function at this stage of development of the world Trotskyist movement.

We thought we had arrived at general agreement that a discussion today involving the issues of 1953—with the exception, of course, of the "organization question"—would not only be futile, but would be calculated to exacerbate the existing division in the world movement and make a reunification virtually impossible. In the light of the struggle for regroupment it appeared to us that such a discussion could only complicate and vitiate the regroupment work, especially in those areas where our tendency directly confronts the organized Pabloite groupings. This conclusion we based on the following considerations:

1. The continuing necessity of explaining the split and justifying the continuation of the division in the light of the obvious manifestations of political agreement on the major political events of recent years as expressed in the press and public declarations of both tendencies. (Parenthetically, we have been receiving mail from various parts of the world requesting such explanation and justification. Because of the confusion that exists on this question it is our practice to forward such mail to the IC without essaying a direct answer which would involve presenting the SWP's approach to the question. What the IC does with these communications we do not know as we have not received a single carbon copy of any reply made to such requests.)

2. It is precisely because the continuation of the split cannot be reasonably explained or justified programmatically that we advanced our parity proposal for unity.

3. On the one hand, the documents of the IC tend to focus attention on and sharpen the issues of the 1953 dispute and on the other they speak not of unification but of "reorganization," which would seem to indicate that the proposal for reunification has been shelved. Instead of Pablo's rejection of parity being made the axis of the unity discussion the SWP approach has apparently been replaced by the line of the French—or so it seems to us—who really do not favor any genuine approach to unity.

It seems to us that the perspective you outline in your

recent letter of remaining on the continent until October to attend the IC meeting in September and dig up the facts of what precisely the extent of the support the IC has is predicated on the concept of a "reorganization" which would presumably be consummated at a 1959 Congress. If we understand the perspective of extending your stay it is to engage in the field work necessary to uncover whatever viable elements may exist to participate in this projected reorganization.

It has been our view that our main contribution to the task of reconstituting the international is not organizational but political, namely:

1. We have sought to give a correct political answer to the proposal for unifying the Trotskyist forces on a world scale. In this respect we feel that what is most essential is to place the main emphasis on the parity proposal and not on our political differences of 1953, or present differences on the Algerian question, a trap which the British fell into with the publication of the Sinclair [Hunter] document.

2. Concomitant with a correct approach to unity is the imperative necessity of the application of a correct line toward the crisis of Stalinism as it manifests itself in each country. It is only to the extent that each group applies a Trotskyist line in the regroupment struggle that they will prevail in the struggle for unification and that our tendency will prevail within the world movement in the event of unification.

It is primarily in this light that we conceive of a leading role for the SWP in the international movement, namely, by demonstrating in action the correct approach to regroupment and therefore setting an example for others to follow. We question whether any real progress can be made in the accomplishment of this task by writing more programmatic documents. (Actually the comprehensive

SWP documents already submitted have not been properly discussed in the world movement even though they have undoubtedly influenced the thinking of the movement.)

We are not in a position to accept responsibility for the day-to-day work of the world movement. We feel that a much more modest approach on our part will create less illusions and yield greater results. We don't, at this moment at least, think it is possible for us to guarantee to have someone in Europe on a continuing basis. . . .

Nearly six months have elapsed since your departure. There are undoubtedly many things in your experience since you left the country of which we are completely unaware. At the same time, many things have occurred here which cannot be adequately discussed through the medium of written correspondence. So far as solving the basic problems of the world movement are concerned, it is difficult for us to see how this can be accomplished by extending your stay through October. Most important at this stage of developments would be personal consideration and full discussion of all the problems that have arisen.

From the contents of this letter you can perceive that there are obvious misunderstandings and perhaps even some differences on the important question of the tasks and perspectives. What Jim's thoughts are we do not know as we have not heard from him on the matters discussed in this communication.

For all these reasons we have been looking forward to your return, which we thought would be this month, as we fear that a postponement under the circumstances could only contribute to a deepening of the misunderstandings and possible differences that may exist.

Fraternally,
T.

5. "To begin with a discussion of 1953 now would be to commit a sectarian mistake": letter from Gerry Healy to Tom Kerry (September 10, 1958)

Dear Tom,

The decision to request Comrade Smith [Dobbs] to return on the eve of our IC meeting has provided cause for considerable surprise amongst leading members of the orthodox Trotskyist movement in Europe.

Moreover your letter of August 18th reveals a number of misunderstandings about the policy of the IC, and we feel it imperative to reply at once so that these may be removed or at least the ground cleared so that a discussion on any political differences which may exist between us can proceed.

To suggest that the IC is or was opposed to the parity proposals of Comrade Cannon is just not true. Just over twelve months ago we approved these proposals and sent them to Pablo on the eve of his congress. From that day to this we have no indication as to what happened to these proposals. All we know is that they were not even mentioned at the congress and we received no reply.

What more can we do about the parity proposals? You are of the opinion that they should have been reaffirmed at the Leeds Conference—but if they were turned down by Pablo in 1957, what reasons do you suggest have caused him to change his mind now? It seems to us that the only

thing that would have happened had we proposed a parity world leadership after the Leeds Conference is that the stalemate would have continued. We cannot see how simple reaffirmation of the parity proposals would provide any more concrete steps towards possible reunification.

We are not looking for a formula to avoid unity. If unity can be achieved in a manner which can strengthen our movement, we are all for it. But there must be agreement between the parties on parity if we are to proceed. Whether we like it or not, when Pablo turned our proposals down then that was that. Of course we can and do draw the attention of other cothinkers to these facts—but when all is said and done, this amounts to little more than good propaganda on our part.

That was the position which faced the Leeds Conference. We are really astonished to read in your letter the suggestion that we intend pressing for a discussion on the issues which gave rise to the 1953 split. This is just not true. We are all well aware that 1953 is not 1958. Since the Khrushchev speech we have made many important regroupment experiences. *Labour Review*, the magazine of the British Section, supplies an example of this. To begin with a discussion of 1953 now would be to commit a sectarian mistake, which we have no intention of doing. At the same time it is difficult to see how one can forget about what happened in 1953. Was it all a misunderstanding or were there serious political differences between ourselves

and Pablo? You go so far as to suggest that these have been removed, but we think that you are misinformed on this point and have not sufficiently studied the Pablo documents since that time.

No matter how much we may wish to avoid an abstract discussion over 1953, it is impossible to imagine how a discussion on contemporary issues would not give rise, sooner or later, to references to 1953. Had Pablo accepted the parity proposals, then every effort would have been made to proceed towards working out a world perspective based upon our estimation of the international situation today. Whether or not Pablo would agree to parity, there would remain the necessity for a political discussion of the party-building problem of today.

The Leeds conference has decided to consolidate the forces of orthodox Trotskyism by preparing a serious discussion on the problems of our movement. What is wrong with this approach? Would this not be a necessary and fundamental part of any principled process of reunification? It was further decided to circulate the documents from this discussion amongst the Pabloite group. How else can we break the deadlock? What do you propose now that Pablo has turned down the parity proposals? The International Committee will seize upon every opportunity to obtain a principled unification and we feel that the decisions of the Leeds conference should have your wholehearted support. We feel also that the

6. "Let us forget about actual or apparent force relationships between our organizations": letter from T. Venturi, for the Political Bureau of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari, Italian Section of the Fourth International, to the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party (October 22, 1958)

[salutations missing]

During the visit of Comrade Dobbs we discussed with him the situation of the international Trotskyist movement. As far as we are concerned, despite the quite reasonable reluctance of Comrade Dobbs to furnish final replies to our questions, we are satisfied with the exchange of ideas we had. We got further confirmed our opinion we drew by reading your weekly newspaper.

This opinion can be summarized into a single sentence: in the present situation there are no political divergencies such as to justify the division of our forces. According to us, *this seems to be the fundamental point.*

If we think over the painful experience we had in 1953, we may recollect that either side was having serious preoccupations. We however believe that the developments which followed have been such as to clear off all these preoccupations.

In fact we think you had two fundamental preoccupations in 1953: (1) that the IS might give an interpretation of the phenomenon of destalinization such as to imply our giving up the basic positions on the nature of the bureaucracy. (2) that the IS were on the same lines of certain revisionist tendencies which were growing up in certain sections of the International.

The critical analysis which was made afterwards by the

problem of reunification must be recognized as a political problem involving clarification of contemporary perspectives and methods.

To assist the closest collaboration and discussion between us, which is a real tower of strength in the world movement today, we are sending Comrade Preston [Healy] to Canada during the week following November 16th and we ask you to prepare to send a delegation to discuss all these problems with him.

Warmest wishes
/s/ Preston
IC Secretary

P.S. to J.P. Cannon

Dear Jim,

For five years now we seem to be groping along with international work. The letter from Tom which I comment on here is a case in point.

We are all very anxious to come to a thorough understanding with the SWP before proceeding further. This it seems to me is absolutely vital for all future work.

I appeal to you to send the strongest possible delegation to meet me in Canada.

We are all delighted with your progress.

Warmest wishes,
Gerry

IS on the development of the process of destalinization, their attitude on the occasion of such events as those of the Hungarian revolution, the explicit statements of the 4th and 5th Congress should have cleared off all these doubts; no change whatsoever in our conception of the nature of the bureaucracy, no illusion on a likely "self-reformation" of the bureaucracy, while the necessity of an antibureaucratic political revolution was underlined further. On the other hand, the 4th Congress had already evidenced the irremediable breaking off with liquidating tendencies like Cochran's, Lawrence's, and Mestre's.

At our end, we could have had the following preoccupations: (1) that you could have taken a sectarian Stalinophobic political line which might practically lead you to give up Trotskyist conception on the nature of the USSR and hence prevent you from understanding all the developments which were going to happen in the Stalinist world. (2) that you might be going to change the tactics which lead us to decide to do entrism into the large Stalinist and Social Democratic mass movements.

After five years we are quite glad to see—both from your ensuing analyses and statements and from our conversations with Comrade Dobbs—that neither of the above preoccupations has a reason to exist any longer.

Let us leave aside the question whether the split could have been helped or not. What is now important is that it is possible to bring it to an end. This is possible and necessary.

We do not think there is any need to illustrate to you all the positive aspects of a reunification: On our part there is no question of sentimental exigencies but of the understanding we think we have of a clear political exigency.

Our international movement still has very weak forces, from an organizational point of view: The partition of

these forces further reduces our possibilities of action. On the other hand, such polemics as those which have been made in several occasions—in both public and semipublic form—in France and Great Britain, have a remarkable incidence on the prestige of the Trotskyist movement in general. We do not speak abstract words.

In Great Britain, Stalinism has undergone a very serious crisis. Both the groups that accept Trotskyist ideology have gained but still to a very limited extent. We are convinced that should a sole Trotskyist organization exist—which means that those militants who left the Communist Party would not see two Trotskyist organizations fighting each other—the attraction power of Trotskyism would no doubt be comparatively higher.

In France the Trotskyist movement had a great tradition and for many years it was the far strongest section in all Europe. The split and the public polemic—between two parties who have the same name and both claim to be the official section of the 4th International!—have stricken a serious blow to the prestige of our movement in general. They have thus prevented it from playing the role which it would have played in the general crisis of the traditional workers' movement, which was concluded with the coming to power of De Gaulle. These are quite heavy lessons to be thought about.

We are convinced that in spite of its present standstill, the crisis of Stalinism will continue sooner or later. Stalinist political organizations will be shaken by other deeper convulsions. We are also convinced that the large Social Democratic parties will not always be able to escape a final showdown with the working class. Do you think that a split Trotskyist movement could avail itself of all the chances when the declining process will appear? We believe it couldn't. We are convinced that one of the conditions for our success is that of presenting ourselves before the international working class as a single organization.

On the other hand, we are also convinced that the process of renewing the international workers movement will involve agreements, alliances, and even unifications with forces not quite homogeneous. In fact it would be absurd to require such deeply corrupted organizations, such as the traditional movements, to release true revolutionary Marxists, Bolsheviks, Trotskyists. How shall we be able to furnish evidence of our ductility in the

working class movement in general, if in our organization itself we are used to behave like sectarians, through letting a partition live without any fundamental political justification?

We therefore believe that the reunification should be included in our agenda very soon.

Certain divergences of course still exist. There are some important points to be discussed. We must discuss them. But we should not go on just as all the world were contained into our organization. We should not continue to engage ourselves in skirmishes for years. The world continues to turn despite our partitions and discussions. The only result of our delays, procrastinations, and endless polemics is that of reducing our possibilities to have a substantial incidence on the actual situation.

Let us put up the problems. Let us make concrete proposals. For instance, you may begin saying what you think about the documents of the last world congress, apart from the formal question of recognizing that congress. Say what is your conception of an international leadership. As to us, we bind ourselves to act in order that your proposals may be given quick consideration.

Let us forget about actual or apparent force relationships between our organizations. We think Comrade Dobbs should have an idea of the situation of our movement in Europe and that you may now have a realistic picture of the situation. We also believe we have a clear picture of the situation. But listen comrades, it is necessary that we should not forget about quite more fundamental force relationships, that is to say those between our movement and the traditional working class movements. How can we forget that in a number of countries we are still a handful of militants who fight in most difficult conditions? It has no sense that we should be satisfied at the fact that brother-enemy Trotskyist group has a few scores or even hundreds of militants less than ours.

Our organization did not feel any particular consequence from the 1953 split. Luckily, in Italy there is no such situation as that existing in Great Britain and France. Not even now we are having difficulties in this respect. For these reasons our appeal for reunification should appear to you worthy of consideration.

We once again wish to repeat: The reunification is possible. We must do it and soon!

7. Report on the National Committee Plenum: letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (December 2, 1958)

Dear Gerry,

We have just concluded a plenum of our National Committee and, since you are preparing a similar gathering, I want to rush you a report of our deliberations about the world movement. On the basis of the Toronto discussions we submitted the following propositions for plenum decision:

Assessment of the political basis for reunification does not involve any question of political confidence in Pablo and Co. Our concern is with the favorable political evolution within the cadres presently associated with the IS.

The International Committee will be urged to press for

reunification on the basis of the parity proposals.

Reunification will involve reorganization of the leadership. Both sides must agree on the executive officers. Pablo may be a representative of his followers within the parity framework but the IC will not accept him as secretary. There can be no return to Pablo's organizational set-up with "concessions" from him. We call for the scrapping of the 1948 statutes and redefinition of the leadership functions in conformity with objective reality.

Reunification must be approached as a process requiring time to achieve full development. We will not rush hastily toward a congress nor move toward further elaboration of an IC organizational structure. The parity proposals will be kept to the fore as the key approach to reunification.

The IC will be urged to advocate collaboration between the various groups, beginning on a minimum basis; e.g.,

common defensive action against reaction in France.

Stress will be put on the need to reverse the split trends in the movement and to bring about the reconsolidation of all assimilable elements in a correctly-oriented world movement.

As you requested we will cooperate in preparing an IC draft on current international perspectives. At a later stage, when current political questions have been clarified and a better discussion atmosphere established, a review of the 1952-53 experiences will be in order.

We will endeavor to help you through correspondence in

your present work and after a period of political preparation we will again undertake to send a representative to give direct assistance. As you know our serious financial problem will be a conditioning factor in the latter case.

The above policy proposals were unanimously approved by the plenum. Not a single NC member expressed any hesitation or reservation. There was not the slightest trace of any conciliation toward Pabloism.

Warmest greetings,
Farrell

Copy to: Cannon

8. "Report on the Paris meeting": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (February 6, 1959)

Dear Farrell,

Please excuse the delay in my report on the Paris meeting. At the moment we are having to cope with the building work on the print shop. The start of our National Campaign, and in addition the libel suit of Mosley, which has been hanging fire for some time, has now been served upon us.

We had almost a two day discussion on my report on the Toronto meeting at the IC. I covered the ground fully and the discussion centered around ways and means to end the deadlock between ourselves and those elements in Pablo's ranks who wanted a genuine reunification. We had in mind the position in Italy and Germany in addition to the very urgent situation in France. We also had a report from Japan where there are two groups operating, one supporting us and the other Pablo. This report stressed that the Pablo group were anxious to link up with us and that any attempt towards solving the problem on a world scale would have the wholehearted support of the Japanese. We discussed the position in India, where as you know, the fused group hangs fire so far as its international affiliation goes.

We had in front of us the latest letter from Pablo on unity, together with his most "informative" information bulletins, and it was agreed that Pablo and Co. were anxious to provoke a situation which would maintain the present division. It was the committee's opinion that Pablo was manoeuvring because there were people in his ranks who were desirous of a genuine unity.

The general opinion of the comrades was that if we present the parity proposals on world leadership, Pablo will be able to continue with the present stalemate. It was felt that a new approach was necessary and the following is a resolution which sums up the opinions on how it should be done.

1) The International Committee will issue a call to Trotskyists all over the world to regroup themselves in one international organisation.

2) The International Committee organises a conference—it proposes to Trotskyists all over the world to prepare, in common, that conference.

3) The International Committee puts forward the proposition of an Organisation Committee for the preparation of such a conference. Each group, each section could send delegates to that Organisation Committee.

4) Naturally such a Committee would be based on parity with the sections supporting the IS for it is not in the plans of the sections members of the International Committee to impose their views.

5) That the Organisation Committee could meet in June, in Europe, and start proceedings for the preparation of a world conference in [blank]

6) Between the publication of its call and the meeting of the Organisation Committee, the International Committee will issue a discussion bulletin, open to all those who accept the constitution of an Organisation Committee.

7) By this way, the rebuilding of an International united movement of the Fourth International can begin, starting from the sections. It will be based on the Transitional Programme, rejecting all the brands of revisionism which pretend that the Social Democrat or Stalinist apparatus can be reformed and used to forward proletarian revolution.

8) Such a conference would define a political line for the movement and would discuss new statutes for its reorganisation.

The Committee would like to have your opinions before February 28th if possible.

There is a genuine desire to resolve the world problem on the part of all the comrades, and it is felt that a Congress of delegates from the sections could help do this, rather than intercommittee relations with Pablo who is seeking to maintain the division. If there is agreement with yourselves then this resolution would become the basis for an international call to be made by the IC. The resolution is quite specific on the question of new statutes and in suggesting parity for the Congress organisation committee. It desires to set up a precedent for the new leadership. Flowing from this of course would come the request that the new secretary must be resolved by agreement. We do not raise these issues at this time because we wish to avoid giving any handles of objection.

Our appeal, as I said, will go to all sections and groups, and representation on the organisation committee *must* come from them, and not from the committee as such. The visit of the Italians here will give us an opportunity to sound them out. My opinion is that we should be able to break through with such proposals, but the comrades are submitting them for your consideration so that our next move will, as far as possible, bring results.

I will be sending you a report on France in a few days.

Yours fraternally,

9. "There is too much opposition in both camps," letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (copy to Healy—February 15, 1959)

Dear Farrell,

I received your letter of February 23rd with the quotation from Renard's letter. I am very dissatisfied with the resolution adopted by the International Committee, that Jerry sent to us, and I assume that the comrades in the center feel the same way.

It looks as though the "agreement" which Renard refers to was an agreement to accept the French line rather than the line of the Toronto conference. They are not the same thing—not by a long shot. The formulas of the IC resolution calling the pro-unity sections of the Pabloite "International" to jump over the head of their international affiliation and collaborate with the IC in the organization of a world congress, would not impress them as a unity proposal. They would take it, rather, as a maneuver to promote a new split, just like Pablo's "unity" maneu-

vers. If they should accept the invitation—which they wouldn't—it would cut them off from any chance to work for unity within the Pabloite set-up and eventually to get a majority and force a unification.

I don't think we will make any headway by such compromise "agreements" of the organizations affiliated to the IC. Sometimes it is better to agree to disagree, until some people learn from life what they refuse to learn from argument and logic.

I am not optimistic about an early reunification of the world movement—there is too much opposition in *both* camps. But I would like to see the forces of the IC adopt a *policy* that would strengthen the *trend* toward unification by giving the genuine pro-unity organizations in the Pablo camp a formula they can accept and use to advantage. The latest resolution of the IC couldn't serve this purpose. At least that's the way I read it.

Fraternally,
James P. Cannon

JPC: jh

10. "The policy seems to assume a split in the Pabloite organization can be triggered": letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (February 27, 1959)

Dear Jim,

Jerry's report of the Paris IC meeting indicates a shift from the policy worked out at Toronto. In the latter talks we agreed to press for reunification on the basis of the parity proposals. Clarification was added concerning reorganization of the leadership to remove any misunderstanding on that score. Collaboration between the various groups—starting on a minimum basis—was proposed, along with development of political discussion looking toward reversal of the split trends. Reunification was to be approached as a process requiring time. There would be no hastily-prepared congress and no moves toward extension of the IC organizational structure.

The Paris meeting advocates building a united movement starting from the sections and rejects any intercommittee relations with Pablo. Proposals are advanced to bypass the Pabloite IS and apply parity through creation of an organizing committee of the sections to prepare a world conference. A June meeting of the organizing committee is contemplated. An IC discussion bulletin open to all who accept the above approach would be issued. The proposed world conference would define the political line of the movement and discuss new statutes.

This policy seems to substitute short cuts toward formal reorganization of the movement for the approach set forth in the Toronto talks. The perspective of an early congress

would supersede the proposal of collaboration between the groups, starting on a minimum basis and opening a process of clarification whereby everybody could get the real score on Pabloism.

Basically this seems to imply extension of the IC organizational structure with the assumption some IS groups would come in on it. For that to happen the IS groups would have to be ready to act as individual units apart from the top Pabloite setup. Also the participating IS groups would have to be ready to reject Pabloite proposals of formal IS-IC consultation. In short the policy seems to assume a split in the Pabloite organization can be triggered through the call for an organizing committee of the sections.

This assumption does not seem justified. Too much remains to be clarified about the general situation within the divided world movement. The ground is not prepared politically to induce IS groups to break through Pablo's obstructionist tactics and move decisively toward reunification in opposition to him.

On the positive side, an advance seems to have been made at the Paris meeting in that all present appeared to recognize the need to reach the IS groups genuinely desiring reunification. It is the tactical proposals toward that end that are in question. The next step would seem to be discussion of the policy advanced by the Paris meeting, seeking to bring IC perspective back toward the policy agreed upon at Toronto.

What is your thinking on the subject?

Comradely, /s/ Farrell

11. "My own section fully supports the Toronto decisions. If the comrades think that we should proceed without the others then I am prepared to . . . recommend such procedure": letter from Gerry Healy to James P. Cannon (March 2, 1958)

Dear Jim,

I have just received a copy of your letter to Farrell dated Feb. 25th. The fact is that even if we present the Toronto agreement to the Pabloites, they won't respond and the present state of affairs will continue. From a long term

point of view, it would enable us to wage a campaign, but to achieve concrete results we still somehow or other have to break through to those in his ranks.

The IC suggestions are the opinions of the comrades in Europe. My own section fully supports the Toronto decisions. If yourself and the comrades think that we should proceed without the others, then I am prepared to put it to the NC which meets on March 20th-21st, and recommend such procedure. Let me have your views and we shall give them immediate consideration.

Of course you are perfectly right about the IC suggestions going "over the heads" of Pablo, but the answer to that is that Pablo does not want unity and that somehow

or other you have got to go over "his head." For instance we are inviting the Italians here during May, and they have accepted. This is an attempt to get round Pablo.

I cannot make any more progress in Europe. We will go ahead with yourselves and the Canadians if you think that is necessary.

We are still being witch-hunted out of the Labour Party, and for the last few weeks it has been one constant fight after another. Brian Behan is at the moment in jail serving his sentence arising from the Shell Mex strike.

Warmest Wishes,
/s/ Jerry

copy to New York

12. "Of course there are no differences between us": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (excerpt—March 11, 1959)

Personal

Dear Farrell,

Many thanks for your letter and the understanding sentiments which it expressed. Of course there are no differences between us and I would like Jim to be assured of this. It is a question of taking into consideration the opinions of the European comrades.

I still think it is a little untimely to force the Toronto decisions on them without taking their views into account and replying to them point by point. Jim's letter is internal in this respect. You built up a solid reputation for patience and understanding here, which I do not wish to mortgage. You know very well that I can be as firm as the next one, and should your comrades feel we have to put the Toronto

decisions in a final take it or leave it form, we will go with you—but have a good think over the whole position first.

This is specially needed now, in view of the way in which Pablo has evolved on the stalinist 21st Congress. He hails this Congress as "heartening." I expect you have read this in his information bulletin. Whether we put the Toronto proposals or the I.C. proposals, his answer will be no to unity on these terms. We are faced with the task of rescue operations for some people, but the conditions are complicated and get more so all the time. Pablo is reverting back to 1953 and drawing his logical conclusions. We have the Italian delegation here in May and we will get as complete a picture as possible.

There is in any case, absolutely no need for any misunderstandings between us on this matter, since we are perfectly clear on the political questions involved. . . .

Warmest wishes to you and Marvel,
Jerry

13 "We have no choice but to continue the discussion within the IC, striving patiently to achieve a common policy": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (March 11, 1959)

Dear Gerry:

The enclosed letter to Jim crossed in the mail with his letter of February 25. These preliminary exchanges will give you an idea of our general impressions of the Paris proposals. We now need further discussion between us to reach a common understanding on the next steps to be taken within the IC.

As occurred after the Leeds conference, misunderstandings and differences of evaluation have arisen concerning the Toronto policy. In the former case some comrades thought reference to "reorganization" of the movement in the Leeds documents meant rejection of reunification. Actually the term was intended to express the need for reorganization of the leadership in a reunification. Apprehension had arisen within the IC that a parity leadership arrangement might allow Pablo to maneuver himself into continued control of the organizational apparatus. Assessment of the political criteria for reunification therefore tended to center on Pablo's positions and it became

necessary to further clarify the leadership question.

The Toronto meeting took these considerations into account and stressed that the parity proposals imply no political or organizational concessions to Pablo. Politically our concern is with the favorable evolution within the cadres presently associated with the IS. Organizationally Pablo may be a representative only of his followers within the parity framework; the IC will not accept him as secretary. Reunification must be based on orthodox Trotskyist positions and will involve reorganization of the leadership. With this clarification it was agreed to urge the IC to press for reunification on the basis of the parity proposals.

Somehow the Toronto understanding got lost in the Paris discussion. Parity on an intercommittee basis was rejected on the ground that Pablo is against unity and would be able to maneuver continuation of the present stalemate. This explanation of the change in policy at the Paris session does not take into account the fact that the Toronto talks presupposed further maneuvers by Pablo in an effort to block reunification. In the same connection a misunderstanding has arisen about our expressed doubt that IS groups would "jump over the head of their international affiliation." Clearly we must go over Pablo's head in seeking contact and discussion with IS groups genuinely

desiring unification, as you have done in inviting the Italians to visit Britain. The question is: Are the IS groups prepared to go over the head of the top Pabloite set-up in organizational procedure?

The Paris proposals assume they will. Plans are put forward to invite IS groups favoring unity into an organizing committee, acting apart from Pablo's IS apparatus, to build a united movement starting from the sections. However we don't think the Italians or others we hope to influence would respond to this proposition. Most likely they would see it as a new form of split rather than a step toward reunification. They might be driven back toward Pablo and instead of getting speedier results we would lose ground.

In a conversation last summer Livio said we should forget the actual or apparent relation of forces between the IS and IC. His remark indicated rejection of Pablo's organizational line and readiness to support a genuine parity arrangement. To this he added, state your conceptions of international leadership and we will see they are given prompt consideration. This statement implied accord with the perspective of reorganizing the leadership. He also suggested that reunification would probably bring about new patterns of political alignment. But nothing he said then or wrote in subsequent letters gives any evidence

he is ready to break with the Pabloite apparatus along the lines contemplated in the Paris proposals.

Our approach requires adjustment to the present outlook of the IS groups genuinely desiring unity and we must take into account the necessary stages of their further evolution. Only time and experience will enable them to overcome Pablo's obstructive maneuvers and prepare them to move decisively toward reunification. As yet they remain confused about Pablo's real line on unity and they are full of misconceptions about the IC sections.

I think one of the most effective things you can do right now is to press the invitation for a visit by the Italians. If they come to Britain the simple gathering of facts about the actual situation there will be an eye-opener to them. They could then be expected to spread the truth about Britain throughout the Pabloite ranks, giving a further impulse to the desire for a principled reunification.

Meantime we have no choice but to continue the discussion within the IC, striving patiently to achieve a common policy and full collaboration on the reunification issue.

As soon as your busy schedule permits, we would like to hear further from you on the subject.

Comradely,
Farrell

14. *"There has been a great change in his standpoint": letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (March 13, 1959)*

Dear Jim,

Peng wrote this letter about the Paris meeting: "I am glad to tell you that in the discussion about reunification

of the world Trotskyist movement at the IC meeting last month, Comrade Healy reported the opinion of this question in the Toronto meeting and expressed his support of it against the old opinion of the French comrades. This proves that there has been a great change in his standpoint and also a decisive influence has come from your talk with him."

/s/ Farrell

SECTION XV: PABLO'S ANTI-UNITY OFFENSIVE

In 1959 Pablo launched new attacks on the International Committee and its supporters. The tone and content of these attacks indicated that he was seeking a political justification for continuing and deepening the split. A major aim of this effort was to put a stop to the efforts toward unity undertaken by the Italian and Ceylonese Trotskyists, on the one hand, and to prevent any consolidation of unity sentiment in the IC, on the other. A full scale assault was initiated in March 1959 with the "open letter" issued by the International Secretariat over the opposition of Germain and Maitan.

The SWP was denounced for its "regroupment" policy towards sectors of the American left disillusioned with Stalinism and Social Democracy. In essence, Pablo and his supporters in the IS solidarized with attacks on this policy by a tendency led by Sam Marcy, which had recently split from the SWP.

Like Marcy, the IS claimed that the SWP was adapting "to right-wing and centre elements in the American CP." This was Marcy's estimate of those in the CP who opposed the suppression of the Hungarian revolution.

Marcy held that these elements were to the right of those CP members who were in the camp of William Z. Foster. Foster followed the CP tradition of slavish obedience to the dictates of the Soviet bureaucracy. In particular, Marcy was attracted by the "tough" stance of those in the Foster faction who flatly rejected de-Stalinization.

In Marcy's schematic view of world politics, the Fosterites remained true to the "working-class camp" headed by the Kremlin tops. From this standpoint, the Fosterites' echoing of Moscow's charge that the Hungarian revolution was a fascist putsch was proof of the Fosterites' superior revolutionary mettle. The Marcyites characterized the Hungarian revolution as restorationist and supported the Soviet invasion.

The majority of the SWP members rejected Marcy's views. They oriented toward those in the CP and its periphery who repudiated Stalin's crimes, supported the Hungarian revolution, and favored more internal democracy in the CP. These people, who were beginning to question aspects of Stalinism, were more likely to collaborate with Trotskyists, discuss Trotskyist ideas, and be won to Trotskyist politics. It was evidence of blind factionalism on Pablo's part that he could align himself, even partially, with the Marcyite view of regroupment. The SWP's approach was clearly in line with that adopted by the overwhelming majority of the world Trotskyist movement.

How far did Pablo's liaison with the Marcyites go? The tone adopted toward the Marcyite splitters in the IS press objectively constituted an overture. There is some evidence that the relationship went further.

The June 23, 1975, issue of the *Internationalist Tendency Newsletter*, a circular published for a time by some U.S. supporters of the former International Majority Tendency of the Fourth International, stated, "In 1959, the WWP [Workers World Party, the organization Marcy formed after his split] refused to rejoin the International

Secretariat." This account implies that an offer was made by the IS or some representative thereof and rejected by Marcy. Hopefully, more documentation on this point will be forthcoming.

The most serious aspect of the IS "open letter" was its attack on the British Trotskyists. The growth of the British Section had enabled them to publish the *Newsletter* and to form the Socialist Labour League, while maintaining an entryist tactic toward the Labour Party as the primary orientation. The creation of the SLL, it was felt, would strengthen the ability of Trotskyists to gain supporters for their views in the Labour Party. The SLL demanded its right to be a constituent part of the Labour Party, like other organized tendencies.

In response the Labour Party bureaucrats launched a virulent witch-hunt, against which the Trotskyists organized a broad defense.

Pablo's "open letter" falsely charged that the Trotskyists were giving up work in the Labour Party. It charged the SLL with "inordinate attacks against the leaders of the LP and the trade unions" and with "disregarding the most elementary discipline necessary toward the party in which supposedly the essential work was to be done"—accusations which ran parallel in many respects to those made by the Labour Party bureaucrats.

The IS statement condescendingly offered to accept reunification as long as the International Committee and its supporters did not "flatly" degenerate into centrist groups. The offer of "organizational guarantees" was omitted in favor of Pablo's preferred formula of "concessions."

Whereas the IS had previously denounced Healy for ultimatism in dealing with the Grant group the IS now issued an ultimatum of its own. It insisted that the majority in the British section would have no right to determine the mass work of IS supporters in a united section. Minorities sympathetic to the IS, it was strongly hinted, would occupy a privileged status as the "International Tendency."

As was to be expected, Healy responded to this factional assault in kind. In "In Defence of Trotskyism," the SLL focused on the disputes of 1953. This document gave a back seat to the fight in the Labour Party, the fallacies in Pablo's concept of entryism, and the duty of solidarity in the face of an attack on workers' democracy in the Labour Party. In the course of the editorial, Healy again revived the call for "reorganizing" the Fourth International.

The IS responded to this with "A Recall to Order." Along with some exaggerations about Healy's policies at that time (the assertion that the SLL "is now opposed to entrism in Social-Democratic and Stalinist parties"), this document made a sweeping extension of the concept of "deep" entryism, making it applicable at all times and all places where the masses are under reformist leadership, even if greater party-building success could be attained for a time by applying other tactics. This strategy, as the document presented it, excluded any public Trotskyist

work in Britain, until such time as the workers broke from the Labour leadership en masse.

While claiming to desire unity, "A Recall to Order" strongly asserted the right of the IS to compel national sections to accept the decisions of the IS on tactical issues. In context, this represented a clear threat to Healy that the price of unity would be the surrender of the SLL's approach to entry work in the Labour Party in favor of Pablo's. This raised an additional roadblock to reunification.

In the course of this dispute, Healy made one of his rare efforts to criticize the SWP. In a private letter to Farrell Dobbs, he complained about the failure of the SWP to join in an aggressive polemical campaign against the IS along the lines of "In Defence of Trotskyism," and predicted that this would be costly to the SWP, which was then losing members under the impact of labor quiescence and capitalist boom. Healy also asserted that two articles in the SWP press contained some "examples of loose thinking reminiscent of Pabloite generalities." He did not specify the objectionable passages, however, or further explain his disagreement with them. Reasserting his support for the Toronto proposals, he also called for immediate measures to "reorganize" the Fourth International under the aegis of the International Committee.

Unlike Healy, the SWP feared that a frenetic polemic

against the IS would blow the remaining differences out of all proportion, focusing attention on largely outlived disputes instead of on defense of the SLL. Such efforts, carried to an extreme, would have a sectarian logic that would repel IS forces who were not wedded to Pablo's policies and who deeply desired a principled unification.

The differences Healy indicated—carefully restricted to vague references in a private letter—were still extremely modest and did not yet go to any fundamental political or programmatic issue. This is especially striking since this letter was written nine months after Healy claims to have concluded that "it was clear that the SWP had capitulated to Pabloite revisionism" and "the time had almost certainly come for the Socialist Labour League to split openly with the SWP."

It is possible the letter provides a pale reflection of the arguments Healy was using to line up his British followers for a split with the SWP, while avoiding discussions that might obstruct such a course.

No effort whatsoever was made by Healy to open a real discussion by making concrete and specific criticisms of the SWP's political views and practice. It is likely that the SWP leaders viewed the letter as an expression of the tension and outrage produced by Pablo's factional frenzy in Britain, rather than as an indication of fundamental differences. —Fred Feldman

1. *The International Secretariat on the Marcy Split: letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (March 20, 1959)*

Los Angeles

Dear Jim:

The Pabloite "Information Bulletin" of March 15 contains the following item:

"UNITED STATES

SPLIT IN THE SWP

"We are informed that the Socialist Workers Party has undergone a split in the middle of February.

"Involved in the split are the Buffalo Branch, the Youngstown Branch, the members in the Steubenville, Ohio, Erie, Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, some members in Cleveland, Ohio, the whole Southern cadres of the party, a

part of the New York City Branch and some additional members in different parts of the United States.

"The differences which range over innumerable aspects of the SWP position, will be expressed in a new workers' paper, *Workers World*, which will appear in the very near future.

"The members involved in the split represent—as they say—'a Leninist tendency, dedicated to regenerate genuine Trotskyism, build a proletarian vanguard party and internationalist through and through.'"

This looks like Pablo is extending an invitation to apply for a charter.

Comradely yours,
Farrell Dobbs

Airmail
cc:Burns [Healy]

2. *"Split and Continued Crisis in the Socialist Workers Party," (reprinted from the Spring 1959 issue of 4th International)*

In mid-February a serious split occurred in the Socialist Workers Party. A minority, whose main strength appears to lie in industrial Buffalo, the steel region of Pennsylvania and Ohio, and the South, and which is led by Sam Marcy and four other members of the SWP National Committee, broke with the SWP over long-smoldering political differences that came to a climax as a result of the recent "Independent Socialist" election campaign in New

York. The new group, which accuses the SWP majority of opportunist adaptation to former right-wing Stalinists who have broken with the CP, has begun publication of its own newspaper, *Workers World*.

Within the SWP, another minority, also opposed to what it considers excessive subordination to ex-Stalinist allies in the election campaign but determined to fight for its position within the framework of the party, is engaged in a bitter struggle that comes to a head at the SWP Convention at Whitsuntide, the results of which are for the moment unpredictable.

This crisis coincides—and this is hardly an accident—with crises in the two other organizations that broke with

the Fourth International in 1953. For a considerable period of time the International has limited itself to repeated and urgent requests to these groups to reunite with the International, and has leaned over backward in refraining from anything that might be termed intervention, going to the extreme even of not criticizing some of these groups' political positions which seemed to it erroneous or potentially so. Its motive was threefold: to allow objective judgment to replace fractional fever among these groups' members; to permit history itself to prove to them which policies were correct; and to demonstrate to them that the International, far from liquidating itself or succumbing to the attempts of these groups to break it up, continues with ever greater organizational strength and political homogeneity. Now, however, in view of the danger, whose

intensity is revealed by these crises, that many valuable elements will be lost to Trotskyism, the International has decided that the time has come for a more active policy.

It is now publishing in its international internal bulletins key documents from the different sides in the SWP crisis and split so that all the members of the International may be fully informed. It has also addressed an Open Letter to the SWP and the other groups that broke with it in 1953, beginning an exposition of the International's position on the recent evolution of these organizations, and appealing one more time for the urgent necessity of unification within the Fourth International of all militants who claim to stand for the political and organizational principles of Trotskyism.

3. *Letter from the International Secretariat to the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party (May 5, 1959)*

Dear Comrades: We are sending you herewith the letter which the International Secretariat of the Fourth International is addressing to the organizations of the Interna-

tional Committee. We hope that you will examine this letter and that you will also make it known to all the members of your organization. It is needless to assure you that any reply from your part will not fail to be published in the internal organs of the International and brought to the attention of all its members.

With our internationalist-communist greetings,
The IS

4. *"To the Organizations of the International Committee": letter from the International Secretariat (April 1959)*

Dear Comrades:

In 1953 your organizations broke with the International on the basis of affirmations of a political and organizational nature which we are asking you to reexamine now in the light of what have been since then the evolution of the objective situation, the evolution of each of your organizations, and the evolution of the policy of the International.

It would be easy for us today to prove, texts in hand, that this split—carried out in the name of the defense of "orthodox" Trotskyism against a so-called capitulation of the International to Stalinism—was not founded on even the most slightly serious basis.

Far from capitulating and breaking up, the International has distinguished itself by a political and organizational activity *never equalled in the past*, which has raised the political prestige of the International, enabled it to win new organizations and sections in several countries, and rooted it more deeply than ever in the real mass movement of those countries.

Never have the theoretical and political publications of the International been richer, more numerous, and of a higher level than at present, providing irrefutable proof of the International's capacity to develop revolutionary Marxism in a creative way by applying it to the real problems of the International communist movement.

Since the split of your organizations away from the International, two World Congresses have been held which were marked by a wider representation than ever before,

and which worked out documents covering the world situation in all fields, documents published and distributed in several languages in the International's expanding theoretical and political press.

The leading organisms of the International have functioned regularly and given proof of intense political and organizational activity, taking positions on all important political questions, and stimulating the political and organizational life of the International as a whole.

In the period preparatory to the VIth World Congress of the Fourth International, scheduled for next year, the International is in better condition than ever, with the expansion of its organizations and contacts on all the continents, penetrating for the first time in the Arab countries, in Negro Africa, in Japan, in Indonesia, as well as in Eastern Europe, etc.; with the steady expansion of its press; with increased material and technical means.

Every sincere Trotskyist who has not been irremediably corrupted by a petty fractional spirit, should be heartened by these striking and visible advances and appreciate at its just value the tenacious effort that has been made since 1953 to overcome the effects of the criminal split, and to maintain and consolidate the International in the midst of all sorts of increased difficulties.

But what has happened in reality to the organizations of the International Committee? By what concrete theoretical, political, and organizational activity has it demonstrated its so-called effort to defend "orthodox" Trotskyism and the International against the "revisionists" and "liquidators"? Where are the theoretical and political documents which would show the ideological activity of the International Committee and which should normally

provide political nutriment for the international movement to whose leadership the Committee has claimed to raise itself? Where are the congresses, the meetings, the publications, the persevering and effective activity of this organism? Where are the facts that might inspire confidence in the abilities and possibilities of those who took the decision of splitting the Trotskyist movement, allegedly in order to ensure it a more correct and effective activity?

The truth is unfortunately quite different, and it must now be stated, forcefully and bluntly. This Committee has distinguished itself by its total deficiency as a pole of ideological and organizational regroupment of the international Trotskyist movement. And the reasons for this now plainly visible failure are not hard to discern:

The Committee has not had and still does not have any principled ideological unity in the front that it set up from the moment the split away from the International was consummated. Its organizations and groups have each followed their own policies, being united among themselves *only in their opposition to the organization of the International as a democratic-centralist world party*. Each of the organizations that form part of the Committee has evolved independently of any consideration of a general common formulation of an international line and discipline in accordance with the authentic tradition of our Trotskyist movement, international and internationalist in its essence.

We have witnessed the following spectacle and results:

The SWP—which at the moment of the split would not hear of either new perspectives opening up in the USSR, more particularly after Stalin's death, or of a modification of the correlation of forces between the Soviet bureaucracy and the masses in favor of the latter, or of the need for work in the direction of Stalinist milieu that could not escape the consequences of the crisis in Stalinism—made after the XXth Congress of the CP of the USSR, a complete turn, coming over to and even going beyond the allegedly most extreme positions of the International in this field.

Gradually, its main activity since the XXth Congress has been concentrated in the milieu originating in the American CP and its periphery, for whom the SWP has not hesitated to soft-pedal its line in a remarkable way on very important questions, to the point of provoking a grave new crisis in its ranks, with an important part of its own cadres—several of them workers—accusing it now of an “opportunism” more particularly adapted to the former right-Stalinist elements!

Now the SWP has never shown this flexibility toward the International, from which it preferred to break away rather than to discuss democratically, as it had always had a perfect possibility of doing. In 1953, it was isolation from the masses and the rigidity of the SWP's line concerning the new international perspectives and the work that it was necessary to do, *even though it was not the main work*, in the direction of Stalinist milieu in the United States, as well as some undeniably erroneous positions of the minority, which provoked the crisis and split in that organization, and not an alleged intervention of the International in favor of Cochran and Livingstone [Clarke]. Naturally, the International does not justify either the positions on which the SWP minority finally crystallized, or the organizational attitude it adopted. On the contrary, it was the International itself that fought

with every ounce of energy against these false positions that would liquidate the International.

In 1958-59 it is the prolonged isolation from the masses, as well as the attitude adopted by the SWP in favor of right-wing and centre elements breaking with the American CP and not yet destalinized, which is provoking the crisis and split in the SWP, without any intervention—even indirectly—by the International. Once again, naturally, the International nowise justifies all the positions adopted by members of the new opposition, and more particularly their manifestly erroneous positions on the Hungarian revolution and toward Yugoslav communism. In both cases—both that of 1953 and that of 1958-59—the International has only noted the objective and subjective reasons for the crisis in the SWP.

At the same time that the SWP was gradually developing this line, the international and internationalist content of its press and activities steadily diminished. The International was really dismayed to observe to what a degree the *Militant* and the *International Socialist Review*—which, to please the ex-Stalinists, unfortunately abandoned its name of *Fourth International*—were reflecting less and less the international movement, concentrating on exclusively North American matters, and treating only partially and often erroneously—for lack of adequate documentation and comprehension—the colonial revolution, for example (Latin American, Arab, etc.), the developments in China, the European labor movement, etc.

The ideological regression in this domain is plain to be seen, and cannot but grieve every Trotskyist militant who remembers the totally different tenor of these organs in the days when the SWP was really part of the body of the international movement.

* * *

Let us now take up the evolution of the Burns [Healy] group, which has become, inside the International Committee, the real champion of the fight against the International and against unification. We do not want to insist here on all the zigzags of its policy in the various political fields (Stalinism, war, prospects for the future of the Labour Party, etc.). Our files are carefully filled with a view to any serious discussion that anyone might eventually wish to open, texts in hand, on all these questions. To the extent that this group has furnished documents and written positions, however rare and incomplete its stands have been, the International has noted them down with all the interest that it takes in the evolution of each of the Committee's organizations. Today we want to stress only the broad lines of the evolution of the Burns group.

After some progress scored in the entrust work in the Labour Party, this group also concentrated the essential part of its activity on those milieu pulling away from the British CP as a result of the crisis produced by the XXth Congress of the CP of the USSR, and then by the Hungarian revolution. Quite valuable elements coming from the British CP were won by this group on the basis of its activism. But instead of patiently reeducating these elements theoretically in the spirit of the real Trotskyist policy on the international and national levels, this group—also particularly “orthodox”—was imperceptibly subjected instead to the influence, activist and sectarian toward the Labour Party, of these elements who had been for years indoctrinated in the particularly empiricist and

sectarian school of British Stalinism.

The activity of the Burns group has since then developed more and more as an independent activity, which could not do other than destroy the possibilities of the essential entrust work in the Labour Party. Instead of showing themselves more prudent than ever in the face of the offensive of the rightist leadership of the Labour Party who were obviously trying to eliminate all revolutionary ferment from this party before it should, as a result of its once more polarizing the basic political current of the British masses, inevitably experience a deeper crisis than ever, the Burns group—intoxicated by some activist successes, and completely disoriented by a congenital empiricism that prevented it from making a correct evaluation of economic and political perspectives in Britain—plunged head first into the traps of the Labour Party bureaucracy. By inordinate attacks against the leaders of the LP and the trade unions, and by its “third period” activity at the rank-and-file level, disregarding the most elementary discipline necessary toward the party in which supposedly the essential work was to be done, the Burns group is now destroying all the positions won inside the LP and the trade unions, in a struggle—ill chosen both in terms of the correlation of forces and in terms of timing—with the reformist bureaucracy.

Not satisfied with destroying the positions that it had itself won in the LP, the Burns group by its present activity is also in reality compromising the future of the Trotskyist tendency inside the Labour Party. For what credit can it have among the politically educated workers of the country who have seen all the Trotskyist advocates of a patient, methodical, and long-term entrust policy in the LP successively give way to activist impatience, destroying their own positions within the mass movement and all inevitably falling back into the sterile “leftist” temptations of an independent “revolutionary” regroupment, whether it be in the British CP like Lawrence, or a new revolutionary party, such as is in fact the SLL now launched by Burns?

For years now the International has tried to persuade British Trotskyists that in Britain the road to the creation of the mass revolutionary party of tomorrow leads inevitably through long-term work within the Labour Party. All the arguments for and against this fundamental thesis about the development of revolutionary Marxism in Britain have been amply stated and debated. Burns was among the advocates of this line of the International in Britain. Only a year ago he was wrongly accusing the British Section of the Fourth International of wanting to do essentially independent work, and posing as a condition for unification the rejection of such a conception and the adopting of an integral entrust orientation.

And here he is today, with an essentially independent periodical and organization, launched on an open war against the reformist bureaucracy, which he in his turn has the pretention of vanquishing and eliminating by his pressure from outside! So many turn-about, recantations of old arguments and perspectives so long and completely debated in our movement; so many childish “leftist” mockeries leave each of us really skeptical about the seriousness of the artisans of such enterprises, literally catastrophic for the organizations that they lead, and also worried about the reputation of our movement in the ranks of politically educated workers.

It must be clearly and forcefully said: Burns’ course in

Britain can only throw numbers of valuable Trotskyist militants either completely out of all activity or into an activity that is again sectarian and without perspectives, which will after a certain time certainly lead into a blind alley. And that a turn of such capital importance could have been carried out without prior democratic discussion, without a conference, and with the tacit approval—either a priori or a posteriori—of the International Committee, is a proof of the irresponsibility of both in affairs concerning the future of Trotskyism in a country as important as Great Britain.

* * *

As for the evolution of the Lambert group in France, it is enough for us to quote the estimate that Cannon and Burns make of this group: simultaneously “opportunist and sectarian, empirical, isolated from the masses.” (Excerpt from the minutes of the 3-4 January 1959 meeting of the International Committee.)

This group, whose line, sectarian toward the real mass movement still influenced by the French CP, has reduced it to a minimum, was long the advocate of a pro-MNA policy in the Algerian revolution, a policy into which it dragged the whole International Committee. For years, the unconditional support given to the MNA, the so-called “proletarian” and even “Bolshevik” wing of the Algerian revolution, led this group and all the organizations of the International Committee into extravagances concerning the real facts about the great Algerian revolution, which were most harmful for the prestige and interests of Trotskyism.

Since the logic of facts has succeeded in making these organizations understand to what an extent they were mistaken about Algeria, we have been witnessing, not a frank proletarian self-criticism, but just an ostrich policy: either the Algerian revolution is no longer mentioned at all, or it is spoken of in general terms, thus avoiding any concrete support (critical, of course) for its genuine leadership, the FLN, which has been for more than four years already fighting alone against a powerful and savage imperialism.

The Lambert group, which was mainly responsible for the Messalist mystification of the whole Committee, has now been led to liquidate its autonomy as a party, not in favor of serious work inside the real mass movement in France, but in all sorts of peripheral organizations with essentially petty-bourgeois bases, such as the UGS and the autonomous SP. It has furthermore ceased to stand publicly for the Fourth International.

In its case as well, Trotskyist “orthodoxy” is softening up in favor of entrust work in various “left” organizations other than the Communist Party, organizations which they now dream of regrouping into an even vaguer political formation. What is more, entrism, not into the real mass movement in each country, but in favor of organizations with a preeminently petty-bourgeois, pacifist, radical, “New Left”-style base, is now spreading to the Committee’s little Swiss group, another indomitable advocate of “anti-Pabloist” “orthodoxy.”

* * *

As for Moreno, the Committee’s main “base” in Latin America, his opportunist adaptation to the Peronist

bureaucracy, which he formerly defined as fascist, is another proof of the weight that principles can have for certain of the main champions of the struggle against the International.

* * *

Comrades:

This political evolution of the organizations of the International Committee, despite its different variants, has this in common: a certain political and even organizational adaptation to peripheral milieux (radicals, ex-Communists, or Socialists, according to the country), because of an ideological and organizational softening-up of the integral "orthodox" aspect of Trotskyism, to the detriment of essential, patient, methodical, long-term work in the real mass movement.

This process is reflected not only in the ideological and tactical concessions that have been made under the pressure of these peripheral milieux, *but also and especially on the fundamental question of the International. It is striking to observe the disappearance of all propaganda for the International in the organizations of the Committee, the almost total forgetfulness of its past, its traditions, its struggles, and its existence; and also the almost total lack of education of their new members in the spirit of the International.*

The crusaders of the 1953 split—who allegedly wanted to save the International from its "liquidators"—have wiped out of their activity every sign that recalls the International, speak no more about it, and limit themselves to essentially national activity and concerns! Naturally they all still claim to be Trotskyist, but they forget that for real Trotskyists who have been educated and brought up in the school of Leon Trotsky, i.e., in the ranks of the international organization of the Left Opposition and then of the Fourth International, *international Trotskyism is a democratic-centralist international organization, a World Party.*

What has always distinguished our organized international movement, led by Leon Trotsky, from all the centrist currents and from all the renegades from our movement, from all those who at any given moment have broken with the International, is that, as against abstract propaganda for internationalism and even for an international organization, our movement has always counterposed *the reality, the existence, of an international organization of the revolutionary Marxist tendency.*

Leon Trotsky thrashed with the most extreme severity not only the various centrists who always shirked the task of creating and giving life to the International as a democratic-centralist world organization, but also the different turncoats of our movement who abandoned the international organization.

The essence of Trotskyism is to be a democratic-centralist world organization, and there is in reality no Trotskyist grouping that can be built on a national basis, with national autonomy, without its rapidly degenerating into a centrist sect.

That is the supreme lesson of the history of our movement.

The International Committee is engaged in repeating the disastrous experience of all those who in the past left the International organization while still claiming to be Trotskyists.

Its present course, *which has been persisted in for six years already*, as a loose front, without principles, of various national organizations fighting essentially to break up the existing International, stamps it with the indelible mark of a sure process of centrist degeneration.

It is high time to understand this truth, and to react with all one's strength against such a fatal development.

The International, conceived as a democratic-centralist world organization, as a single world party, is the essence of Trotskyism, or revolutionary Marxism. Whoever in practice gets away from that line is already on the road to centrism. Starting there, any centrist ideological evolution is possible and even inevitable. The degree to which the revolutionary Marxist tendency reacts to the always powerful pressures of reformism, Stalinism, and centrism, is indicated precisely by its ability to maintain its ideological and organic cohesion in one single international organization.

It is the highest irresponsibility to believe that small national organizations can develop harmoniously, as revolutionary Marxist organizations, in the midst of gigantic centrifugal and deforming forces, outside an international framework. Those who, after so many years in the international Trotskyist movement, has not understood this, run the risk of being irremediably lost to it. *To maintain and strengthen the International is the main task of the existence of the international revolutionary Marxist tendency.*

Comrades:

The International, independently of the observations that it makes about the policy of the organizations of the International Committee, has since the split never ceased calling for unification. It even went to the extreme of not replying, during a whole period, to attacks and calumnies, and refrained from criticizing positions that it considered erroneous.

This course had as its purpose, for a whole period, to let fractional fever calm down, to allow positions to be clarified by experience itself, and also to destroy illusions about the possibility of breaking up or weakening the International. All the appeals of the International for unification, including its last one dated November 1958, have remained practically unanswered.

The explanation of this attitude is now clear. The Committee is thinking not in terms of a sincere and loyal unification, but in terms of tactical manoeuvres to break up the International. "The question of reunification is above all a tactical question" in order to separate the greatest number of members and organizations away from the International, it was stated in the 3-4 January 1959 meeting of the International Committee, the Italians and Ceylonese being named as the goals to be attained.

It is needless to say that such practices and such hopes are absolutely unreal and doomed to total failure.

The International is a principled political organization and not an alliance or a compromise among fractions and persons. The International is furthermore a highly democratic organization that favors to the highest degree a free political life, free exchange of opinions, the formation and existence of tendencies, and fruitful ideological confrontation.

Despite the divergences that we observe with the organizations of the Committee, at the present moment mainly

concerning the question of the International and that of tactics, the International is ready to consider the question of unification absolutely without any exclusivism toward anyone, provided that its general programme and discipline are accepted as a democratic-centralist world organization.

The International is ready to grant tendency rights to those who do not share its present programme on all points, and fully to guarantee their rights as a tendency. The International is also prepared to consider broad organizational concessions to the organizations of the Committee, for example according them a representation in all the International's leading organisms considerably greater than what they effectively represent compared to the forces of the International.

The International will be the more disposed to make such organizational concessions to the extent that it verifies the existence of a sufficient political agreement to avoid paralyzing the activity of the International as a democratic-centralist world organization.

The International is ready to examine in a parity commission the points of agreement or disagreement that now exist, without insisting on the past divergences. Following upon such an examination, it is prepared to consider—in case of broad political agreement—the greatest organizational concessions. The International was, is, and will be in favor of unification as long as the organizations of the Committee claim to be Trotskyist and do not flatly degenerate into enemy centrist currents.

The International is nowhere pushing its supporters to new splits. It is ready to envisage, in the one country,

Great Britain, where its organization constitutes a minority in comparison to the corresponding organization of the Committee, to instruct its supporters to integrate with the organization of the Committee, provided the latter grants them the right to be the International tendency and allows them to carry on their work in the mass organizations where they are integrated. This last point is particularly important: the work in the Labour Party is a basic condition for the development of the revolutionary Marxist tendency in Great Britain and no compromise is possible about this condition.

The International asks the comrades who share its points of view and who are still members of organizations of the Committee not to make splits but to demand within these organizations the right to be the International tendency struggling for unification.

At the same time it makes an appeal one more time to the leadership of the International Committee to be conscious of its historical responsibilities and to abandon its splitting course, to stop aiming by tactical manoeuvres at breaking up the International, and sincerely and loyally to take the road of reunification of the international Trotskyist movement within the Fourth International.

Any proposition it makes in this direction will be immediately examined with the greatest interest.

Trotskyist militants everywhere, unite in the World Party of the Fourth International, the supreme expression of the essence of our existence as the international tendency of revolutionary Marxism!

THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

5. "A savage and unscrupulous war against the British Trotskyist organization": letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (May 11, 1959)

Dear Farrell:

Novack and I both received from Holland copies of the Pabloite Open Letter and had a little talk about it Saturday. The document is being passed around to the other NC members here. I haven't examined this document closely yet. But even a cursory reading clearly shows it to be an example of the insidious, cold-blooded treachery which we recognized in Pablo's operations in 1953. It is a declaration of war, designed to whip the Italians and Ceylonese into line; and, at the same time, to fish for suckers in our ranks who can be converted into agents and stool-pigeons for Pablo.

This new attack calls for cool deliberation and consultation before we decide on our own method of dealing with it and answering it. I will undertake to write an analysis of this latest and completely typical manifestation of Pabloism, but I can't do it right away. I am preparing a speech for Wednesday night's membership meeting on "Regroupment in Perspective"—to open the local discussion on the PC Draft Resolution—and have to concentrate on that right now. The speech will be tape recorded and I hope to work over the transcription after the meeting with a view to publishing the speech in the Internal Bulletin.

Meantime, as always when the party faces an attack,

the first task is to put our own ranks in order. During the period when the possibility of international reunification was being considered, as also during the first period of regroupment in the youth field, a certain laxity and slackness in the matter of party loyalty and party discipline made itself evident. For a time, unfortunately, this deviation from our principle and tradition was tolerated and even condoned.

All that's out of date now. (It was out of date already when it happened.) Article VIII, Section 8, of the party constitution—"Political collaboration with non-members of the party must be formally authorized by the Party Committee having jurisdiction"—must be strictly enforced without any exceptions whatever.

I mention this because, during the period when we were considering the Pabloite "unity" maneuvers, some young party members in New York and San Francisco were enlisted as distributors of the Pabloite press. They were also snared into correspondence by the Pabloite center with the object of turning them into agents in our ranks. This, as we have long known, is Pablo's invariable method of operation with national organizations, whether affiliated to his secretariat or not.

* * *

The worst way to meet this unscrupulous attack would be to rush out with a hasty and ill-considered answer which would appear to put us in the position of conducting

a discussion with the Pabloites as a loyal tendency in our ranks. That is not the case at all. Pablo is an enemy. He is conducting a savage and unscrupulous war against the British Trotskyist organization—the most proletarian and most effectively active section of our international movement—at the moment when it is engaged in a life and death battle with the Labour Party and trade-union bureaucracy. The timing of the new attack is not accidental. Pablo is also appealing openly for dupes to promote a new split in the SWP—on the theory, presuma-

bly, that everybody has forgotten what happened to the dupes of 1953.

The discussion we need in this situation is not a discussion with Pablo but a discussion among ourselves as to the best way of combatting this new attack, now that the “unity” mask has been taken off.

Fraternally,
James P. Cannon

JPC:jh

Copies to Burns [Healy] and Ross [Dowson]

6. *Excerpt from the minutes of the May 18, 1959 meeting of the SWP Political Committee*

3. WORLD MOVEMENT

Report by Dobbs: Pabloites have opened new disunity offensive. Appears precipitated by visit of Italian delegation to Britain. While they were there Pablo opened vicious factional attack on British at a time when they are resisting a heavy assault from the L[abour] P[arty] and union bureaucracy calculated to drive them out of the mass movement. Pablo's aim clearly to break up any tendency within IS ranks toward genuine reunification of the movement. Didn't hesitate to strike the British a hard blow in order to put the Italians on the spot in an attempt to estrange them from the British and the IC.

First signs of new Pabloite offensive against unity were noted in an “Information Bulletin” which they began to publish at the beginning of the year. First issue described its purpose as providing “highly necessary correctives . . . to various misleading positions” in the orthodox Trotskyist press. Later they published a crooked account of the

Marcyite split which had obviously been supplied to them by the Marcyites. The latest issue (May 15) speaks of “. . . the crisis which is raging in the organizations of the ‘International Committee’.”

Pabloites have published an “open letter” to the IC in which they rewrite history of 1952-53 split and subsequent developments. They purport to describe the orthodox Trotskyist policies in what amounts to a grotesque distortion of facts. The “open letter” winds up with a call for the formation of Pabloite factions in the IC organizations.

The “open letter” is accompanied by a real Moscow-trial type frame-up in the form of alleged “Excerpts from the Minutes” of an IC meeting in Paris last January. Dobbs is alleged to have made a major report to the meeting when he wasn't even there. The remarks attributed to him appear to be a combination of Marcyite gossip and a Pabloite rewrite job to improve on Marcy's fantasies.

The first task in closing ranks against this new attack is to alert the comrades and arm them with the facts. For Trotskyists everywhere who are genuinely interested in a principled reunification, it is necessary once again to clarify the real score on the problem.

7. *“All the talk about ‘unity’ is a manoeuvre and a smokescreen”: letter from Gerry Healy to the Italian section of the International Secretariat (May 4, 1959)*

Dear Comrades,

Recently we had the pleasure of extending a warm welcome to a delegation from your organization who came to England to “exchange opinions” and see for themselves the work which our organization was doing in this country.

Your delegation through Comrade Livio expressed the opinion that they had come to England on a “fact finding” mission and that they had no position on recent developments connected with our struggle against the right wing reformist bureaucracies of the Labour Party and the trade unions. Your delegation had ample opportunity to question leading members of our organization and it attended a meeting of our Executive Committee where several aspects of our work were discussed.

We accepted your delegation in the firm belief that it was a genuine attempt on the part of comrades in your group to

examine objectively the work we were doing in England and to ascertain our opinions on problems concerning the international movement.

We find it hard to contain our disgust, when only two days after your delegation returned to Italy a document violently attacking our organization and the International Committee arrived in England from your International Secretariat (of which Livio is a member). The authors of this document attack our work in England without in any way ascertaining the facts about this work, other than information supplied from garbled factional sources, from allies of Pablo—who on the Liverpool Trades and Labour Council *abstained* from voting against the decree of the right wing which proscribed our organization and banned our newspaper. It is from “freedom fighters” such as these that the International Secretariat derives its information.

Regretfully, we are forced to conclude that Comrade Livio was not really interested in “facts” about our work in England, because he must obviously have known that such a document was already prepared and ready for dispatch. For how could Livio want “facts” when he had already accepted the spurious facts of the Secretariat? Ironically this fresh attack from Pablo emerges at a time

when the hostility of the capitalist press in England and of the right bureaucrats reach a new crescendo of fury against the Socialist Labour League. We recall how Pablo constantly helped the Stalinist Lawrence in his attacks against us in 1953-54. From the Lawrence-Pablo split we emerged far stronger than ever before. Today we are proud to record that there are more Trotskyists in our organization than in the whole of Europe. Before long we shall have even greater numbers.

Accompanying this attack on our organization and the other sections of the "International Committee" is an extract from a stolen document reporting a meeting which took place recently in Canada. It is not, as the authors suggest, a meeting of the "International Committee" on January 3rd and 4th. From this stolen document, the International Secretariat attempts to derive some factional satisfaction, just as in the case of the Cannon-Tom [Sam Gordon] correspondence, which was stolen by their faction in the 1953 fight. History will before very long show that these unscrupulous methods will rebound upon those who use them, as they have done in the past.

The British Section of the Fourth International will continue its efforts to unify on a principled basis all those

Trotskyists who have a genuine desire for such a unification. We ask the Italian comrades to seriously ask themselves how is it possible to have such a reunification on the basis of stolen documents, threats of reprisals, and fake requests for "facts" when those who have made the request have already made up their mind about the facts? These are the traditional methods of Pablo and Stalinism.

The Italian comrades should have no illusion as to what will result from this open declaration of war against our section. Pablo and his International Secretariat have now shown their real hand. All the talk about "unity" is a manoeuvre and a smokescreen behind which Pablo has been hoping to destroy the forces of orthodox Trotskyism since 1953.

We are sorry to record that the visit of your delegation seems to us to have been engineered as another step in this chain of attacks. We sincerely hope that you will reconsider the mistaken position and join with us in condemning these latest actions of Pablo as a most serious blow against the reunification of the International Trotskyist movement. The reply of our section to Pablo's lies and slander against it will be sent to you very shortly.

[salutation missing]

8. *"I am ready to call a halt": letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (May 26, 1959)*

COPY TO BURNS [HEALY] AND ROSS [DOWSON]

1902 Hyperion
Los Angeles 27, Calif.

Dear Farrell:

A careful letter from you to Livio might be useful. I can't judge very well and would like to hear Jerry's reaction. We're still in the dark about how Pablo got information about the IC meeting. He may have gotten a copy of the Minutes and purposely garbled them to protect his source. The notation that the alleged Minutes are "retranslated from a translation" might indicate something like that.

The alleged Minutes published by Pablo read to me like something transcribed in distorted form from notes of a report by Jerry on the Toronto meeting—possibly one made in England. However that may be, if Pablo has a true copy of the Minutes of the IC meeting—with the resolution which we received and objected to so strongly—he would have plenty of ammunition. Every concession that has been made to the French in the unity negotiations has played directly into Pablo's hands. For my part, I am ready to call a halt once and for all to any acquiescence in this stupidity.

Fraternally
James P. Cannon

JPC:jh

9. *"Some examples of loose thinking reminiscent of Pabloite generalities": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (August 21, 1959)*

Dear Farrell,

This is a personal note to yourself.

We are very disturbed about the lack of political clarification on the question of Pabloism. Although JPC urged support for our struggle here your press remains silent on the whole issue. In addition the article by Hansen and the follow-up by Warde [Novack] on the summit talks contain, in my opinion, some examples of loose thinking reminiscent of Pabloite generalities.

We must be absolutely clear about what is involved in this whole question so far as the world movement is concerned. Unless the Pabloite question is clarified it will be quite impossible to reorganize the movement for some considerable time, especially if the SWP continues to sit on

the political sidelines. It is little use writing to me about the Toronto decisions. You know very well the background of the struggle in Europe. You know very well the political issues involved in this. The Toronto decisions can not be achieved without a political clarification. To imagine that they can be brought about by an organizational coup d'etat would be quite wrong in my opinion. If we are to achieve any unity with elements in Pablo's ranks it will only be after a relentless confrontation of our programme and theirs.

We propose to continue our political offensive against him and we will go forward to an open struggle in preparation for our congress next year. We are not going to halt in the preparation of this congress—no matter what happens—because to do so would be to fall into the pool of stagnation which has stifled this movement since 1953. Enough time has been wasted. Everyone agrees that unity would be a good thing if it can be achieved on the Toronto proposals. But it isn't going to be achieved on the Toronto

proposals, and you cannot soften up Pablo's weak spots, unless you proceed with political clarification.

Since this is a personal letter and is my own feelings on the question, I would like further to say that the political crisis in the SWP will grow and grow unless some rock-bottom basic education on Pabloite revisionism is conducted. There is no way out of this question. Nobody appreciates more than myself your considerable difficulties in relation to the objective situation, but the adverse side of this situation will continue to take a toll of your membership unless something is done now.

In my view the proposal of JPC should not be tossed aside, even though we all realise the limitations. Open up on Pablo in your paper and magazine. Take up his openly revisionist arguments in relation to "workers' governments", which is nothing more than a miserable centrist formula for capitulation in the front of stalinism on the one hand and social democracy on the other.

Pablo continues his relentless work against this section. Every weak petty bourgeois element who seeks to drop out is immediately approached and offered trips to Paris and Cannes. The latest in this line is John Daniels who, because of his personal life and problems, dropped back some months ago. He is now the proud bearer of a ticket to Cannes to see Pablo and presumably also to attend the flower show.

Ellis Hillman, Pablo's representative in our ranks for

many years, has now openly ratted to Transport House and rejoined the Labour Party by crawling on his belly in front of the bureaucracy. This man has also a special invitation to meet Pablo. The Pabloites are a dirty piece of blotting paper whose sole purpose is to attract everybody and anybody who will attack us.

Let us, for Christ's sake stop hedging around and get on with the job of building up a world movement and not postponing it until some ideal conditions arise. They are not going to arise by themselves. We must work for them now by pushing forward the political clarification of our attitude towards Pablo, publicly and on the widest possible scale.

I would be glad to have a personal line from you on this matter since as you know I value our collaboration as one of the most valuable relationships in the movement, but you will appreciate that we are a little tired of this shuffling around. We get the blunt end of the stick. We get attacked by Pablo and implied criticism from yourselves, yet at this moment the English section fights on a number of urgent fronts against the reformists and the Stalinists. We know we have the sympathetic consideration of the members of the SWP, but we want a little more. We want their political consideration which in the long run will prove decisive.

Warmest regards to yourself and Marvel.

[Salutation missing]

BECAUSE it firmly adheres to Marxism, and because it is attracting militant workers to its ranks, the Socialist Labour League has been under constant attack in the short period since its establishment. Its first major proposal on a vital social question—that the London Labour movement form united defence committees and defence squads to protect the citizens of north Kensington from fascist gangs—has had the compliment paid to it of systematic misrepresentation in practically every national newspaper. Transport House has passed a series of solemn decrees proscribing the League and banning its weekly paper, and has even succeeded in expelling ten very active members of the Labour Party. Dutt, the Stalinist leader—who generally manages to find his own level in controversy—has written about the 'lavish American finance' that is supposed to be sustaining the Marxist movement in its challenge to capitalism and to class collaboration! It is with a certain measure of pride that we face these attacks. They show the Socialist Labour League is on the right road.

And now, over the noise of the heavy artillery of Fleet Street and Smith Square and the poisoned arrows of King Street, it is possible to hear the faintest ping of a peashooter, as a body with the high-sounding title of 'The International Secretariat of the Fourth International' joins in the attack. Anxious not to miss the chance of adding their mite, the international secretaries have the following to say about the Socialist Labour League:

By inordinate attacks against the leaders of the L[abour] P[arty] and the trade unions, and by its 'third period' activity at the rank-and-file level, disregarding the most elementary discipline necessary towards the party in which supposedly the essential work was to be done, [the Socialist Labour League] is now destroying all the positions won inside the L[abour] P[arty] and the trade unions, in a struggle—ill-chosen both in terms of the correlation of forces and in terms of timing—with the reformist bureaucracy.²

'Inordinate attacks.' "Third period" activity at rank-and-file level.' This is how this body describes the activity of *The Newsletter* and the Socialist Labour League, whose only aim is to build an alternative working-class leadership to that of the Right wing and the Stalinists!

¹ R.P.D., 'Notes of the Month', *Labour Monthly*, vol. xii, p. 155, April 1959.

² 'Open Letter to the Organizations of the International Committee', *Internal Bulletin of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International*, April 1959.

Serious workers will ask: how does it come about that a body professedly Marxist, professedly Trotskyist, can make such a farcical assessment of the recent developments in the Marxist movement in Britain? Who are these international secretaries and what do they stand for? And what is the road to the construction of an international revolutionary leadership that can restore the good name of the Fourth International—which the international secretaries tarnish with every breath they utter—re-establish the political and ideological authority of world Trotskyism, and construct a world communist party in the best traditions of working-class internationalism?

FOUR attempts have been made to organize working men on an international scale. The First International was founded in London on September 28, 1864. The defeat of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the vast expansion of world capitalism checked the development of the revolutionary vanguard and prevented its becoming an international working-class party. The Second International collapsed ingloriously as an international force when the first imperialist world war broke out in 1914. The reformist leaders capitulated to 'their' imperialist governments, betraying the pledges they had made to wage an international struggle against war. The conquest of power by the Russian working class in 1917 set the stage for the creation of a new world party. Those socialists throughout the world who were faithful to Marxist principles came together to form the Third International—the Communist International. Unlike the loose association that was the Second International, in which each national leadership put collaboration with 'its' own capitalist class above the interests of the working class throughout the world, the Third International was truly international; it was a disciplined, fighting organization; it was a world party, dedicated to the cause of socialist revolution.

But the degeneration of the Soviet Union led to the degeneration of the Communist International. The bureaucratic leaders of the Soviet Union usurped the authority of the Russian revolution and turned the Communist International from an instrument of world revolution into an organization for the defence of their own bureaucratic privileges. To Stalinism 'inter-

nationalism' stands for working-class collaboration with the Soviet bureaucracy. It means the subordination of working-class and colonial struggles to the diplomatic needs of the Soviet leaders. Stalinism transformed the communist parties into frontier guards for the Russian bureaucracy. By 1933 the inability of the Communist International to prevent the victory of German fascism showed that it had decayed as a world revolutionary party. It was a mere formality when ten years later, at the behest of Roosevelt and Churchill, Stalin finally buried the corpse.

From 1933 onwards there could be no doubt of the urgent need for the revolutionary vanguard to build a new international. It was then that the world movement which had developed around the struggle of Trotsky and the Left Opposition inside the communist parties issued the call for a new communist international, a fourth international.

TWENTY-ONE years ago, in September 1938, thirty delegates from eleven countries, representing the most advanced sections of the international working class, met and set up this new international. These founders of the Fourth International were the true heirs of Marx, Engels and Lenin. They had carried forward the internationalist traditions of Bolshevism in a struggle against Stalin's narrow, nationalistic doctrine of 'socialism in one country'. They had pitted their strength against the policies of defeat and capitulation which the Communist International in its degeneration had imposed upon the struggles of the German workers, the French workers, the Spanish workers.

From the historical experience of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard in the ninety years since Marx and Engels had written the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, they drew conclusions about what the workers of the world and the oppressed colonial peoples must do to overthrow decaying capitalism. Their conclusions were embodied in the 'Transitional Programme', written by Leon Trotsky and adopted at this founding congress as the programme of the new international.³

The world was on the brink of a war which the policies of the Right-wing and Stalinist reformists had helped to prepare. These mis-leaders had led the working class into a series of defeats. In Germany the social democrats had refused to mobilize the working class for social revolution—the only way Hitler's road to power could have been barred. The German Communist Party had pursued an ultra-Left policy and,

with Stalin's theory of 'social-fascism', had split the German working class. Both parties collapsed miserably with the victory of fascism. In 1935 the seventh and last congress of the Communist International had met, veering from the ultra-Left theory of 'social-fascism' to the Rightist, reformist theory of the people's front, based on the Stalinist bureaucracy's desire for an agreement with French and British capitalism. It was the application of this theory by the Spanish Communist Party which destroyed the revolutionary initiative of the workers and peasants; the party confined the struggle to a defence of the bourgeois republic when the only way Franco could have been destroyed was by carrying forward the socialist revolution.

In Russia, the progress of the working class towards socialism had been retarded and distorted by the political dictatorship of a privileged caste which could only betray revolutionary movements in the rest of the world. The Stalinist rulers had lately carried through their abominable frame-ups, executing the Old Bolsheviks almost to a man.

The 'Transitional Programme' declared that objective conditions for socialist revolution on a world scale were ripe. Capitalism was in decay. Ever more destructive wars, fascism and unemployment were the marks of that decay. The working class had both the power and the numbers to destroy this outmoded system. But between the working class and socialism stood all the old working-class leaders. 'The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat', the programme began. But 'the laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus'.⁴ By these words Marxists expressed their confidence that the working class would be able to break the stranglehold of Stalinist and Right-wing reformism, and fulfil its historical task: freeing humanity from capitalism. That task, however, could be fulfilled only under the leadership of a Marxist vanguard, which would be built in the inevitable conflict between the workers and their traditional leaders. The 'Transitional Programme' was the foundation for the new international which would eventually lead the working class to the overthrow of imperialism, and to political revolution in the Soviet Union—the overthrow of the bureaucracy and the restoration of soviet democracy—which would be spurred on by an extension of the socialist revolution in the west.

In 1938 the Marxists who founded the Fourth International expected revolutionary explosions in the major capitalist countries in the forthcoming imperialist war. They expected that these developments would hasten the disintegration of Stalinist and Right-wing reformism. They predicted that the crisis caused by

³ *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Working Class. The Transitional Programme of the Fourth International* (n.d.).

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 3, 5.

the war would enable the Fourth International to win the leadership of the masses of the people.

YET the Fourth International did not emerge as a mass force out of revolutionary developments brought about by the war. The members of the Fourth International on the Continent were decimated by the war and by Nazi occupation. In the main it was a new, young generation of supporters of the Fourth International that emerged. By the end of the war the movement still consisted of groups in the major countries, for the most part carrying out only propaganda activity, still with much work in front of them if they were to show that their programme was correct and win support for it.

Discussing the defeat of the Spanish revolution, Trotsky had written: 'Even in cases where the old leadership has revealed its internal corruption, the [working] class cannot improvise immediately a new leadership.'⁵ Trotskyism came out of the second world war still isolated from the mass movements, still weak in numbers. Despite Stalinist and Right-wing betrayals, it was unable to win mass support.

Thanks to the treachery of Stalinism in western Europe the old capitalist politicians assumed leadership once again. Mass movements in France and Italy were diverted by their Stalinist leaders. In Britain the Right-wing Labour leaders came to power and successfully headed off the mass movement against Toryism. The Fourth International now faced a period of slow, painful, uphill work to build the Marxist movement in the various countries.

Then in 1947-53 came the period of the Cold War. The question that presented itself to the Marxists was this: could revolutionary parties be built in time, before war began?

It was in this period, under the pressures of Stalinism and imperialism, that certain prominent individuals in the Fourth International, headed by Michel Pablo, secretary of the international executive committee, began to revise, and reject, the fundamental principles of the Marxist movement. It was these revisions which caused a split in the Fourth International in 1953.

PABLOISM had as its central thesis a deeply pessimistic prophecy of inevitable and immediate war. This forecast not only presumed the organic incapacity of the American and European working class to prevent such a war—thereby dismiss-

ing their revolutionary potentialities—but also attributed to the imperialist rulers a power, homogeneity and stability which they did not possess. Pablo made this forecast of inevitable, immediate war in a speech he delivered on July 12, 1952. He said: 'The international situation is evolving irreversibly within a very brief period towards a world war of a given character and within a given relationship of forces.' He went on to proclaim, modestly, that 'this evaluation, which we were the first to make, not only within the ranks of the workers' movement but even to a certain extent of all political movements, no one dares to attack any longer'. Referring to this 'evaluation' as 'this inevitable evolution of the situation', Pablo added: 'Not wanting to lull ourselves with illusions, we attempt to act as of now in *consequence of this position and in practice*.'⁶ Thus the 'inevitable' war and all that Pabloism saw as flowing from it in the policies and activities of working-class bureaucracy were to be the immediate axis of the Fourth International's activity.

Since the 'inevitable', 'immediate' war would be a war against the Soviet Union, Pablo declared that by its very nature it would be an international civil war, a 'war-revolution'. The world was already being polarized between the forces of revolution and the forces of imperialism. Working-class bureaucracies, both Stalinist and Right-wing, were in a vice. On the one side was the irreversible march of imperialism to war—a war against the whole working class. On the other side was the irreversible revolutionary wave. 'The situation is pre-revolutionary all over in various degrees,' declared Pablo in February 1952, in a report to the executive committee of the Fourth International, 'and evolving towards the revolution in a relatively brief period. And this process from now on is irreversible.'⁷

But these irreversible developments did not mean that the working class and the oppressed peoples in struggle would come into ever sharper conflict with their bureaucratic leaders; or that the latter would seek, as in the past, to head off and destroy revolutionary development. On the contrary: according to Pablo the conflict between the interests of the bureaucracy and those of the working class would be overcome. The bureaucrats would be swept along by the revolutionary wave, which would end imperialism.

⁵ Leon Trotsky, 'The Class, the Party and the Leadership. Why Was the Spanish Proletariat Defeated?' (Questions of Marxist Theory)', *Fourth International* (New York), vol. i, no. 7, p. 193, December 1940.

⁶ 'For a Decisive Turn in France (Speech of Comrade M. Pablo at the 8th Congress of the P[arti] C[ommuniste] I[n]ternationale)—French Section of the Fourth International', *International Information Bulletin* (Socialist Workers Party, New York), November 1952, p. 5.

⁷ 'The Tactical Application of the Third World Congress Line. Report by M. Pablo (Adopted by the Tenth Plenum of the I[n]ternational] E[xecutive] C[ommittee]) February 1952', *International Information Bulletin* (Socialist Workers Party, New York), 1952, p. 8.

In this way Pablo revised the conception of the bureaucracy as being by its very nature a barrier to working-class struggle. In its place he put the idea that the present leaders of Right-wing and Stalinist parties—or some of these leaders—would adjust themselves to ‘mass pressure’ to the extent that they would be forced to carry through the final battle against capitalism. For example, speaking of ‘countries where the [Right-wing] reformist movements embrace the political majority of the [working] class . . . as in England, Austria, Belgium, Australia, Canada, Holland, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland and, with certain reservations, India and Germany’, Pablo declared: ‘These organizations cannot be smashed and replaced by others in the relatively short time between now and the decisive conflict. All the more so since these organizations will be obliged, whether they wish it or not, to give a leftward turn to the policy of the whole or at least a part of their leadership.’⁸ The bureaucrats were trapped by the revolutionary wave and forced to act counter to their nature—‘whether they wish it or not’. To use words properly, they were forced to *change their nature*; for if a counter-revolutionary no longer acts as a counter-revolutionary he ceases to be one. The Stalinist bureaucracy in particular was caught between the drive of imperialism to war on the one side and, on the other, the pressure of the masses of the people in a continuous, unfolding revolutionary wave. While this bureaucracy might wish to betray the revolution, imperialism could no longer offer it any compromise. So, in its own interests, it was forced to go forward in struggle against capitalism under mass pressure. Under this pressure communist parties could be forced to struggle for power, or, as Pablo delicately put it, ‘project a revolutionary orientation’. ‘The communist parties of the capitalist countries . . . find themselves placed in conditions absolutely different from those of pre-war days’, declared a document called *Rise and Decline of Stalinism*, which embodied Pablo’s ideas, and around which the sharpest controversy developed in 1953. This document, adopted as a resolution by Pablo’s ‘Fourth World Congress’ in 1954, stated:

In countries where the C[ommunist] P[artie]s are a majority in the working class, they can, under exceptional conditions (advanced disintegration of the possessing classes) and under the pressure of very powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses, be led to project a revolutionary orientation counter to the Kremlin’s directives, without abandoning the political and theoretical baggage inherited from Stalinism Under these conditions the disintegration of Stalinism in these parties must not be understood in the next immediate stage as an organizational disintegration of these parties or as a public break with the Kremlin but as a gradual internal transformation, accompanied by a political differentiation within their midst. It is even possible that such a process of

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 11.

Stalinist disintegration may be accompanied in some communist mass parties by a certain consolidation or an organizational strengthening, to the extent that, under the pressure of circumstances, they modify their policies to conform closer to the interests of the masses.⁹

The ‘irresistible process’ was also at work on the Soviet bureaucracy itself. Pablo was one of those who after the death of Stalin predicted a liberalization of the Soviet bureaucracy when it was forced to grant certain concessions to the Soviet people in order to maintain its rule. Pablo wrote:

The dynamic of their concessions is in reality liquidatory of the entire Stalinist heritage in the USSR itself, as well as in its relations with the satellite countries, with China and the communist parties. It will no longer be easy to turn back Once the concessions are broadened, the march towards a real liquidation of the Stalinist régime threatens to become irresistible.¹⁰

The programme of the Fourth International had maintained that the Soviet bureaucracy must be overthrown by the Soviet masses under the revolutionary leadership of a Marxist movement in the USSR: ‘Only the victorious revolutionary uprising of the oppressed masses can revive the Soviet régime and guarantee its further development towards socialism. There is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses to insurrection—the party of the Fourth International!’¹¹ Pablo placed a question mark over this basic proposition.

Pablo’s theory of ‘mass pressure’ is set forth most clearly in a recent article where he states: ‘In the concrete currently existing conditions, particularly in the advanced capitalist countries, this transitional political power will be able to take on the form only of a government of the workers’ party or parties, supported by the revolutionary organization of the masses

⁹ ‘Rise and Decline of Stalinism. Resolution Approved by the Fourth World Congress of 1954’, *Fourth International* (Paris), no. 1, pp. 52, 53, Winter 1958. The June 1957 issue of the French Pabloist journal *La Vérité des Travailleurs* summed up the conclusions of Pabloism, which it said had been ‘remarkably well confirmed’. Among these conclusions it gave the following: ‘The antagonism between capitalism and socialism cannot but lead to a war-revolution, i.e., an armed class struggle on the world scale In the course of the process leading to the war-revolution, and during the latter, the proletariat in the countries where the recognized leadership is Stalinist will tend to regroup itself around the C[ommunist] P[arty]. This leadership may put forward a revolutionary policy under pressure of the masses The outcome of the war-revolution which is by far the most likely is the victory of socialism. The building of socialism will take place under the banner of the Fourth International’ (English translation in *Against Pablo Revisionism*, Bulletin no. 1, pp. 41-3, September 1957. Our emphasis).

¹⁰ Michel Pablo, ‘The Post-Stalin “New Course”’, *Fourth International* (New York), vol. xiv, no. 2, p. 39, March-April 1953.

¹¹ *The Death Agony of Capitalism*, p. 39.

in committees.¹² In Britain this would mean a government of Labour Party and Communist Party MPs—which is precisely the present policy of the British Communist Party. Pablo goes on to outline his followers' tasks:

In reality the goal of the extra-parliamentary revolutionary action of the masses could not be to bring about a parliamentary government of a coalition between the workers' parties and one wing of the bourgeoisie, but to impose a government of the workers' parties, and to support it in the application of its transitional programme. By educating and mobilizing the masses for a whole period of years on the basis of a transitional programme oriented towards workers' power of the workers' parties in the advanced capitalist States, it would turn out to be possible to impose this political solution, either by winning the parliamentary majority or by forcing the bourgeoisie to accept the government of a coalition of workers' parties

A consistent class policy on the basis of a concrete transitional programme adapted to the conditions in each country, and a united front of the parties claiming to be of the working class, would be able also in certain cases to win a parliamentary majority, and in others to impose a government of the workers' parties even if it were minority [sic] from the viewpoint of parliamentary representation. Then, beginning with the formation (however it came about) of a workers' government, mobilization and organization of the revolutionary masses, enabling the workers' government to begin to act by going outside the bourgeois framework. The 'new road' to socialism in each advanced capitalist country, i.e., the concrete transitional road to socialism, depends on three conditions: the working up of a transitional programme adapted to the peculiarities of the country; a systematic united front policy of the workers' parties; the orientation of the programme and the front towards the government of the workers' parties applying this programme and backed by the extra-parliamentary mobilization and organization of the masses.¹³

In an article on 'The Arab Revolution' Pablo calls for the formation, not of revolutionary parties, but of 'transitional parties'. In Morocco and Tunisia he calls for the formation of a mass Labour Party based on the trade unions. 'In the more special case of Algeria, it is obvious that both the revolutionary Marxist tendency and the essential forces of a mass Labour Party of tomorrow will emerge from the inevitable social and political differentiation within the present FLN.'¹⁴ The Marxists in these Arab countries must first work to form the Labour Parties so that they can work inside them in accordance with the theory of 'mass pressure'.

All this rigmarole shows Pablo not only turning his back on Marxist principles, as embodied in the 'Transitional Programme'; it also shows him arrogantly refusing to take into account the rich experience of the Marxist movement in Ceylon, where the Lanka Sama Samaja Party has established itself as a mass party.

What is the essence of Pablo's theories? They are a

¹² Michel Pablo, 'Democracy, Socialism, and Transitional Programme', *Fourth International* (Amsterdam), no. 6, p. 34, Spring 1959.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 35.

¹⁴ 'The Arab Revolution', *Ibid.* pp. 56, 57.

complete negation of the Marxist conception of the *conscious intervention* of the Fourth International. If one accepts the Pabloite dogma of irresistible processes, then the entire struggle for correct working-class leadership, and therefore for the building of the Fourth International, becomes completely redundant. If 'objective conditions', the 'new reality', as Pablo called it, can make bureaucracy act as a revolutionary force, then what earthly purpose does the Marxist movement serve? Why should Marxists put forward their own policies against those of the present leaders of the working class? Why should the Marxist movement fight to build itself as a realistic alternative before the working class, if 'mass pressure' can cut revolutionary channels along which the present leaders, or at least sections of them, will have no option but to travel?

But it is not simply a question of running away from the difficulties of building a revolutionary movement, and covering one's retreat by an artificial and mechanical scheme of 'irreversible processes' which will bring the victory of socialism. Those who declare that irresistible, irreversible mass pressure can prevent bureaucrats from carrying through counter-revolutionary acts as in the past are in practice helping those bureaucrats. They are blunting the fight for correct policies and providing excuses for the bureaucracy.¹⁵

¹⁵ When the east Berlin rising took place in 1953 the main lesson the Pabloists drew was that the bureaucracy was no longer able to repress in the same way. They sharply attacked articles in the *Militant*, the weekly paper of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, declaring that these articles were contrary to the 'line' of the International and 'devised from old schemas and reminiscences and not from a correct analysis of the present reality, of the relationship of present forces, from present dynamics'. A correct analysis of what happened in east Berlin should have been based, according to them, on 'international revolutionary dynamics and the new relationship of forces between the masses and the bureaucracy, obliging it to make real concessions and limiting its possibilities of repressions and purges'. Again, according to the Pabloists the events in east Germany 'did not primarily demonstrate the reactionary and repressive role of the bureaucracy (which we know very well) but its weakness in relation to the masses and its dislocation under the pressure and influence of the masses. The native and Soviet Stalinists in east Germany did not respond primarily by mass repressions, shootings etc. to the workers' revolt but much more by a series of concessions. Elsewhere, in Hungary, Rumania, Poland, Bulgaria, Albania, they proceeded by the granting of concessions even before the pressure of the masses erupted, precisely in order to avoid it On the other hand, the events in eastern Germany have given rise to a highly significant and precious phenomenon for the understanding of the real and not the bookish course of the political revolution in these countries, namely a split from top to bottom of the Stalinist party, an entire wing of the bureaucracy capitulating before the workers and taking their side at the time of the workers' uprising' (Letter of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International to the Socialist Workers Party, September 3, 1953). Three years later the bureaucracy, which was no longer 'responding primarily by mass repressions, shootings etc.', brutally crushed the uprising of the Hungarian workers.

No revolutionary organization, no combat organization, will ever be built on the basis of theories such as these. That is why Marxists must oppose them.

AS the proverb says, 'Tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you who you are'. Is it accidental that the ideas of Pablo were first taken up in this country by one John Lawrence and a small group around him in St Pancras? Lawrence has now developed Pablo's ideas to their logical conclusion by joining the Communist Party. A small monthly paper, *Socialist Fight*, carries the torch for Pablo in Britain. It is a flickering torch; but the British Pabloites have bravely tried to keep its feeble flame alight by joining in the attacks on *The Newsletter* and the Socialist Labour League. Its February issue denounces as 'irresponsible adventurism' *The Newsletter's* call for the rank and file of the trade unions to organize around militant policies. To *Socialist Fight* it is no less important to warn against this 'folly' than to criticize the policies of the Right-wing Labour and trade union leaders. To *The Newsletter* the main task is to build an alternative leadership with a socialist policy in the factories and trade unions. To *Socialist Fight* the main task is this: 'Above all pressure must be mobilized at branch and district level.' (The emphasis is in the original.) By distorting the position of the Socialist Labour League, by declaring that the aim of the League is to get together a tiny handful of militants and artificially call them a rank-and-file movement, the British Pabloites seek to cover up their own avoidance of the task of building an alternative leadership. The prospect that Pabloism holds out is that one sits tight contemplating one's navel until the 'process' within the Right-wing and Stalinist parties pushes the bureaucracy in a revolutionary direction.

The Socialist Labour League has not come into being by accident, but out of the struggles of the past year, which showed that such an organization was needed by the British working class. It has come into being to intervene in the experience of the working class, to organize, educate and prepare the vanguard which is drawing fundamental lessons from the employers' offensive, from rank-and-file resistance and from Right-wing betrayals. It has come into being at a time when the growing militancy in industry is not yet being carried into the Labour Party. It has come into being to fight for class struggle policies inside the Labour Party and trade unions, so continuing and carrying forward in present-day conditions the best traditions of Trotskyist work within the mass organizations of the working class.

Pablo and his band of international secretaries have

made not the slightest attempt to analyse or assess the present situation in Britain, the objective class relations, the industrial struggle, the political struggle, the problems and tasks of Marxists that flow therefrom. This is not their method. For one thing, such an analysis and assessment could be fruitful only if it drew on the experience of practical activity by the Marxist movement in Britain. But the international secretaries do not need to draw on anyone's living experience. They have their ready-made scheme. And that means subordinating one's own intervention in the class struggle until mass pressure forces the bureaucracy or sections of it into the leadership of a revolution.

The anti-Marxist idea that 'mass pressure' could change the essential nature of the bureaucracy; the anti-Marxist idea that 'mass pressure' could force the bureaucracy to go along with the world revolution; the assumption that—again under 'mass pressure' the communist parties could lead the working class to the conquest of power: it was against these Pabloite theories (which are indeed the 'crude revision of the Marxist conception of the bureaucracy'¹⁶ which LABOUR REVIEW branded them almost two years ago) that Marxists defending the principles of the Fourth International gave battle. There could be no compromise, for what was at stake was the International itself as a revolutionary force. For while Pablo and his supporters might repeat, side by side with their revisionist ideas, formal phrases about the necessity for the Fourth International, their revisionist ideas in practice steadily undermined its very foundations. Formal adherence to the International while destroying its content, its programme: that sums up Pabloism. Those who put forward Pabloite ideas in the proud name of the Fourth International are impostors.

Trotskyists in various countries who opposed this revision of Marxism therefore set up an International Committee to defend the programme and principles of the Fourth International against these people who posture as Marxists.

The supreme task for Marxists today, as the International Committee sees it, is to establish the political independence of the working class through the construction of powerful revolutionary parties in every country, parties which will provide the solid foundations for the Fourth International. If this task is to be achieved there can be no compromise with Pablo's theories. Between Pabloism and the Marxist ideas which guide the practical activity of the Socialist Labour League there lies an unbridgeable gulf. The Marxist *cadre* of the future cannot emerge without a consistent struggle against Pabloism.

¹⁶ 'Soviet Reality', *Labour Review*, vol. ii, no. 5, p. 130, September-October 1957.

A STRONG guiding centre for the revolutionary workers' movement in all countries must be built. An international cannot be a simple sum of parties; it must be a unified organization undertaking revolutionary tasks and able to help the workers' struggles throughout the world.

But how is such a powerful world party to be built?

The crisis of the proletarian leadership cannot be overcome by means of an abstract formula. It is a question of an extremely humdrum process. But not of a purely 'historical' process, that is, of the objective premises of conscious activity, but of an uninterrupted chain of ideological, political and organizational measures for the purpose of fusing together the best, the most conscious elements of the world proletariat beneath a spotless banner.¹⁷

The International will not be built by a group of impressionistic 'world strategists' handing down the tactical line to each country; nor by commentators charting the 'irreversible processes'. An international movement will be built by helping national movements to reach a thorough understanding of the realities of struggle in their own countries, and of their tasks. The richest and most important lessons for the development of the revolutionary movement will be drawn from its practical struggle to win leadership, from the struggle for its programme, from its intervention in the battles of the working class and the oppressed peoples.

The building of a world party is in many ways more complicated than the building of a national party. But nationally and internationally alike the authority of leaders can only be based on confidence, born out of experience, in their ability and the correctness of the practical and theoretical help they give to revolutionaries participating in the class struggle.

IN association with the International Committee of the Fourth International, the Socialist Labour League is proposing to call an international conference open to all revolutionary parties and groupings that are seeking to build Marxist movements in their

countries. It is planned to hold this conference in the autumn of 1960. To this conference there will be invited: all who stand for the building of Marxist working-class parties in the capitalist countries, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and in the countries under the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy; all parties and trends which stand for the defence of the Soviet Union, China and the countries of eastern Europe; all those directing their efforts to the construction of a revolutionary leadership capable of organizing the working class for the socialist revolution; all those who, seeking to be in the forefront of the national liberation struggle in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, base their activity on the need to build independent working-class revolutionary movements as the only leadership able to carry through the struggle for national independence to the end by fusing the national revolution with the socialist revolution; all those who oppose the idea that Stalinism and social democracy can be transformed into revolutionary forces and who consciously intervene in mass movements for the purpose of winning leadership and smashing the bureaucrats' hold over the working class.

This conference will have the purpose of assessing the present state of the Marxist forces throughout the world, and of elaborating ways and means whereby the common experience of these forces can help each national movement to develop as a revolutionary force. The conference will be a step towards the eventual unification of the international revolutionary forces into a world party on a realistic basis, with a centre whose functions can develop as the growth of the movement permits the rise of representative executive bodies with an authority that has been earned by work.

The time has come to reorganize the Fourth International and build it as a powerful international party linking the vanguard of the working class throughout the world. We are confident that the proposed international conference will be a milestone along this road.

¹⁷ Leon Trotsky, 'Luxemburg and the Fourth International. Cursory Remarks on an Important Question', *New International* (New York), vol. ii, no. 5, p. 169, August 1935.

11. "A Recall to Order: an Open Letter from the International Secretariat of the Fourth International to the Members and Leadership of the Socialist Labour League," reprinted from the Autumn 1959 issue of 4th International

The July-August 1959 issue of *Labour Review* contains an editorial entitled "In Defence of Trotskyism." The objective result, as well as the subjective scope, of this article is in glaring contradiction with its title. Ever since the beginning of 1957, which saw unity negotiations once more initiated by the Fourth International with the organizations which form the "International Committee," exchange of argument and polemics has remained internal — on both sides. Today the S L L abandons this attitude and publicly attacks the Fourth International, thereby seriously jeopardizing any chance of early unity of the world Trotskyist movement. This is therefore no contribution to the defense of Trotskyism; it is rather a contribution to weakening it. It contributes to the confusion which exists in broad progressive layers of the working-class movement about the nature of the Trotskyist organizations. It is another act that tends to discredit Trotskyism in Great Britain.

Under the circumstances, the Fourth International, created by Leon Trotsky, to which he adhered till the day of his death, and which continues to defend his ideas, his programme and his tradition, has no other choice but to answer these public attacks blow by blow. It regrets that, through no fault of its own, this public polemic, difficult for the great majority of advanced workers to understand, must start again. At the same time, however, there is also a progressive side to this irresponsible initiative of the S L L leadership. This discussion will allow many young comrades who have but recently joined the Trotskyist movement in Great Britain to understand better the significance and the purpose of the Trotskyist policies of the Fourth International, so slanderously misrepresented by the *Labour Review* editorial.

WAR AND REVOLUTION

After some historical introduction for the benefit of readers who do not know exactly what the Fourth International is and when and why it was founded, the authors of the *Labour Review* editorial, speaking about the cold war, arrive at the true scope of their article, the denunciation of "Pabloism," a creed which, they say, is adhered to by the present Fourth International leadership. This is how they define this creed.

It was in this period [of the cold war], under the pressures of Stalinism and imperialism, that certain prominent individuals in the Fourth International, headed by Michel Pablo, secretary of the international executive committee, began to *revise and reject the fundamental principles of the Marxist movement*. It was these revisions which caused a split in the Fourth International in 1953.

[*Labour Review*, July-August 1959, p 35.]

Here we have a statement of immaculate logic. Of course, if the leaders of a Marxist organization "revise and reject the fundamental principles of the Marxist movement," this can only cause a crisis and a split. No true Marxists, and certainly no such principled Marxists as Comrades Burns and Sinclair, the authors of the editorial in question, could stay for a long time together in a single organization with outspoken revisionists. And we are ready for the big blow, for the very next words tell us that "Pabloism had as its central thesis . . ."

If the reader is concerned by matters of programmatic principle, he will pause in his reading to ask himself: which of the tenets of Marxism will our orthodox principled comrades of *Labour Review* consider so fundamental that "revision and rejection" could only mean crisis and split? The thesis of the class struggle? Of the dictatorship of the proletariat? The Leninist theory of the state? The Trotskyist definition of the Soviet Union? The necessity of building a new revolutionary leadership throughout the world, for which the FI was founded? The defense of the Soviet Union? The Leninist conception of the revolutionary party? The principles of workers' democracy? The theory of the permanent revolution? The necessity of unconditional support of the revolutions of colonial peoples against their imperialist oppressors? The necessity of opposing class collaboration in peace and war inside a capitalist country? The necessity of a political revolution in the U S S R in order to restore Soviet democracy?

Dear reader, you are quite wrong. All these fundamentals of Marxism have nothing to do with the "crisis and split" in the Fourth International. The authors of the *Labour Review* editorial do not even pretend that the present FI leadership has "revised and rejected" them in any sense whatsoever. No, the "fundamental principles of Marxism" which we are said to have "revised and rejected" are beautifully described by Burns and Sinclair as follows:

Pabloism had as its central [!] thesis a deeply pessimistic prophecy of inevitable and immediate war. The forecast not only presumed the organic incapacity of the American and European working class to prevent such a war — thereby dismissing their revolutionary potentialities — but also attributed to the imperialist rulers a power, homogeneity and stability which they did not possess. [...] Since the 'inevitable', 'immediate' war would be a war against the Soviet Union, Pablo declared that by its very nature it would be an international civil war, a 'war-revolution'. The world was already being polarized between the forces of revolution and the forces of imperialism. Working-class bureaucracies, both Stalinist and right-wing, were in a vice. On the

one side was the irreversible march of imperialism to war — a war against the whole working class. On the other hand was the irreversible revolutionary wave. [Ibidem, p 35.]

We shall return to the subject itself in a minute. But some preliminary remarks are necessary. The authors pompously committed themselves to denounce a “revision and rejection of the fundamental principles of Marxism.” And the “central thesis” of this revisionism is pessimistic prophecy about the inevitability and the nearness of the imperialist war. Now we beg Comrades Burns and Sinclair: Please, show us the textbook, of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, and even minor figures, where optimism or pessimism according to the inevitability and/or short-term or long-term perspectives about war is considered a “fundamental principle of Marxism.” In the twenties, Trotsky had predicted as probable an Anglo-American imperialist war. It so happened that this war never broke out. Did he thereby become a “revisionist”? When Hitler took power, Trotsky called upon the Soviet government to mobilize the Red Army immediately, for war was inevitable within two or three years. In fact war broke out only six and a half years later. Marx and Engels made many statements of the same nature. But perhaps, in the eyes of these distinguished Marxologues Burns and Sinclair, Marx was a little bit revisionist himself.

The old Romans had a neat saying for this kind of thing; it comes from the poet Horace: “The mountains are in labor, but they bear only a ridiculous mouse.” If indeed the “rejection and revision of the fundamental principles of Marxism” amounts to nothing more than a wrong and pessimistic analysis of the world situation, some comrades of the S L L might well ask their leaders, did this justify provoking an international crisis about it, not to speak of a split? Could this not have been settled by discussion and by experience?

The case of Burns and Sinclair is even worse than it looks prima facie. For this terrible “central thesis” of “Pabloite revisionism” was adopted as early as *Autumn 1950* by the *unanimous world movement*, with the exception of some French comrades. Burns and Sinclair were its staunch supporters for three long years. They had it unanimously adopted and confirmed at the conference of the British section of the F I which they headed. Till the very day of the split, they never said, murmured, or wrote a single word or line — not to say a discussion document — against this “central thesis.” A strange way of “giving battle.” A strange kind of “revisionism” which remained invisible to these orthodox critics for three long years. And so distinguished an “orthodox Trotskyist” as Comrade James P Cannon commented as follows on this “central thesis” adopted by the Third World Congress and the Xth Plenum of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, as late as 29 May 1952:

I think the Third World Congress made a correct analysis of the new post-war reality in the world and the unforeseen turns this reality has taken. Proceeding from this analysis, the Congress drew correct conclusions for the orientation of the national Trotskyist parties toward the living mass movement as it evolved since the war. Further, the Tenth Plenum, in its basic document on the tactical application of the Third World Congress

line, has faithfully interpreted, amplified and concretized the line of the World Congress.

Note well, this is the same Tenth Plenum document where Comrades Burns and Sinclair discovered the “central thesis” of “Pabloite revisionism.” And Comrade Cannon continues, on the nature of the Third World Congress and Xth Plenum documents:

We do not see any revisionism there. All we see is an elucidation of the post-war evolution of Stalinism and an outline of new tactics to fight it more effectively. We consider these documents to be completely Trotskyist. They are different from previous documents of our movement, not in principle or method, but only in the confrontation and analysis of the new reality and the tactical adjustment to it.

This definition by Comrade Cannon we wholeheartedly approve. It is the correct answer to the nonsense of the *Labour Review* editorial. There was of course only one sort of “revision” in these documents — not a revision of Marxist principles, but a revision in the analysis of the world situation, for the very simple reason that that world situation had changed in some fundamental aspects compared to 1938.

Let us briefly summarize the contents of these documents relative to the problem of war. World War I and World War II had been inter-imperialist wars. But it is obvious that the capitalists can slit one another's throats only if they are not under the immediate threat of being overthrown by their respective workers (as they were after November 1918, when Foch let the Reichswehr have additional machine-guns to fight the German revolution). So it was absolutely correct to say, in the past, that an imperialist war could break out only if the workers' movement was paralyzed (as in 1914), or crushed (as in the years from 1933 to 1939). The defeat of the Spanish revolution directly opened the road to the war.

But World War III will be an entirely different kind of war. It will not be an inter-imperialist war. It will be a war by an imperialist alliance, headed by American imperialism, against the Soviet bloc, the colonial revolution, and all active and class-conscious forces of the international labor movement. We hope that, at least on this point, there is no difference of opinion between the comrades of the S L L and the Fourth International.

Now one can visualize two sorts of wars by an imperialist alliance against workers' states. One is the kind of war in which an imperialist alliance tries to crush an incipient danger for itself. This was the nature of the 1918-1920 wars of intervention in Russia. This was also, in a certain sense, the nature of the Korean war against revolutionary China. And under such conditions, it is still correct to say that the ability of the metropolitan workers' movement to paralyze the criminal arm of imperialism could successfully stop the war. As a matter of fact, this is what happened in 1918-1920. Incidentally, it did happen also in a very limited sense in 1950-51, when the British Labour Party was the timid and unprincipled spokesman of the British and European workers' opposition to MacArthur's plan of using the atom bomb against revolutionary China.

But there is also another kind of imperialist war against workers' states and colonial revolutions which can be visualized. Not a war under conditions of crushing military superiority for imperialism (these were still

the conditions of 1950, when the U S A retained the monopoly of the A-bomb), but a war of despair and self-defense by a dying class, which is not ready to leave the scene of history without a last-ditch fight for its existence. This is the kind of war the Third World Congress documents spoke about — with the full approval of the authors of this strange *Labour Review* editorial. And this is in all probability what World War III will be like.

The relationship of forces has turned with breathtaking speed against American imperialism. In 1945 it looked like the master of the world. Then came the colonial revolution. China was lost to it. North Vietnam was lost. The atomic monopoly, nay even military superiority, was lost. Within 15 or 20 years, economic superiority will be lost as well. The colonial revolution will “irresistibly” — we shall come back to this “revisionist” formula — spread from country to country. Sitting on top of the greatest stockpile of wealth and power which was ever accumulated on this planet, the leaders of U S imperialism see a world evolution in which they will lose country after country, continent after continent, till they will be isolated in their own hemisphere, nay their own country, economically strangled, socially threatened with imminent overthrow.

There is only one hypothesis which, under these conditions, makes war improbable. It is the hypothesis that U S imperialism has already been so decisively weakened *that it is no longer capable* of a last desperate attempt at self-defense. This is the illusion the Stalinist leaders seem, for the time being, to be laboring under. It is not the task of the Trotskyist movement to voice reformist illusions of this kind. No class has left history without defending itself by all means at its disposal. American imperialism still possesses tremendous means. It is mobilizing them, preparing for war. By far the most probable variant is that, sooner or later, it will throw them into the arena.

But can the international revolution not stop American imperialism? To a great extent it cannot. For each spread of the revolution is precisely followed by military intervention. There was military intervention against the Chinese, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Malayan, Kenyan, Tunisian, Moroccan, Guatemalan, Egyptian and Iraqi revolutions. There is military intervention against the Algerian revolution right now. There is no guarantee that any new revolutionary outburst will not be threatened by the same intervention. There is nothing “pessimistic” in this analysis, for if the list of countries we have enumerated is carefully reread it will be found that the majority of them successfully defeated this foreign counter-revolutionary intervention.

It may be objected: but what you have just proved is only a *general tendency*, not a precise timetable. This is true. The general tendency contained in the Third World Congress documents was correct. More precise predictions turned out to be incorrect. At the Fifth World Congress we made a long self-criticism on the subject. But it must not be forgotten that since August 1950, there have been four occasions on which we stood at the very brink of war: when the Chinese Army crossed the Yalu; when the U S atomic armada was already sailing into the Bay of Tonkin to relieve the siege of Dien Bien-Phu; when the Suez affair broke out; and when the American marines landed in the Lebanon to counteract the Iraqi revolution. Each time some specific

reason at the last moment saved the situation: inter-imperialist rivalry; the hope to come to an understanding with the colonial bourgeoisie; the high profits reaped in periods of boom; the conciliatory policies of the Kremlin, etc. But to understand why on all these occasions there has been no world war, is also to understand why the tendency towards World War III will remain and become more and more dangerous.

The only basis for a long-term “deal” between the Kremlin and Wall Street would be the ability of the Kremlin to guarantee the world status quo. It cannot do this, for two reasons: firstly because ever since 1946 the colonial revolution has become an autonomous force, which does not obey the Kremlin’s orders; secondly because the technical, economic, and social progress of the Soviet Union itself constantly changes the status quo. Under these circumstances, in the long run, the alternative for imperialism will be: to die fighting, or to die without fighting. We should have no doubt about the choice it will make. The only power which could prevent that would be the American working class, by taking power away from the monopolists. This would mean civil war in the U S A — and it will be admitted that that has not been quite so much on the calendar of world events since 1950, as the possibility of the sudden outbreak of World War III.

THE BUREAUCRACY AND “MASS PRESSURE”

The *Labour Review* editorial, we have just seen, indicated that the “central thesis” of “Pablo’s revision and rejection of the fundamental principles of Marxism” consisted in “a pessimistic prophecy of inevitable and immediate war.” We have already seen that this sentence contains at least three pieces of nonsense. There is nothing “pessimistic” about it — in the present world context. There is nothing “fundamental” or “principled” about it — it is a matter of analysis, not of principles. And it has nothing whatsoever to do with “revisionism.” If the worse comes to the worst, it is nothing but a wrong analysis of world evolution, which stands to be corrected by fraternal discussion and practical experience, on some occasion — and not by a split.

But perhaps we have been unjust to Burns and Sinclair. Perhaps what they wrongly called the “central thesis” of “Pabloite revisionism” was only some starting point. Perhaps we finally get at the devil’s tail when we read in the Editorial, on p 35:

But these irreversible developments did not mean that the working class and the oppressed peoples in struggle would come into ever sharper conflict with their bureaucratic leaders; or that the latter would seek, as in the past, to head off and destroy revolutionary development. On the contrary: according to Pablo, the conflict between the interests of the bureaucracy and those of the working class would be overcome. The bureaucrats would be swept along by the revolutionary wave, which would end imperialism.

One expects to find some substantiation for this serious accusation. No quotation follows. One reads on. No proof whatsoever is brought forward. The only quotation which follows — and which, incidentally, is taken out of the same Xth Plenum document in which Comrade Cannon found nothing revisionist and which he called “completely Trotskyist”! — says that the reformist

mass parties will make some leftward turns during a revolution:

These organizations cannot be smashed and replaced by others in the relatively short time between now and the decisive conflict. All the more so since these organizations will be obliged, whether they wish it or not, to give a leftward turn to the policy of the whole or at least a part of the leadership.

Now if that statement is looked at from all sides, from left to right, upside and down, nothing can be found wrong — not to say “revisionist” — about it. In a revolutionary period, leftward turns are made by the whole or part of Social-Democratic bureaucracies; isn't that so? Didn't that happen in 1918-1921, when “whole or parts” of the reformist bureaucracy of most European countries went as far as adopting — in words — the slogans of dictatorship of the proletariat and of soviets (the Austrian S P, the Norwegian Labor Party, the reformists inside the Independent S P of Germany, the French S P, the Italian S P, and many others)? Didn't it happen again in the period 1934-36, when such typical reformist bureaucrats as Léon Blum and Largo Caballero wrote that Hitler had won in Germany because the Social Democracy had been unable to build a dictatorship of the proletariat? Why shouldn't the same thing happen at the next revolutionary wave? Even that scoundrel Guy Mollet got himself elected general-secretary of the S F I O in 1948 on a leftist platform, during the revolutionary postwar upsurge!

Of course, the authors of the *Labour Review* editorial — the authors, not Comrade Pablo! — draw from this quotation (the only one they find to substantiate their strong accusation!) the following conclusion:

The bureaucrats were trapped by the revolutionary wave and forced to act counter to their nature — ‘whether they wish it or not’. To use words properly [mind you: the words “to act counter to their nature” are Burns's, not Pablo's!] they were forced to *change their nature*; for if a counter-revolutionary no longer acts as a counter-revolutionary, he ceases to be one.

Burns and Sinclair take a quotation which says that in times of revolutionary upsurge Social-Democratic bureaucrats, in whole or in part, in order to keep their treacherous control over mass parties, will make leftward turns — a hypothesis confirmed dozens of times in the history of the labor movement. They draw from that quotation the conclusion that — because of a left turn? — these bureaucracies can no longer act in a counter-revolutionary way (something which no document of the Fourth International, no document of Comrade Pablo, ever said), and then *they* accuse the F I of having “revised” Marxism by stating that — the bureaucracy has changed its nature! What kind of “dialectics” or “polemics” are these?

But more of the same is to come, for we now catch our unprincipled critics in the very act of deforming quotations. In order to “prove” that Pablo defends the revisionist thesis of bureaucratic self-reform, our clumsy falsifiers have *simply suppressed from their quotation two sentences where Pablo says the exact opposite!* For in the original Xth Plenum Report (printed in *Quatrième Internationale*, February-April 1952 issue), we find between the first (“countries where the reformist movements embrace the political majority of the working

class . . .”) and the second sentence (“These organizations cannot be smashed . . .”), quoted by Burns-Sinclair, the following passage:

In all these countries it is extremely probable, except for some new and at present unforeseeable developments, *that the radicalization of the masses and the first stages of the revolution*, of the objective revolutionary situation, will manifest themselves within these organizations. The main forces of the revolutionary party of these countries will spring up by *differentiation or disintegration of these organizations*.

Now any child reading these sentences *purposely deleted* by Burns and Sinclair from their “quotation” can understand that what Comrade Pablo said — and what everybody, including Comrades Cannon, Burns and Sinclair considered quite “orthodox Trotskyist” — was only that a revolutionary mass upsurge in a country with an established working-class mass party would begin by causing a differentiation *within* that party; that it would lead on the one hand to a leftward move of the bureaucracy (or parts of it) and on the other to the emergence of a genuine revolutionary tendency; that through the *struggle between* these tendencies the reformist party would disintegrate and a new revolutionary mass party would emerge, exactly as happened in most European countries between 1918 and 1923.

Comrades of the Socialist Labour League!

Ask your leaders why they have to lower themselves to the Stalinist methods of misquotation and slander, in order to fight their factional struggle against the Fourth International. You know where such methods lead; don't tolerate them in your organization! No honest discussion is possible when people, driven by factionalist passion, cynically distort not only speeches but even writings, and insinuate that comrades say the contrary of what is actually written down. The accusation of Burns and Sinclair, that the Fourth International defends the revisionist thesis that the contradiction between the working class and the bureaucracy is being overcome, was already disproved in the very passage which they “quote”! The only thing this passage says is that the *inevitable struggle between the bureaucracy and the workers* will, during a revolutionary period, *start within* the working-class mass parties, and not by the workers leaving these parties by the thousands!

THE STALINIST BUREAUCRACY AND MASS PRESSURE

But falsifiers Burns and Sinclair have still another ax to grind. The Fourth International is alleged to have made its peace not only with the reformist bureaucracy, but also with the Stalinist bureaucracy. Two “quotations” (we have just seen what they are worth!) are brought forward to “confirm” this sweeping accusation. The first reads as follows:

In countries where the C Ps are a majority of the working class they can, under exceptional conditions (advanced disintegration of the propertied classes) and under the pressure of very powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses, be led to project a revolutionary orientation counter to the Kremlin's directives, without abandoning the political and theoretical baggage inherited from Stalinism.

Again we may ask: what is wrong with that statement? It comes, it is true, from the document "Rise and Decline of Stalinism," which, for the S L L, is considered heretical literature. But it was also made at great length (and in a much less limited way) by the Third World Congress documents — documents which were enthusiastically hailed by Comrades Cannon, Burns, and Sinclair.

The quotation speaks about "exceptional circumstances." If words mean anything, this means that this hypothesis is the *exception, not the rule*. Why then mention it at all? Because "exceptional circumstances" do occur from time to time. And it so happens that this "revisionist" perspective "rejecting the fundamental principles of Marxism," is nothing but an explanation of events *which have already happened* and which could — not as a rule, but in some exceptional case — happen again.

Please answer us, Comrades Burns and Sinclair: has capitalism been destroyed in Yugoslavia? Has it been destroyed in China? Has it been destroyed in North Vietnam? By whom has it been destroyed in these three cases? By genuine revolutionary parties, Trotskyist parties? Of course not. By the Communist Parties of Yugoslavia, China, and Vietnam. Did these parties, at the time of their conquest of power, still keep "the political and theoretical baggage inherited from Stalinism"? Of course they did. The Yugoslavs started to break with that heritage only three years later, and have not yet completed the process. As for the Chinese, they have hardly begun, not to speak of the Vietnamese. But did they not take power contrary to the directives of Stalin? Of course they did. Is that a general rule for the future? No, only in extremely exceptional cases will such a thing repeat itself.

So if we carefully read this "revisionist thesis," without letting ourselves be carried away by passionate invectives, we find that it corresponds literally to objective reality, objective truth. To read into this statement any idea that the contradictions between the Soviet bureaucracy and the working masses have been overcome, needs an extreme degree of bad faith.

The second quotation which proves our kowtowing before the Stalinist bureaucracy is another striking example. It concerns the concessions which the Soviet bureaucracy had been forced to make in increasing number to the pressure of the Soviet masses. Comrade Pablo wrote:

The dynamic of their concessions is in reality liquidatory of the entire Stalinist heritage in the U S S R itself, as well as in its relations with the satellite countries, with China and the Communist Parties. It will no longer be easy to turn back. [...] Once the concessions are broadened, the march towards a real liquidation of the Stalinist regime threatens to become irresistible.

Now again, from this quotation Burns and Sinclair draw the conclusion that "according to Pablo," the contradiction between the Soviet bureaucracy and the Soviet masses "has been overcome," that the Soviet bureaucracy will liberalize itself or that Pablo puts a question mark above the necessity of a political revolution in the U S S R. Once more these are of course absolutely slanderous deductions — not proved by a single word which is actually quoted. The only thing this quotation says is that under pressure of the masses, the Soviet bureaucracy was obliged to make concessions

to the people which have proved irreversible and which open the road to the overthrow of the Stalinist regime. There is nothing wrong with this statement; it is a correct analysis of what happened in Russia in 1953.

In reality, the Fourth International was the first working-class organization which understood that the relationship of forces between the Soviet workers and the bureaucracy had fundamentally changed in the workers' favor. This change is precisely the factor that determines the *pre-revolutionary character* of the present situation in the U S S R. This is a fundamental change compared with the prewar situation. Burns and Sinclair seem not to realize this even today. But the National Committee of the S W P understood it very well, for it stated in a resolution of April 1956:

A new stage has opened in the continuing development of the Russian revolution. The masses of the Soviet Union, who were politically expropriated by the bureaucracy under Stalin, and who suffered its brutal rule for nearly three decades, are evidently once again in motion; they have already forced far-reaching concessions from the bureaucracy and more can be expected to follow. [...]

[...] The [XXth] Congress [of the C P S U] thus marks the beginning of a new, profoundly revolutionary stage in the Soviet Union. *The immediate reason for the concessions, as we have indicated, was the palpable pressure of the masses which has grown so great that the bureaucracy calculates it cannot be suppressed simply by sweeping purges as in the days of Stalin — it is more expedient to bend with the pressure in hope of avoiding being broken by it.*

A revolution, in history, is very often preceded by evolution, concessions from the enemy, shadow fights which prepare the real thing. There is nothing "revisionist" in stating this; it is, on the contrary, the ABC of Marxism. Revisionism is the denial of the thesis that this process of pressure and concessions needs to transform itself into a revolution, a direct mass action, a qualitative "leap," in order to achieve final victory. Deutscher and other people who thought that the bureaucracy could reform and suppress itself, were revisionists; if they still think so today, they are still revisionists. But Pablo nowhere said or wrote that. On the contrary, *in the same article* from which Burns quotes, nay, in the same paragraph, he explicitly states that Stalin's heirs make the said concessions to mass pressure "in order to survive as the Bonapartist leadership of the privileged bureaucracy." A few sentences earlier he explicitly states that it would be fundamentally wrong and dangerous to conclude that the new leaders have been reforming themselves and that they can successfully "democratize from above the Stalinist bureaucratic and police regime."¹

¹ The *Labour Review* editorial distorts a third quotation from an article by Comrade Pablo. On p 37, the authors quote part of his article, "Democracy, Socialism, and Transitional Programme" (which originally appeared in *Fourth International* no 6, Spring 1959, p 34). They attempt to create the impression that Pablo proposes "precisely the present policy of the British Communist Party." But in order to arrive at that result, they quote two paragraphs which in the original text do not follow one after the other, but are separated by the following: "In both cases, the parliamentary origin of the workers' government would in

And again we must ask you, comrades of the Socialist Labour League: Why is it that Comrades Burns and Sinclair, who have often known how to fight capitalists, reformist bureaucrats, and Stalinists with correct arguments, have to resort to crude slander, distortion, and falsification in their irresponsible fight against the Fourth International? Perhaps for the same reason why the Stalinists, who more than once have correctly polemized against capitalists and even against the Social-Democratic stooges of capitalism, cannot honestly refute Trotskyism but must resort to slander, vilification, and forgeries? Is it because they are basically wrong in this fight?

HOW TO BUILD REVOLUTIONARY MASS PARTIES

The *Labour Review* editorial insists strongly upon the necessity of building "an alternative leadership." It sees in the building of that leadership the main goal of the Fourth International. We completely agree with that statement. That is what the Fourth International was created for: to give a new, genuinely Marxist, genuinely revolutionary leadership to the workers of the world. The question is not whether one agrees or not with that mission; no one can be Trotskyist and put a question mark above it. The question is *how* we are going to attain these goals *in practice*.

Experience has taught that it is not enough for a group of people to *say* or *claim* that they are "the alternative leadership," in order to be recognized as such by the masses. They must conquer the *political* confidence of the advanced workers, and, in the end, of the majority of the working class of their country. This is not an easy task. The Stalinists, in many countries, have been trying to do this for more than 40 years, with little or no result. We Trotskyists have been trying to do it for 25 years. At least there exists a huge body of experience in this matter. It might have been thought that Comrades Burns and Sinclair, who attach so much importance to this question, would at least summarize some of the lessons of these rich experiences. They do not even attempt to. Instead, they content themselves with hollow and pious incantations: "Slow, painful, uphill work"; "building an alternative leadership"; "smashing the bureaucrats' hold over the working class"; "practical struggle to win leadership." All well and good, but please tell us *how* this will be done.

We can at least give one example how it cannot be done. *Labour Review* devotes quite some space to denouncing the class-collaborationist policy of the CP of Great Britain. There is no doubt that the British Stalinists have been guilty of that crime at many periods of

fact be the result of the revolutionary united-front mobilization of the masses. *This mobilization, as well as the adequate organization of the masses*, would then be the guarantee that a workers' government might apply its transitional programme against the inevitably fierce resistance of the bourgeoisie." (Emphasis added.) Now this is exactly what the Transitional Programme says on the subject. Are Burns and Sinclair against the united front? Are they against the united front government? Are they against the united front government supported by mass committees? Of course this proposition applies only to countries where the working class is politically divided between two mass workers' parties, not to Britain. In Britain the formula is of course the Labour Party government.

their existence, to a greater extent perhaps than any other European CP (we recall their fight for a coalition government in the 1945 general elections). But it is also undeniable that, at other periods, the British Stalinists have shown quite courageous examples of militancy among the organized workers and the unemployed. The "third period" (1928-1933) was typical of that. It was a period of great economic crisis, which brought unheard of misery to many layers of the British working class. It was a period which witnessed the extraordinary betrayal of the MacDonald group. It was a period of numerous militant class actions led by the Communists. Yet when that period was over, and a trial balance was drawn of the relationship of forces between the reformist Social-Democratic Labour Party and the Communist Party, the conclusion had to be reached that the former had grown stronger compared to the latter, and not the other way round.

As a great number of similar experiences in other European countries confirm the same rule, we may formulate it in the following way. In countries with an old-established political mass movement, to which the overwhelming majority of the workers give political allegiance, no alternative leadership will be built up essentially through leading militant strike actions on the economic front. If they act in an intelligent way, individual revolutionaries (like individual Stalinists) can win very strong positions in this way as shop-stewards or even as union leaders on a regional or national scale. But this nowise means that the workers who follow them in a strike or a militant action against union bureaucrats are ready to follow them politically into a new party, group or league. And those who follow them there will not stay for long, if they remain outside the organized mass party of labor.

We can draw a second conclusion from this experience. In all countries with organized mass parties of the working class, to which the majority of the class gives allegiance, no *mass* revolutionary party will be built mainly by *individual recruitment* (i.e. winning over, through propaganda or the example of militant actions, individual members of the mass party, or groups of 4, 5, 10, 12 members at a time). There is no example of such a process of building an alternative leadership of the working class, either in the history of the Third International, or in the history of the Fourth International. Revolutionary mass parties will be built through *splits inside the reformist (or Stalinist) mass parties*, splits not of a couple of hundred or even a couple of thousand members, but splits which draw away the majority (or a very strong minority) of all the politically conscious members of these parties. That is the way the Communist mass parties of Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, France, and Italy were built in the early twenties. And in countries like Britain, Austria, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, where the Communists failed to do that job efficiently — notwithstanding Lenin's correct and far-sighted advice — the CPs have remained politically isolated sects right up to this day.

Of course these lessons from forty years' experience apply only to countries where a politically organized and conscious working class exists. They do not apply to countries where there exists a strong trade-union movement, but no mass political party of the working class. They certainly do not apply to countries where there exists no mass labor movement at all. It was in these

latter conditions that our Ceylonese comrades, whom Burns approvingly sets up as an example, have been able to build an independent Trotskyist mass party which has won over the majority of the workers of their country. But inasmuch as the conditions under which our Ceylon comrades — in a certain sense also our Bolivian comrades — work are exceptional and not the rule, for in most countries of the world there exists today a working-class mass movement, either purely trade-union, or trade-union as well as political, the lessons of their splendid achievement cannot be applied to countries where these conditions do not exist, without miseducating the movement, leading it into a dead end and causing repeated demoralization and disintegration.

The terrible example of the French allies of Burns — whom he has himself characterized in a recent document of the International Committee — as a “small opportunist sect,” should give much matter for thought to the members of the S L L. A few years ago, this Lambert group, which counted some excellent militant workers in its ranks, boasted also that it was building an “alternative leadership for the French workers” because it had played a leading role in some unofficial strikes and had brought together some militant unionists — outside of the mass movement. Today it has practically collapsed when these inflated dreams proved absolutely unrealistic.

We have spoken of countries where a politically conscious and organized working class exists, and about countries — like Ceylon — where at the time of the foundation of the L S S P there existed neither mass unions nor mass parties of the working class. But there exists a third category of countries, countries with a strong trade-union movement, but no politically organized masses of workers. In these countries, according to the thoroughly rotten, defeatist, pessimistic, and revisionist outlook attributed to the present Fourth International leadership, there is slight probability that the mass of the workers will at one bound jump from a total lack of political consciousness to political consciousness at its highest level: revolutionary Marxism, Trotskyism. That is why that allegedly treacherous leadership proposes for such countries the “rigmarole” of “transitional parties,” i.e., mass labor parties based on the unions. The *Labour Review* editorial scornfully denounces such a proposition as revisionist through and through. Unfortunately for the authors of that editorial, the real patent-right of that proposal does not belong to the I S of the Fourth International but to — Comrade Trotsky, who made it in 1938-9 to the S W P. It was adopted enthusiastically by the S W P and has been kept ever since as a main plank in the S W P programme!

The only “innovation” we have made is to extend the same idea to some countries with the same conditions (mass unions but no independent working-class political party) such as Argentina, Morocco, and Tunisia. We still wait for any argument to tell us why this is correct in the U S A but wrong in Argentina — where, incidentally, our comrades have conquered quite some influence in the unions owing to this slogan, and where they got 15,000 votes in the province of Buenos Aires, 25 % of the Stalinist vote.²

² As an indication of the principled character and political homogeneity of the policy of the International Committee, it may be noted that while Burns is now opposed to entrism in Social-Democratic and Stalinist Parties, his Argentine

Comrades Burns and Sinclair wind up this passage of their indictment of the Fourth International with the following sweeping assertions:

What is the essence of Pablo's theories? They are a complete negation of the Marxist conception of the *conscious intervention* of the F I. If one accepts the Pabloite dogma of irresistible processes, then the entire struggle for correct working class leadership, and therefore for the building of it, becomes completely redundant. If ‘objective conditions’, the ‘new reality’ as Pablo called it, can make bureaucracy act as a revolutionary force, then what earthly purpose does the Marxist movement serve? Why should Marxists put forward their own policies against those of the present leaders of the working class? Why should the Marxist movement fight to build itself as a realistic alternative before the working class, if “mass pressure” can cut revolutionary channels along which the present leaders or at least sections of them, will have no option but to travel?

But it is not simply a question of running away [!] from the difficulties of building a revolutionary movement, and covering one's retreat by an artificial and mechanical scheme of ‘irreversible processes’ which will bring the victory of socialism. [*Labour Review*, p 37] ³

Now this is indeed a childish rigmarole, to use a word which Burns and Sinclair seem to like. *Labour Review* has produced no shadow of a proof that the present F I leadership abandons to either bureaucrats or “irresistible processes” and “objective conditions” the tasks of building a new revolutionary leadership or of achieving the victory of world revolution. What the F I consistently pointed out in this connection since 1950 was the fact that, *contrary* to the 1923-1943 pre-war period, the relationship of forces on a global scale had irreversibly swung against capitalism, and that therefore objective conditions were globally *favorable* to the building of revolutionary mass parties, and not unfavorable as before the war. *Labour Review* has not quoted a single sentence proving that the F I thinks that the bureaucracy can reform itself or become revolutionary. What the F I *did* say in this connection was that the bureaucracy would split under the pressure of the revolution,

political ally Moreno has entered — the *bourgeois nationalist* Perón party!

“Burns and Sinclair make quite a play about “irreversible” processes. If one believes in “irreversible processes,” why fight for the revolution? How little they understand about the concrete ways to bring about victorious revolutions! Marxists never thought that the objective conditions alone “could do the job”; but they always thought — and still think — that certain objective conditions, certain “irreversible processes,” are *necessary prerequisites* for a successful revolution. The National Committee of the S W P showed a better understanding by voting in its April 13-15 session a resolution on the XXth Congress of the C P of the Soviet Union, which has this to say about “irreversible processes”: “The slogan ‘back to Lenin’ is thus a proletarian slogan which the masses will inevitably fill with their own revolutionary socialist content. Naturally, this will not occur in a day. The workers are yet unorganized. The bureaucracy will fight desperately as it nears its doom. The entire process will have its ups and downs and even reversals. *The important thing is that the process has begun and in the final analysis it will prove to be irreversible. [!]*”

and that some parts of it would go along for *part of the way* towards the revolution, a unanimously recognized fact in Hungary (Nagy!), Poland (Gomulka!), Yugoslavia (Tito!), Germany 1918-23 (part of the U S P D - leadership), etc.⁴ The idea of a revolutionary mass movement being led only by those who have been "pure from birth" is of course a childish sectarian illusion. But in all this there is not the slightest proof of the assertion that the F I is "running away from the difficulties of building a revolutionary movement." Far from "running away" from those difficulties, it is tackling them, not without success, in more than thirty countries throughout the world.

For the first time in its history, the Fourth International had tried to work out a rounded theory of the concrete way to build revolutionary mass parties in various parts of the world. To this, Burns has nothing to oppose but slanderous invective and empty phrases. It is not in this way that a Marxist movement gets educated; and it is certainly not along such a road that it becomes a mass movement.

AN IRRESPONSIBLE TURN IN GREAT BRITAIN

But the heart of the matter is the new tactical decision of the Burns group concerning "independent work." In order to understand the thoroughly unprincipled, monstrously irresponsible nature of this turn, the young comrades who have recently joined the S L L should consider the following facts.

For more than 13 years, the Burns group — before the split, during the split, and after the split — has been violently and totally opposed to the public activity of a Trotskyist organization in Britain. As we have argued above, it has argued that the mass revolutionary party of the British workers will be born as a result of differentiation within the Labour Party — not only the unions affiliated to the Labour Party but the Labour Party as a political organization, with its annual conferences, its local branches, etc. It has argued at great length that any independent Trotskyist activity, which draws forces away from that work inside the Labour Party and jeopardizes the security of that work, should be condemned and stopped as a disruption of the building of a revolutionary mass party in Great Britain.

As late as 6 July 1957, Comrade Burns wrote a letter to the I S, in the course of the then unity negotiations. We wish to quote the following passage from that letter:

We must disagree with you when you maintain that our attitude toward Comrade G's group is ultimatistic. Our movement in Britain discussed for many years the tactics and strategy for the construction of the Revolutionary Party. By an overwhelming majority, the International movement as a whole decided with us that the entrust tactic was the best way to do this. As far as we are aware, no decision has ever been taken by your bodies to reverse this, and certainly the International Committee is fully in support of this policy. *More than ever* we are convinced that this is the correct road for our movement.

⁴Burns himself wrote in May 1957 on the Polish events: "A section of this native [Polish] bureaucracy began to lean on the masses to counteract the demands of the Kremlin." ("The Fight against Pabloite Revisionism," p xiii in the I S *Internal Bulletin*, edition of July 1957.)

The G group are in favour of the ex - R C P policy of "open work" and we for our part have no desire to resume the old discussions of the forties. What happened to the R C P and the majority of its leaders should be instructive enough in this respect. [. . .]

[. . .] When we say that they must disband the R S L, we are simply repeating that our movement rejects the tactic of "open work" and there is nothing ultimatistic about this. It is simply a statement of fact. [. . .] We for our part will not tolerate any resumption of the old factionalism and for this reason *we are absolutely opposed to any forms of activity which will repeat the wasteful practices of the past, re-opening old issues which have long been settled by history.*

We do not agree with Comrade Burns' description of the activities of the R S L at that time. But for the rest, we were and are in full agreement with everything said in that letter concerning the entrust tactic in Britain, as the best way to build the revolutionary party. We were and we are opposed to an orientation towards independent activities which are "the wasteful practices of the past." Like Comrade Burns, we considered this question an issue "which had long been settled by history."

Barely two years after writing that letter, Burns now has completely reversed his position on this fundamental issue. Now he is in favor of independent activity. Now he wants to build the S L L not only as an independent working-class organization, but even — there can be no other meaning given to the *Labour Review* editorial — as a Trotskyist one.

Now first of all we may ask: Did the Burns group prepare this fundamental turn by a thorough-going discussion, by a deep-going analysis explaining why this break with 14 years of political struggle and experience suddenly became necessary? There was no discussion. There was no conference. The decision was made at the top, with breath-taking celerity. It was approved after a short discussion which *followed* instead of preceding this fundamental turn.

One should expect Burns and Sinclair to give at least a short explanation of the reasons for this fundamental turn, of their "analysis and assessment of the present situation in Britain" — as they accuse us of clinging to the entrust tactic without such an analysis. But the only explanation for the building of the S L L as an independent organization is to be found in one paragraph:

The Socialist Labour League has not come into being by accident, but out of the struggles of the past year, which showed that such an organization was needed by the British working class. It has come into being to intervene in the experience of the working class, to organize, educate and prepare the vanguard which is drawing fundamental lessons from the employers' offensive, from rank-and-file resistance and from Right-wing betrayals. It has come into being at a time *when the growing militancy in industry is not yet being carried into the Labour Party.* It has come into being to fight for class struggle policies inside [?] the Labour Party and the trade unions, so continuing and carrying forward in present-day conditions the best traditions of Trotskyist work within the mass or-

ganizations of the working class. [Ibidem, p 38 — emphasis added.]

What a curiously self-contradictory statement! The S L L, we are told, has been born out of the struggles of the past year. True, for, a year before, Burns still considered the dissolution of an independent group an absolute precondition for unity! But that means that the S L L is a child of the conjuncture, of recent events. Nowhere in this document is it proved that the mass of the British workers have abandoned their political allegiance to the Labour Party. Nowhere is it argued that the radicalization of the British workers as a class will not find its first mass expression *inside* the Labour Party, through the building of a new left wing. The only thing Comrade Burns argues about is that *this has not yet happened*. That is the only objective justification he gives for his turn.

It so happens that the very same position had been defended by Jock Haston and his group in the old R C P *against* Comrade Burns! The sectarians argued that it was no use entering the Labour Party, as long as there was no immediate prospect of a mass left wing inside it. In the meantime we have to conduct militant struggles and attract vanguard elements to the party, they said. Comrade Burns, with the support of the International, answered that argument by saying that it would be too late to wait until such a left wing actually had come into existence in order to enter the L P; that we should be there before, in order to play our role in building this left wing right from the start. In other words: the entrism tactic was *independent of the passing conjuncture*, “boom” or “slump,” temporary growth or stagnation of the left wing in the L P. It was a general line, correct for a whole historical period, as long as these three factors continued to exist:

- 1) Strength and self-confidence of the British working class.
- 2) Political allegiance of the big majority of that class to the Labour Party.
- 3) Certainty that each wave of radicalization of the working class would find its mass expression inside the L P, by the building of a new left wing.

Nothing has happened since 1957 to change these basic conditions. Nothing justifies therefore the fundamental turn which was implicit in the setting up of the S L L. It was an *impressionistic manoeuvre*, born from temporary conditions and impatience, opposed to the thoroughgoing analysis of the conditions for building a revolutionary class party in Britain, which British Trotskyists had achieved after fifteen years of discussion and experience!

Why was the S L L formed? Between Bevan's break with the left on the question of nuclear disarmament and the present moment, the left inside the Labour Party was undoubtedly disorganized and dispirited. At the same time, militant workers responded hotly to the employers' offensives in the shops. Thereby they came into headlong conflict with the right-wing union bureaucracy. There seemed to be a contradiction between this radicalization in the shops and the “lull” inside the Labour Party, including the Labour Left. Those were the reasons for the hasty building of the S L L.

Now the very moment the printers' ink had dried on the *Labour Review's* editorial, we witnessed the appearance of a *new mass left wing inside the Labour*

Party: the left wing concentrating around the problem of unilateral nuclear disarmament and some other no less important issues: nationalization, the 40-hour week, etc; and for some time it even looked likely that this left wing would get a majority at the next L P Conference! This left wing is broader than the Bevan wing of the early fifties. It has especially a much larger union basis. It has linked some very important economic demands to its foreign-policy platform. And its political demands are more advanced than those of the late Bevanites.

Of course Frank Cousins, as a person, might be not an ounce better than Bevan as an individual. But that is not the point. We have never judged left-wing tendencies through illusions in their bureaucratic leaders; we appraise them for their importance in raising the average political consciousness of hundreds of thousands of workers. The formation of the Bevan tendency had that effect; the present Cousins current will have the same.

This event, of very great importance for the future of the labor movement and the class struggle in Britain, did not take us by surprise. British and international Trotskyists had been trained for 15 years to expect just that — after the wave of trade-union militancy of the past months.⁵ It was *inevitable* that that wave should find political expression inside the Labour Party. That is what the International — and Comrade Burns himself — had been predicting for years and years.

It is not surprising that the comrades who have joined the S L L from the C P, impatient with the lull and the generally sad state of affairs inside the L P in 1958 and the beginning of 1959, were eager to strike out on their own. They did not have the experience with the Labour Party we had. They had not been educated with the general lessons which the Trotskyist movement has drawn from 40 years of experience of the British left. But Burns, Sinclair, and the other old Trotskyists should have restrained them and warned them that a new and bigger left wing would come up inside the Labour Party. Instead, in their unprincipled manner, they yielded to that pressure, and started their independent organization *at the very moment* the new and broad left wing was being born!

Comrade Burns might reply, with fake indignation: “We have no intention of abandoning the entrism work. Didn't we write that the S L L would fight for class struggle policies *inside* the Labour Party?” Unfortunately, that statement is nothing but an empty and hypocritical formula. A French writer once said that hypocrisy is nothing but vice presenting its respects to virtue. We may say that Burns's hypocritical formula about

⁵ As late as May 1958 the Burns group adopted a political resolution that says: “Formalists, sectarians and Stalinists begin their assessment [of the L P] by considering the leaders. All the political demands of the workers must turn in the direction of the Labour Party. [...] The growing demands for socialist policies among the working class must be demands on the Labour Party, which at this stage appears as the only alternative to Toryism. [...] In the period of mass action opening up, new forces are going to move into action. *Will they by-pass the Labour Party? On the contrary, we reaffirm our opinion that the central political experiences of the working class will be geared to developments in the Labour Party. The fight for revolutionary leadership is impossible without roots in this mass party of the British working class.*”

“fighting inside the Labour Party” is nothing but his bad conscience paying respect to his own former principles, which he has now so irresponsibly thrown overboard.

The way the S L L was launched rendered its existence within the Labour Party practically impossible, for anybody who has no illusions about the nature of the right-wing bureaucracy. But let us admit that the naïve founders of the S L L were taken by surprise by the Transport House ban. This ban is, however, a fact. Now if the S L L had wanted to stay inside the Labour Party, it would, after this ban, have had to disband under protest. Nothing of the sort happened. It decided *openly to defy the bureaucracy*. Under the present circumstances, such a defiance inevitably leads to expulsion. Burns says that only ten members of the S L L have been expelled till now. We do not know if these statistics are not a bit gilded on the edges. In any case, more and more expulsions will follow. A big part of the old Trotskyist cadres, who had worked for more than 10, in many cases nearly 20 years, inside the Labour Party, will find themselves outside the Labour Party — at the very moment the struggle between the left and the right wing is flaring up again, stronger than ever before. A policy which has such a result, after all the past discussions and experiences of British Trotskyism, is an utterly irresponsible one. It destroys by one stroke of the pen the results of a long period of energetic and fruitful revolutionary work.

Some comrades might reply: “What do you propose instead? Capitulation before Transport House?” We should ask these comrades to read carefully some chapters of Lenin’s *Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder*.

The British Labour Party is the strongest working-class organisation in Europe. It is governed by a treacherous right-wing bureaucracy, which acts as a stooge of the capitalist class. It manipulates the mass movement through a rotten bureaucratic apparatus. The struggle with this apparatus is a life-and-death struggle for the future of socialism in Britain. To say that you will “openly challenge” their rules, and refuse to retreat, *when you are not strong enough to win the support of the majority of the workers*, means only to withdraw from the field of struggle for the cause “of purity,” to leave these millions of workers politically at the mercy of the right wing and some confused centrist oppositionals. To retreat before the attack of the right wing is neither “unprincipled” nor “dishonorable.” It is absolutely indispensable in order to break in the long run the hold of the labor fakery on the mass movement.

There is nothing new or “revisionist” about this thesis. It has been applied in the recent past by Comrade Burns himself. Some years ago the bureaucracy banned the left-wing paper *Socialist Outlook*. Comrade Burns had some influence in that paper. He defended — correctly — the position that the editors of the *Outlook* should stop publishing their paper under protest. Was that “capitulation before Transport House”? Of course not. Was it perhaps “refusal to build an alternative leadership,” or “replacing revolutionary action by pressure of the masses”? Nonsense! It was an indispensable step for safeguarding the vanguard’s chances of linking up with hundreds of thousands of leftward-moving workers, i.e., for a successful fight against Transport House.

You may ask your leaders: Why don’t the same arguments apply to the present situation? Do they really think that the Labour Party has lost the political allegiance of the majority of British workers? Do they really think that under present conditions, in the given relationship of forces, they are stronger than the L P bureaucracy? It is one thing to defy Transport House when you have say two or three million votes behind you; it is something else to “defy” the bureaucracy and to be kicked out from the arena of struggle because of an utterly fantastic over-estimation of your own forces.

We should like to add a last word on this subject. Through the present issue of the *Labour Review* the S L L now presents itself openly as a *Trotskyist* organization; but Burns still upholds the legend that it wants to work “inside the Labour Party.” Can anyone imagine greater confusion? Has he never heard about the Transport House ban against the C P joining the L P? Does he not know that even at the time Attlee and Stalin were close allies this ban was not lifted? Does he not know that Transport House rightly considers Trotskyism a variant — and from its own point of view, a more dangerous variant — of communism? How can anybody in his right senses think a single moment that Transport House is going to accept the affiliation of an officially Trotskyist organization to the Labour Party? Isn’t it clear under the circumstances that the building of the S L L means the end of the entrism tactic, the sudden irresponsible liquidation of the fruits of ten years’ hard work?

The comrades who have recently joined the Trotskyist movement coming from the C P might not understand why we argue with so much passion on this point. To understand that passion, we ask them one thing: *Demand from your leaders the documents on entrism produced between 1945 and 1949!* Study the arguments brought up on both sides during the discussion. Study especially the very documents then written by Comrade Burns. Perhaps you will then understand that even if the S L L should gain many more members than it has at present, but *outside* the L P, it would be an incommensurably lesser threat to the bureaucracy than a hundred Trotskyists *inside* that Party. Perhaps you will also learn, then, that, to use comrade Burns’s own words, the “open work” of the S L L, whatever may be the courage, enthusiasm, and combativity of its militants or its momentary progress, will in the long run prove to be nothing but a waste of energy, a source of disappointment, discouragement, and demoralization. No one should reopen a debate on this issue “which has long been settled by history.”

BACK TO INTERNATIONALISM!

The *Labour Review* editorial ends with a confused page on internationalism; another expression of bad conscience on the part of Comrades Burns and Sinclair. They solemnly reaffirm their adherence to the idea of an International, which is more than “a simple sum of parties” (ibidem, p 39). But at the same time, they subtly revise the basic Trotskyist, i.e., Marxist, conception of an International based upon democratic centralism on a world scale, i.e., the *World Party of Socialist Revolution*, as Trotsky named it.

Now the comrades who have joined the S L L coming from the C P may regard with some distrust the idea of

any kind of "centralism" (even be it democratic) in an International. They know the sad experience of the Comintern and of the Cominform. They know how the Kremlin used to "lay down the line," and how the C Ps, all over the world, used to follow, in a servile and abject manner, all the twists and turns decided by the Soviet bureaucracy.

But our International has nothing in common with practices of this kind. How could it have? It has no state power; it has no apparatus of its own; it has no financial means other than those which the sections put at its disposal; it is not dominated by a single section; it cannot bring any kind of "pressure" on any section, except, of course, the pressure of ideas, documents, and discussion. That is the way the International has functioned in the past, when Comrade Burns also was a member of its leadership. That is the way it functions today.

The *Labour Review* editorial makes some dark insinuations about this subject. It says (*ibidem*, p 39):

The International will not be built by a group of impressionistic 'world strategists' handing down the tactical line to each country; nor by commentators charting the 'irreversible processes'. An international movement will be built by helping national movements to reach a thorough understanding of the realities of the struggle in their own countries, and of their tasks.

If by "handing down the line" Burns and Sinclair mean the kind of *diktats* the Stalinist Comintern used abruptly to apply, this is nothing but slander of the Trotskyist movement. We dare them to give a single example of any such thing having been done by the Fourth International, in any country. If, on the contrary, they mean that the International should not express its opinion on the main tactical problems confronting the sections, and should not submit these opinions to international and national discussion, then what does the second sentence mean? How can you help a national section to reach "understanding of the realities of the struggle in their own countries," without discussing the main tactical problems, and, above all, the problem of the correct road to building a revolutionary mass party?

In fact, Burns never was against such discussions and even international decisions in the past. As long as he was a member of the International majority he pushed the International leadership, again and again, to intervene in the British section in order to "speed up" the solution of the crisis, to intervene in many other sections with the same goal, to "expel," "crush" and "eliminate" all kinds of tendencies with whom he had tactical differences. Happily, the International never followed this kind of advice, and always *discussed for many years* tactical problems of sections, before taking any definite decision. What Burns really means, therefore, is this: as long as I am with the majority, I want the right to apply strictly the rules of democratic centralism on an international scale. But if, unfortunately, I find myself in an international minority, than I want it put down that there shall be no international "meddling" in my "internal affairs." In that case, the International must be reduced to a letter-box and a discussion club. This is the reality that underlies the "principled" "orthodoxy" of comrade Burns. For really orthodox Trotskyism is above all attachment to the idea and the organi-

zation of the International, as Comrade Trotsky taught us so many times.⁶

We have quite a number of other outstanding witnesses on this subject. Comrade Cannon told an S W P convention in November 1946:

Internationalism, as the Trotskyists have conceived it, means first of all international collaboration. But in our view this international collaboration must signify not only the discussion of the problems and tasks of co-thinkers in other countries — this is where platonic internationalism begins and ends — *but also the solution of these problems*, above all our own specific problems, *in action*. [*Fourth International*, February 1947, p 43.]

That has always been the conception of Trotsky; that has always been the practice of the Fourth International. And here you have another statement on the same subject:

The additional factor which aggravates the sectarian sickness of the British section is the past history and evolution of the present majority leadership. Their unprincipled split from the Fourth International in 1938, which they defend to this day, is a source of constant miseducation in the party. Their *inability to understand the role of international democratic centralism* and to abide by the decision of the 1938 Founding Conference of the FI on the British question, merges today with the organisational abuses of their sectarian policies. On the international field

⁶ Burns and Sinclair write that "the supreme task for Marxists today, as the International Committee sees it, is to establish the political independence of the working class through the construction of *powerful revolutionary parties in every country, parties which will provide the solid foundations for the Fourth International*." (*Ibidem*, p 38.) Further on, they write: "The conference will be a step [!] toward the eventual [!] unification of the international revolutionary forces into a world party on a realistic [!] basis, with a centre whose functions can develop [!] as the growth of the movement permits the rise of representative executive bodies with an authority that has been earned by work." (*Ibidem*, p 39.)

Our authors espouse here the old centrist formula — "First build national parties, then a 'really authoritative' International" — against which Trotsky fought all his life. Here is an excerpt from one of Trotsky's polemics against the I L P on this subject:

"It is necessary to understand first of all that really independent workers' parties — independent not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of both bankrupt internationals — cannot be built unless there is a close international bond between them, on the basis of self-same principles, and provided there is a living interchange of experience, and vigilant mutual control. *The notion that national parties (which ones? on what basis?) must be established first, and coalesced only later into a new International (how will a common principled basis then be guaranteed?) is a caricature echo of the history of the Second International: the First and the Third Internationals were both built differently. But today, under the conditions of the imperialist epoch, after the proletarian vanguard of all countries in the world has passed through many decades of a colossal and common experience, including the experience of the collapse of the two Internationals, it is absolutely unthinkable to build new Marxist, revolutionary parties, without direct contact with the self-same work in other countries. And this means the building of the Fourth International.*"

it is reflected in their permanent distrust of the patient educational efforts of the International Executive Committee, and their constant skirmishing on secondary issues.

[*Internal Bulletin* of the R C P, Special 1947 Conference Number — emphasis added.]

You know of course who wrote those sentences which call upon the International to “lay down the tactical line.” It is Comrade Burns himself.

If Trotskyists attach paramount importance to the International and internationalism, it is not only for reasons of principle. It is also because of the immense importance of an international organization for working out a correct political line. Marxism teaches us that knowledge is impossible without action. Politics are today world politics; national problems are inextricably linked with international ones. You cannot correctly formulate an international analysis behind an office desk or before a typewriter. Such an analysis must be tested by the practical experience and action of revolutionists all over the world. It must be the result of the confrontation of these experiences. Outside an international organization, such a real confrontation is impossible. Outside an international organization, revolutionists inevitably make grave errors of interpretation. To name only one example: the terrible mistake the “International Committee” and Comrades Burns and Sinclair made on the Algerian question — and note well, the Algerian revolution is today the most important revolutionary movement going on in the world — by “discovering” that the M N A, a moderate nationalist organization which today openly collaborates with butcher de Gaulle, was a “working class,” nay a “Bolshevik” party, which should be supported against the F L N even in its acts of individual terrorism within the anti-imperialist camp — this terrible mistake would never have happened if the Burns organization had remained within the Fourth International.

FOR A UNITED WORLD CONGRESS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

Having given lip-service to the idea of the International, Burns sets out to explain that the “time has come to reorganize the Fourth International and build it as a powerful international party linking the vanguard of the working class throughout the world.” A pompous and slightly ridiculous statement. *For Burns and his “International Committee” have now been trying to “reorganize” (i e, to split) the Fourth International for six long years, and they have completely failed in this task.*

They split the International in 1953, without any previous political discussion. They set up a “rival” international, with a “rival” international leadership. In four countries of the world, Britain, New Zealand, Switzerland, and Canada, they got the majority of Trotskyists. In thirty countries, this majority stayed with the Fourth International. That was the situation in 1953; that is the situation today. For six years, the “International Committee” has tried to split the Trotskyist organizations in the other countries, or to set up new organizations. They only could assemble a few individuals here and there, whose only common principle was their opposition to the F I majority, without a common programme, not to speak of a common analysis of the world situation or a tactic worked out in common.

If, after these six years of failure — during which the

Burns group made undeniable numerical progress in Britain, but during which many sections of the Fourth International made very important advances, and many new sections were founded — if, we say, after these six years Burns says that *today* he will start “reorganizing” the movement, this is only dust in the eyes of his membership, a diversionist manoeuvre to turn it away from what it really wants: *reunification of the world Trotskyist movement!*

In our opinion, the split of 1953 was an irresponsible one, because the differences between the two tendencies were only tactical ones, not differences in principles. The comrades of the S L L may differ with us on this subject. But they could hardly deny what Comrade Cannon stated in a letter to the Ceylon section of the Fourth International (March 1957): that since the split the positions of both tendencies had come very close to each other. Since then, grave differences have appeared only on the question of the Algerian war, and these differences seem also lately to have disappeared. Therefore, there is today no practical nor principled political justification for the split in the world Trotskyist movement.

The Fourth International must hold its Sixth World Congress in 1960. Burns announces an international conference of the “International Committee” for the same year. If both conferences convene, one can tell in advance what will happen. There is nothing to be “assessed,” for the situation in the revolutionary world movement is very clear. There are some national sects (like the American De Leonites, the Italian Bordiguists, the German Brandlerites), which will attend neither of these conferences. There is the Yugoslav C P, which will not be present either. And there are the Trotskyist organizations, of which the overwhelming majority will be represented at our Sixth World Congress, and a minority at the conference of the “International Committee.”

This would only consolidate and perpetuate a split which nobody can justify any longer today. It would tend to confuse and discourage those willing but insufficiently informed sympathizers who are now thinking of joining the Trotskyist movement in some countries such as England. It would be nothing but a manifestation of childish factionalism, in view of the tremendous problems we have to solve, and the tremendous progress a unified movement could make.

We therefore call upon you to *organize together with the F I the united world congress of Trotskyism in 1960.* The conditions for doing this are simple, and your leaders had already agreed upon them in 1957. Let us set up a parity committee which will lay down the rules of international discussion and material organization prior to and during that congress. Let there be an understanding and agreement, already proposed by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International in 1957, that whatever tendency remained in the minority at that congress would not be the victim of any kind of “repression” or “organizational measures,” that that minority should get greater than merely numerically proportional representation on all leading bodies of the International, including the International Secretariat, and that the some of the powers transmitted by the statutes of the International to the I E C, in case of differences within sections, should be reserved only to World Congresses during a transitional period of healing the split. If any supplementary orga-

nizational guarantees are asked, we are ready to examine them most attentively. All these problems can be fraternally discussed and solved, *for the political differences allow such a solution.*

Comrades of the S L L!

It is time to recognize the facts of life. The Fourth International, World Party of the Socialist Revolution, cannot and will not be "reorganized" because it exists, functions, and grows, with the support of the overwhelming majority of Trotskyists. Your goal should be to unify with that International, not to set up a smaller rival one. This must and can be done in the coming

year, if your leadership abandons its sectarian factional attitude on the question of unity. Divided from the International, you will experience new and harsh disappointments. United with it, you will participate in a new and higher stage of building a revolutionary vanguard in the world.

Forward towards a united world congress of Trotskyism in 1960!

Forward towards a united Fourth International!

THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

September 1959

SECTION XVI: DEFENDING THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

While continuing to advocate reunification, the SWP made the defense of the newly-formed Socialist Labour League an urgent order of business. The *Militant* carried frequent reports on the struggle of the British Trotskyists for the right to advocate revolutionary-socialist ideas in the Labour Party. "What the Fight in the British Labour Party is About," by Joseph Hansen is an example of that coverage.

The SWP leaders felt that the formation of an open Trotskyist group in Britain was, if anything, overdue rather than premature. However, some feared that Healy's initial tactics in accomplishing this necessary turn might create an impression that an independent party was being formed rather than a revolutionary-Marxist formation in the Labour Party. Cannon offered advice to Healy, with the aim of minimizing the losses that might be caused by tactical errors and preventing the development of any tendency to break with the Labour Party.

When the British followers of the International Secretariat refused to firmly solidarize with the SLL against the witch-hunt, Murry Weiss publicly criticized them in an article that appeared in the January 4, 1960, issue of the *Militant*:

"Before closing it is necessary to mention another grouping that has joined the campaign against the Socialist Labour League. The May 30, 1959, *Newsletter* reported that a group of supporters of a Liverpool publication called *Socialist Fight* united with the right wing of the Labour Party to pass an amendment to a resolution protesting the ban on *Newsletter* and the SLL. The amendment stated: 'The League (SLL) could only hamper the development of the movement in its struggle for socialism.'

"What is shocking in an incident of this kind is the fact that *Socialist Fight* considers itself Trotskyist and is associated with Trotskyists internationally who belong to a faction headed by Michel Pablo in the Fourth International.

"It is regrettable that Pablo has not thought it advisable to restrain his followers from such rabid factionalism. We do not deny the right of Pablo to express whatever differences he wishes with the British Trotskyists; but to join in attacking them instead of closing ranks in their defense in circumstances like these is certainly not in the tradition represented by Trotsky."

This comment drew a sharp response from Pablo. In reply, Joseph Hansen pointed out the contradiction between Pablo's asserted support of reunification and his campaign against the SLL. Healy hailed this exchange.

Today, Healy's squad of trained falsifiers are attempting to deny the support given to the SLL at this time by the SWP. An example of this is *James P. Cannon: A Critical Assessment*, by Michael Banda, a pamphlet published after Cannon died in 1974. Banda wrote:

"The formation of the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the Workers Revolutionary Party) and the split with Social Democracy in 1959 intensified the conflict with Cannon, who reacted with extreme subjectivism to this step forward of the International Committee."

By referring to the formation of the SLL as a "split with Social Democracy," Banda falsely attempts to identify the formation of the SLL with Healy's fullblown sectarian split from the Labour Party after 1963. Cannon's real views on the formation of the SLL will be found in the letters reprinted below.

The attack on the SLL's work in the Labour Party provided a test of the policy of "deep" entryism advocated by Pablo. Adherence to this strategy had led the IS to confidently predict that Healy was "destroying all the positions won inside the LP and the trade unions." In fact, however, the opposite occurred. The Labour Party bureaucrats proved unable to drive Trotskyists out of the party because of wide support for their rights in the ranks. Over the next period, the SLL won a powerful following in the Labour Party youth and recruited several hundred people. This outcome was in glaring contrast to the IS predictions of certain doom for anyone who carried out open Trotskyist propaganda in the British labor movement. Shortly after this test, the issue of "entryism" began to be debated within the IS itself.

Healy began to come under fire at this time for the organizational methods he used in settling internal disputes. These criticisms generally came from individuals or groups that appeared to be moving rapidly toward a break with Marxism, like Peter Fryer, or advocated a sectarian policy toward the Labour Party, like Peter Cadogan and Brian Behan. Their charges were avidly spread by anti-Trotskyists and the bourgeois press to justify the Labour Party witch-hunt. These factors led the SWP to largely discount the charges as the product of fundamental disagreements with revolutionary Marxism or personal demoralization as a result of the witch-hunt pressure on the SLL.

It is now certain that the dictatorial regime that made Healyism an international scandal in the workers' movement was being established in these initial disputes. Antidemocratic methods of handling opposition flowed from a monolithic conception of the party, and this, in turn, fed Healy's conviction that he could not live in the same international with other Trotskyist trends such as the IS.

At this time, however, the only area of disagreement between the SLL and the SWP that could be traced in the literature and activity of the two groups was over reunification. The scope and political significance of this difference was obscured by Healy's reiterated claims to support the SWP proposals on reunification.

1. "This is revolutionary 'entrism' as Trotsky taught it": letter from James P. Cannon to Joseph Hansen (May 19, 1959)

1902 Hyperion
Los Angeles 27, Calif.

Copy to Burns [Healy]

Dear Joe:

I was pleased to note that this week's *Militant* featured a story about the fight of our British comrades. I think it would be a good idea to have such running informative reports as a more or less regular feature of the paper in the next period.

These true news reports of a proletarian Trotskyist organization on the firing line should inspire our own comrades and also encourage the British. At the same

time, this factual publicity should be a very effective way of answering the Pabloite attack on the British organization in all international circles where the *Militant* is read.

In view of the Pabloite attack, it is important to emphasize the point that the British comrades are not abandoning the Labour Party but, on the contrary, fighting to remain in its ranks as a revolutionary tendency; appealing against every single expulsion and demanding reinstatement; and urging all revolutionary workers to join and work in the Labour Party for a genuine socialist policy. This is *revolutionary "entrism"* as Trotsky taught it. Pabloite "entrism"—which in practice means to play dead—is not the same thing. Cadres cannot be built that way; they can only be demoralized and eventually liquidated. This is an old story. I am making notes for an article on this subject.

Fraternally,
James P. Cannon

JPC:jh

2. "Do not yield to the impatience of some comrades who may want to give up the Labour Party": letter from James P. Cannon to Gerry Healy (June 12, 1959)

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Jerry:

This is a quick letter in a hurry. As you know, we are heading into a convention. So many problems and tasks are piling up, they have to be taken one at a time. I am scheduled to make the International report at the convention. I hope I will be able to get some time to concentrate on the article about liquidating the cadres through an "entrist" policy of playing dead in the Stalinist or social-democratic parties. I doubt, however, that I will be able to do it before the convention. I will deal with this question, among others, in my report.

Meantime, we have to concentrate on the task of consolidating our own ranks here in the U.S. and in Britain. That is the main task and we mustn't get diverted from it. After our Convention has given its mandate on Pablo's latest attack, we will proceed with full authority on the international field.

You seem to be doing very well in Britain, and I have no doubt that our own convention will be a big success of party consolidation and preparation for anything to come.

If I were to make one suggestion to you in your fight there, it would be to watch your tactics coolly and carefully at every step. The faction spirit is good for fighting but not for thinking. Do not be provoked into unrealistic actions which might play into the hands of your enemies. Take full practical advantage of the opposition of the Tribune and the Victory for Socialism people to the witch-hunt, and even make a few tactical concessions to facilitate their support.

Keep your actions as legal as possible, consistent with a militant defense of your opinions and your rights. Insist all the time that according to normal, democratic party practices you are not doing anything illegal; that you are members of the Labour Party and intend to remain as such whether expelled or not. Remember the Trotskyist

policy in conducting the fight against Stalinism up till 1933. That also was an "entrist" tactic, but not the Pabloite brand. We insisted on our right to be members of the CP, and recruited most of our cadres in the CP, but we refused to let the bureaucrats muzzle us. Cadres cannot be built up and expanded that way; they can only wither away and die.

Appeal against every expulsion. And make sure that a certain number of key people are kept out of the line of fire in the Labour Party for future action.

Do not, under any circumstances, yield to the impatience of some comrades who may want to give up the Labour Party as a bad job and start a new party from scratch. You are in the hard fight right now. But it should be regarded not as the war but as one battle in the war which will be long-drawn-out, and in the course of which you will consolidate the cadres for the future.

All this, of course, is ABC. As far as I can judge from a distance, you are proceeding along this line with good tactical skill, as well as revolutionary aggressiveness and refusal to roll over and play dead at the first sign of right-wing displeasure. That's the right combination for cadre-building.

I wish I could be in England to take a hand in this fight. It has been a long time since we had such an opportunity in the U.S. But I can still remember from past experience how easy it is to get provoked and carried away into tactical excesses which backfire in the midst of a fight.

* * *

The Los Angeles *Times* prints Cassandra's column from London. It carried the information the other day about your intervention in the racial conflicts in England. I think the slogan of defense guards is alright, but I doubt the wisdom of the demand to prevent the distribution of fascist literature. I recall that Trotsky once warned us against slogans of this kind when we are fighting for free speech for ourselves. We had quite a few fights with fascists in this country years ago. But even fights at their meetings and demonstrations were always conducted and reported as *defensive* actions against their attacks and

provocations. And we never demanded the suppression of their publications. That is a two-edged sword to play with.

I dealt with this general theme of *revolutionary action in defensive form* in my debate with Munis in the pamphlet "Defense Policy in the Minneapolis Trial." Do you have a copy of that at hand? I quote extensively from Trotsky in my answer to Munis. I think you will find it worth looking into on this point; and also on the defensive formulation of the question of the proletarian struggle for power. If I remember correctly, Trotsky also dealt with this question

3. "What the Fight in the British Labor Party is About," by Joseph Hansen (reprinted from the June 29, 1959, issue of the *Militant*)

A struggle in the British Labor Party over the democratic right of the rank and file to advocate opinions at variance with those of the top leadership may seem somewhat remote to American workers still faced with the problem of creating a labor party of their own.

The issue involved, however, is not a narrow one of concern only to members of the Labor Party. It happens to be under active discussion in the radical movement in America. It faces every trade unionist who sees what organized labor could gain by breaking from the Democrats and Republicans and taking the road of independent political action. It will strike a sympathetic response in every militant bucking dictatorial bureaucratic practices in the American trade-union movement.

The issue is the relation between democracy and socialism.

The British Labor Party presumably stands for socialism. Many of its members, however, have become convinced that the current leadership has given up the struggle for socialism and that this collapse weakens the appeal of the party. In fact, it can lead to the defeat of the party in the coming election.

A militant current, which had formed around the weekly *Newsletter* edited by Peter Fryer, sought to bring this viewpoint forward for consideration by the membership. To facilitate this, they organized the "Socialist Labor League" last February.

This was no violation of British Labor Party statutes. Groupings representing other viewpoints, such as the Fabian Society, Victory for Socialism, and Socialist Union, are accepted as part of the democratic internal life of the British Labor Party.

The Socialist Labor League advocates a five-point program:

(1) In opposition to layoffs, the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress ought to open up a struggle to spread available work among all workers.

(2) Basic industries should be nationalized without compensation to former owners.

(3) Shop stewards under attack from the bosses should receive maximum support.

(4) To win the next election, and put the Tories out of business once and for all, the Labor Party should campaign for an end to capitalism.

(5) To advance the struggle for peace, British troops

in "Whither England?"

Fraternally,
James P. Cannon

PS—Rose has recovered from her pneumonia, but is not yet up to par. She is a strong partisan of your fight in Britain and sends her best regards to you and all the comrades on the firing line.

JPC;jh
encl.

should be withdrawn from colonies and semicolonies, manufacture of nuclear weapons and construction of rocket bases should be ended, and the next Labor government should make an international appeal to the working class to "end production of H-bombs everywhere and go forward to world socialism."

The last point in the program seems to have particularly crossed the policies of the top bureaucrats of the Labor Party, for the desire to block a nuclear war is very strong among British working people, while the Labor Party heads are quite anxious to demonstrate to Washington that they will do nothing to upset the preparations for such a war.

This, coupled with the astonishingly rapid growth of the League and its influence, appears to have alarmed the right-wing leaders of the Labor Party, who dominate the National Executive Board, to such an extent that they decided in March to crack down. That this violated the democratic tenets of the party was, of course, of small concern to them—if they could get away with it.

They ruled that membership in the Socialist Labor League or support of the *Newsletter* were grounds for expulsion. Thus they began a witch-hunt in the Labor Party.

They calculated, perhaps, that a swift purge would behead the revolutionary-socialist current and at the same time isolate it. Under threat of massive retaliation, what section of the Labor Party would dare come to the defense of the victims designated for punishment at the stake?

The calculation, however, appears to have misjudged the temper of the rank and file. Militants throughout the ranks resented the dictatorial decree proscribing members for holding socialist views displeasing to the bureaucrats. Local organizations, who knew followers of the *Newsletter* to be among the most devoted and hardworking members, indignantly refused to expel them.

The strength of this feeling of solidarity can be gauged from the latest issue of the *Tribune* to reach New York. The *Tribune*, an independent voice of opinion, enjoys wide circulation among Labor Party ranks. The weekly has opened its columns to letters on the witch-hunt, and the June 12 issue contains almost a page, including correspondence from some of the victims.

Doreen T. Jarkowska writes to the editor: "I have studied the correspondence on the expulsions within the Leeds, Midlothian and Birmingham Labor Parties with very uneasy interest.

"It may be that justice has been done but no one but the blindest man could claim that it has been seen to be done. In short, the situation stinks."

JFR asked a sharp question: "Last night I was reading

Isaac Deutscher's biography of Trotsky. Is this a proscribed activity, and will the party expel me for it?"

Lance Lake, denouncing the witch-hunt at Leeds, says: "Councillor Dennis Matthews asserts that the Right-Wing majority in the Leeds Labor Party believe in democratic Socialism . . . Now it only needs Councillor Matthews to explain how the action of the Leeds Labor Party executive in expelling nine members without a hearing or without notification of the charges was either Socialist or democratic. It was only after legal proceedings had actually commenced that the decision was rescinded. . . .

"The Right-wing are whipped up to attend party meetings. They shout and clap and stamp their feet. They enthusiastically support bans, proscriptions and expulsions. All in the name of preserving official party policy from any kind of taint.

"When there is the need to attend public meetings—to go out on the streets—to knock on doors to propagate that same policy, a strange lethargy overcomes them; they become so shy, so coy. . . ."

David R. Smith declares: "It is typical of the group that dominates the Midlothian constituency Labor Party that every challenge to answer the basic points is evaded by a fresh outburst of erratic vituperation against the expelled members. It would be simple to reply to Mr. Tweedie's completely false account by a series of counter-charges, but that would be to deviate from the main issue, i.e., elementary, let alone socialist, democracy."

Smith then sets the record straight, detailing the dictatorial procedure used against the witch-hunt victims. Following his presentation of the facts, he says: "Members of the executive committee have been challenged to meet Moffat and me on a public platform, but they have chosen to conduct their operations from behind the scenes, indulging in character assassination and deliberate falsification. . . .

"Yet these people and their conduct are upheld by the National Executive. A leadership which will not tolerate democracy within its own ranks cannot be expected to guarantee ordinary civil rights when it gains political power."

Vivienne Mendelson, appealing for financial support in organizing and defending the witch-hunt victims, reported how the National Executive had suspended the entire membership of the Norwood Labor Party "because we had refused to expel from our party members who are alleged to be members of the Socialist Labor League, or to be associated with the *Newsletter*."

"An emergency meeting of the Norwood General Management Committee on June 4 decided by 26 votes to nil to fight against the reorganization and to continue as the Norwood Labor Party.

"We are now beginning a campaign among the 2,000 members of the Norwood party to win their support.

"We are also proposing to circularise the rest of the constituency Labor parties asking them to protest to the NEC against the 'reorganization' and to contribute to the fund which we have set up to help us carry on the fight."

League's Viewpoint

The Socialist Labor League itself seems to have thrived under this heavy fire from the reactionary right-wing bureaucrats. The grouping has not budged from its five-point program and has done remarkably well in bringing the attention of the party membership to the basic issue in

dispute—the democratic right to advocate socialist views in the Labor Party.

In the June 13 *Newsletter*, Brian Behan reports the latest developments in the internal struggle and what the Socialist Labor League thinks about them.

"The decision of the Labor Party national executive to reorganize the Streatham and Norwood Labor Parties," he begins, "is a blow against every member of the Labor movement who wants to fight for socialist policies in the Labor Party.

"But the decision of the Norwood general management committee to reject the reorganization of the local party is no less powerful a blow against the Right, and a foretaste of the new and formidable Left-wing movement that can emerge in the Labor Party.

"The NEC is trying to destroy two active local Labor Parties because they have struggled consistently for socialist policies.

"It has selected the Socialist Labor League as its principal target because the League has been foremost in the fight against the Right-wing policies that are shackling the Labor Party."

Basically, says Behan, the Labor Party is composed of rank-and-file trade unionists, who want to organize for socialism, and a bureaucracy that in its upper reaches wants to preserve capitalism. The middle-class careerists and reactionary trade-union leaders belong to various factions and write for the capitalist press.

The Labor leaders' real objection to the Socialist Labor League and the *Newsletter* is not that the League is a separate organization, but that it does its best to organize the fight for socialism within the party and challenge the grip of the Right.

"The Right wing dare not allow the Left to become as well organized as the Right and will use any methods to retain its grip."

In the past, Behan continues, the right wing has succeeded in similar situations. It did this in two ways:

(1) It has forced the Left to go outside the party. This happened with the Communist Party and the Independent Labor Party. These organizations correctly fought for their rights but went wrong when they turned their backs on the Labor Party in sectarian fashion.

(2) The Right wing has bought off the Left with offers of prominent posts.

"The Socialist Labor League," Behan declares, "is determined to avoid both these traps. We have not the slightest intention of abandoning our right to be in the Labor Party. Our policy has more in common with the views of the ordinary Labor Party member than Gaitskell's policy has."

Election Danger

The author cites the League's five-point program as evidence and turns to the problem of the coming election:

"Unless there is a radical change in policy, the danger exists that the Tories will go back into power at the next election.

"We are absolutely opposed to the working class repeating the experience of the hungry thirties. To prevent this the Socialist Labor League intends to continue and intensify its campaign for a socialist alternative.

"There are people who say we should keep our mouths shut about these embarrassing questions until after the election. We are not going to take this advice."

The current election platform of the Labor Party, this spokesman of the Socialist Labor League insists, cannot solve the growing problems facing the British workers. It is the duty of socialists to say this. It is their duty to seek organization of a Left wing in the Labor Party dedicated to the advancement of the socialist solution.

In the National Executive Committee, pseudo-lefts like Bevan have made common cause with rightists like Gaitskell against the socialist wing. "Bevan says he wants to defend nationalization. But he unites with Gaitskell to throw out of the party members of an organization which has the extension of nationalization as one of its main aims."

Behan voices a strong appeal for solidarity against the witch-hunters:

"We appeal to the whole of the Left to fight against this alliance of Right-wing careerists and pseudo-Lefts at the top of the Labor Party.

"We appeal to the Left to fight against the reorganization of local parties and for their maintenance as Left-wing parties campaigning for socialist policies.

"In some areas this will mean a fight against rump organizations set up by the Right. This is a fight against leaders who have no scruples about splitting the movement.

"To give way to these leaders for the sake of 'unity'

means abandoning the party to the Right wing.

"Unlike other Left-wing movements in the Labor Party, the Left we now must build will have a Marxist leadership.

"It is being born, not out of the defeat of the working class, but at a time of rising working-class militancy, when there is a real basis for challenging the Right wing's domination."

"Stay In and Fight"

Behan closes his article by urging any who feel like turning from the Labor Party in disgust to "stay in and fight."

"Unlike the Communist Party, the Socialist Labor League does not seek to pull the Left out of the Labor Party into a small sectarian organization. We answer the reformists' attacks by remaining inside the party and carrying forward the fight against the reformists and for a socialist program.

"The Socialist Labor League is able to unite with the Left in the Labor Party because it has no separate interests from the Left. Around our program can be forged the widest possible unity.

"The first serious resistance to Right-wing policy is being waged. Every trade unionist and Labor Party member who joins the Socialist Labor League can make an immense contribution in his local Labor Party towards the adoption of a fighting socialist policy."

4. "We must make sure that we do not facilitate this Pabloite game by abandoning our own policy of unification": letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs (July 24, 1959)

1902 Hyperion
Los Angeles 27, Calif.

Dear Farrell:

Doric De Souza has been in California on some private business. During the past week we had a number of talks with him. This week his business will take him to Ann Arbor. While he is in Michigan he will look up our friends in Detroit, whose addresses I gave him. He told me that he will be in New York about the first of the month and will remain there three or four weeks. He will look you up at the headquarters as soon as he gets some time free from his business engagements.

Our talks here covered two subjects: one, the situation in Ceylon, and, two, the problems of the international movement.

The detailed information he gave us about the situation in Ceylon was very interesting and illuminating. Since you will be seeing him, I will not report on that here.

On the international question, we had a pretty full and frank exchange. It seems that on the broad political questions which have been involved in the split his position is very much the same as ours. On the crucial question of the functioning of the international and the degree of "centralization" possible and workable at the present stage of the development of the world movement, his opinion seems to be substantially the same as ours. This applies also to the evaluation of the leading people in the Pabloite center.

He did emphasize, however, that the Ceylonese people favor a positive policy of reunification and think the responsible leaders of organizations in both camps should work together to advance it. We assured him that this was our policy too. We gave him a pretty full and frank exposition of our attitude as it was summed up in the discussions at the Political Committee on the eve of the Plenum. At the beginning of our talks, he was inclined to write off our parity proposal as some kind of a gimmick on our part. But when we explained to him that we meant it in earnest and cited the precedents for such a procedure, as I did in my convention report, I think he began to take a more serious view of it.

We told him that our proposal was not presented for bargaining purposes; and that we do not intend to retreat an inch from it. If the Pabloites had been serious and honest in their talk about unity they would have accepted our parity proposal at once. Their refusal, and subsequent actions and maneuvers, have in effect taken unity off the agenda as an early prospect. This is the present reality, and it must be recognized. But it does not change our basic position, as previously stated.

We told him that, in our opinion, it would be stupid to count on an early realization of the reunification. The new attack of the Pabloites rules that out. Reunification can be brought about, if it can be brought about at all, only when the responsible leaders of functioning organizations make their influence and pressure for unity felt in the Pabloite organizational set-up, as well as in the International Committee.

* * *

The Pabloite strike-breaking attack on the British section in the midst of its struggle with the Labourite right

wing, and his flirtation with the Marcyites in this country, call not for unrealistic chatter about a quick unification, but rather for an all-out fight against the latest eruption of Pabloism on these two fronts. The unity perspective must be maintained, but serious discussion of unity *as a project to be realized* will again make sense only when a definitive victory over Pabloite disruption on these two fronts has been registered and recognized by all.

Pablo's attempted new adventure in the United States by way of the Marcyites, has, of course, no serious organizational significance. It is useful, however, as another demonstration of Pablo's unscrupulousness and treachery and as another warning about the insane folly of anyone in our ranks entertaining illusions about him. The real battlefield now is in Britain, and our consistent stand for an eventual reunification of the international movement takes now the concrete form of all-out support of our British comrades.

This support must not consist simply of applause from the sidelines; it must include active participation in the fight, with critical suggestions in regard to the tactical line of the British comrades at every stage of complicated battle.

As we see it, Pablo's new intervention in Britain has two aspects. On the one side, it appears to be a startling revelation that Pablo construes his liquidationist policy of "deep entry" as a *principle* to be imposed upon national sections by centralized, international discipline. On the other side, the new attack was obviously designed to break up the trends for genuine unification recently manifested in his own ranks, notably by the Ceylonese and the Italians, but probably also by others.

We must make sure that we do not facilitate this Pabloite game by abandoning our own policy of unification, as agreed upon at the Toronto Conference. We cannot hope to influence the pro-unity organizations in the Pabloite "international" if we abandon our own program of unification and call or appear to call for a deepening and hardening of the international split.

We knew that before, and the discussion at the pre-Convention Political Committee meeting showed that all the leading comrades are agreed upon it. The opinion expressed at this PC meeting was also stated in Breiman's letter to you. Our conversations with Doric showed quite conclusively that this is the correct line to follow on the international field.

The Ceylonese want a general reunification, without supercentralization, and with organizational guarantees against Pabloite domination of the reunified movement.

But they don't want any more splits, and they don't think the cause of reunification can be served by any attempt to split off single organizations from one side or the other in the two international set-ups. If we had started out with the demand that the LSSP withdraw from the Pabloite "international," our discussion with Doric would have ended before it got started. But when we explained our policy in its essence and in detail, we began to get a sympathetic response from him.

The upshot of our discussion was a general agreement that we should make a deliberate attempt to create a climate for eventual unification by beginning a more active and open fraternal collaboration between our two parties. Doric agreed to our proposal that the LSSP should appoint a comrade to serve as correspondent of the *Militant* to keep our readers informed of all developments there. For his part, he suggested that Leslie [Goonewardene] and I should conduct an informal, confidential correspondence about all questions of mutual concern, which would include such critical suggestions and proposals as we might be able to offer about LSSP policy and practice in the developing crisis in Ceylon.

I gave him the Detroit addresses and suggested that he talk with our leading comrades there as fully and frankly as he did with us in Los Angeles. He will do the same with you when he comes to New York. I think it would be highly advisable for the PC comrades to schedule as many discussions with him as possible during his three-week stay in New York. It will be good if arrangements can be made to put him up so that meetings can be facilitated.

He will be interested to get from you some detailed information about the SWP; its organizational strength and where its branches are located; its structure and methods of work; its number of full-time functionaries, etc. We had scheduled such a discussion with him here, but didn't get around to it before his time ran out.

When Doric leaves New York he will return home by way of Europe and plans to visit at least Britain, France, and Italy.

It is our opinion here that if we can improve fraternal relations and open collaboration with the LSSP it can strengthen the unity trend and become a solid contribution toward eventual unification on a workable basis. Far from hampering the concrete fight in Britain, which cannot be soft-pedalled, an improved understanding with the LSSP should help that fight too.

Fraternally,
James P. Cannon

JPC;jh

5. Letter from Michel Pablo to the editors of the *Militant* (reprinted from the February 1, 1960, issue of the *Militant*)

I have just seen the article by Comrade Murry Weiss "Guilty of Daring to Battle for Marxism," in your issue of January 4, 1960.

It is, naturally, Comrade Weiss' right to interpret in his own way recent developments in the policy and organization of the Socialist Labour League. What is regrettable indeed is to proceed to declarations of a scarcely responsible kind.

To suppose that *Socialist Fight* is in effect a Trotskyist paper linked with the fourth International, according to the version now peddled by Comrade Weiss, is objectively to denounce this paper to the bureaucratic leadership of the Labour Party, and to provoke the expulsion of the comrades who support this paper.

It is feasible to propose to carry out a long-term entrism work in a party such as the Labour Party and at the same time to agitate openly for another, revolutionary organization, the implacable enemy of reformism, such as the Fourth International is?

In the present relationship of forces between the

revolutionary Marxists integrated in the LP and the bureaucratic leadership, such an attitude would be an adventure of guaranteed self-destruction of the entrust work.

That is the path chosen by the SLL since its formation, for reasons which escape ordinary understanding. Comrade Weiss now gives his approval to this policy of suicide, and after the example repeatedly provided by the SLL press seeks to impose the same state on revolutionary Marxist forces which would try, with good reason, to maintain by all means a genuine entrust work.

I refuse, of course, to accept the version given by Comrade Weiss of *Socialist Fight* and its so-called links with the Fourth International.

Socialist Fight is not an organ of the Fourth International, and in particular has no links with me personally. My personal position is that of a militant elected to a particular position in a Marxist organization, democratically and collectively led: the Fourth International. In connection with the precise accusation launched by Comrade Weiss against *Socialist Fight*, I have taken the trouble to check the facts.

It is easy to obtain this paper, circulating freely in the British labor movement circles.

In its issue dated August 1959, there is an article signed by Councillor Brian Deane replying to accusations

launched by the SLL, which Comrade Weiss, without exercising critical judgement, now takes as his stand.

I quote in appendix this article *in extenso*:

From this quotation it is clear that the charge made by the SLL against the Left Labour paper which is *Socialist Fight* does not hold water, and that the facts, as often the case, were grossly twisted.

The "crime" of the LP members in Liverpool who support *Socialist Fight* was to refuse to follow the comrades of the SLL in their "operation suicide" within the LP, in declaring themselves members of an organization outside the LP.

The SLL has now latterly chosen a peculiar way to proclaim the "truth": regardless of the particular circumstances of those whom it now considers to be its "enemies," often erstwhile militants in its own ranks, against whom it lets fall calculated "indiscretions" objectively equivalent to denunciations. This was the case, for example, with *Socialist Fight* and also with Comrade Peter Fryer whose illegal presence in a semifascist country is denounced.

It is necessary resolutely to call a halt to this really factional backsliding, now damaging terribly the great name of Trotskyism in Great Britain.

It is to be hoped that after careful reflection on the facts, Comrade Weiss will likewise arrive at this opinion.

With my Communist Internationalist greetings,

6. Reply to Michel Pablo by Joseph Hansen (reprinted from the February 1, 1960, issue of *The Militant*)

We were pleased to receive your letter clarifying your relationship to *Socialist Fight*. We hope that by publishing this and by clarifying the allusion in Comrade Weiss' article, to which you objected, we can make it clear that *Socialist Fight* is not at all linked with the Fourth International or with you personally.

I am sure that Comrade Weiss did not intend to imply the existence of organizational ties in the brief reference he made to *Socialist Fight* and to its association and the association of its supporters with Trotskyists internationally "who belong to a faction headed by Michel Pablo in the Fourth International."

What Comrade Weiss actually referred to, or meant to refer to, was the common political position held by you and the supporters of *Socialist Fight* in relation to the attack that has been mounted against the British Trotskyists by a wide range of foes.

We take it that you do not question the accuracy of the reference in that context, or the propriety of discussing it, since in your letter you solidarize politically with the supporters of *Socialist Fight* in this question and defend their position against the Socialist Labor League.

We note also that you indicate in your letter that your political sympathy for such opponents of the Socialist Labor League extends to Peter Fryer, whose rather wild charges, evidently colored by emotion, offer little of interest, in our opinion, except as symptoms of vacillations of a kind seen often enough among some intellectuals suffering from an ambivalent attitude toward the Marxist movement.

We regret that you would lend a sympathetic ear to complaints of that kind, particularly in view of the way reactionary forces are scavenging for such things for their own purposes.

Your charges regarding possible "indiscretions" which you interpret as "objectively equivalent" to denouncing comrades to right-wing bureaucrats and even semifascist authorities seem to us without factual foundation. It would be well to withdraw them, we think, in the interest of reducing the heated factional atmosphere and establishing more comradely relations.

We wish that all the factions, groupings, and tendencies that adhere to the Fourth International, or consider themselves cothinkers, would decide to close ranks in a situation like this and follow policies to facilitate this aim. Much of our criticism of your policy in Britain stems from this consideration.

In the latest issue of the magazine *Fourth International*, for instance we were struck by the fact that although you printed an article about the British Labor Party and the crisis it faces, you did not mention the witch-hunt against the Socialist Labor League. The issues raised by the Socialist Labor League are at the heart of the crisis in the British Labor Party. It would therefore seem essential, even from the limited aims of such an analytical article, to defend with the utmost vigor the Trotskyist tendency which has been proscribed by the right-wing bureaucrats.

Many of your readers, rightly or wrongly, will come to the conclusion that such an oversight is deliberate; this in turn is not conducive to narrowing the present unfortunate division in the Fourth International.

In your letter, too, you appear to blame the victims for the witch-hunting visited upon them, since you imply that they invited it by a self-immolating tactic, an "operation

suicide." To give any comfort whatever to the witch-hunters because you have highly debatable tactical differences with the victims is a strange position for a Trotskyist leader. It is scarcely calculated to convince the victims or their supporters that you are interested in narrowing the political differences.

We feel this all the more keenly because we have been keenly impressed with the argument—and you happen to be among those who have voiced it rather strongly—that the political differences among the various groupings in the world Trotskyist movement have narrowed to such manageable proportions that organizational unity is called for. If you really believe this, your failure to open a vigorous campaign in support of the British Trotskyists who are under concerted attack from centrists, right-wing bureaucrats, and professional red-baiters is quite difficult to understand.

Some comrades have come to the conclusion that in reality you are not interested in unity and that your main concern at the moment in Britain is to seek immediate gains for your faction by approaching those in the Socialist Labor League or its fringes who might buckle under the attack that has been launched by the foes of Trotskyism. Such a policy seems to us so shortsighted that we hesitate to subscribe to this ungenerous interpretation.

7. *"You have succeeded in hooking him so completely on the witch-hunt question": letter from Gerry Healy to Tom Kerry (March 31, 1960)*

COPY TO JPC

Dear Tom,

Yesterday evening we had a telephone call from Pablo, who wanted to meet me personally. He said the matter was of great importance, but we told him that this was impossible. We offered an alternative suggestion which was to come here to meet the whole committee and this he accepted.

His point was that he had received Joe's letter and he wanted to know what he could do to remove the obstacle so far as his attitude towards our section was concerned. We told him that the best thing for him to do was to reply to you and make clear publicly his position on the witch-hunt in this country. He evaded this by stating that he wanted unity and secondary matters such as this should not stand in the way.

During the course of conversation we asked him what was his opinion of Cadogan who circulated the Fryer document amongst the capitalist press in Fleet Street. He again tried to evade a direct answer, but upon being pressed he said that he would be opposed to Cadogan. However, when he was asked if he would make this clear in writing he simply evaded the point by returning to the theme of unification.

It is perfectly clear that he is embarrassed by the fact that you have succeeded in hooking him so completely on

It would seem much more to the interests of a faction that believes itself capable of loyally representing Trotskyism as a whole to deliberately demonstrate in this situation how it would act if the movement were united and its leaders were holding elected positions of authority. In other words to give the Trotskyist movement a sample of what could be expected from you in a united organization.

In our opinion the best course for every comrade to follow, no matter which faction he favors, is to seek to uphold the interests of the world revolutionary-socialist movement as a whole. Right now these are heavily involved in the historically important struggle in Britain. Every genuine socialist, we believe, should feel it his first duty to close ranks against the enemies who have set up a united front against the specter of Trotskyism. Let's unite in a counter campaign! We think this is the only principled course. We hope that responsible revolutionary-socialists in every part of the world will recognize this and act accordingly.

We trust that you will not feel offended by our frankness. Our intention is simply to suggest, from where we see the struggle, that the advantages to be gained from a change in your course in Britain would prove considerable to the world movement for revolutionary socialism.

Again we want to thank you for your letter.

the witch-hunt question. He wanted to try and get a formula to get off the hook. But this, of course, is not forthcoming, so he went away empty-handed.

One of the other reasons why he is in difficulties is that his section here is falling to pieces. They never were much, but what there was of them is now disintegrating. An example of his problem is Cadogan and his friends. They have now joined with the state capitalists, Cliff and Co., and are "threatening" us with the production of a new theoretical magazine. There is not a single Pabloite on the editorial board of this. Once again, as in the case of Lawrence, he supported elements who now proceed in a different direction.

He said that he had something very important to tell us about the colonial revolution in Algeria and we told him to write it down, as well as anything else he might like to submit. It appears in this connection that he was looking for some support from us to impress the FLN from whom he probably receives some financial assistance.

There is no doubt about it but he is well and truly caught on the question of the witch-hunt and we should keep him in that position. The fact that he came to see us represents a certain humiliation on his part, especially since he knows very well the attitude of this section. At the same time he is quite clever and suave in his approach. He carefully avoids political discussion and tries to pose everything in the form of deals and agreements.

If he should contact you, we should like to know about it.

With best wishes,
Jerry

GM/H

8. "I don't want to polemicize"; letter from Michel Pablo to Joseph Hansen (February 29, 1960)

(Sent airmail from Tunis)

Dear Comrade Hansen:

I take note of your reply to my letter of January 12.

It raises many questions that I don't consider useful to discuss publicly.

I have a great deal to say about the actual political course of the SLL as well as about the different "incidents" and the unceasing efforts to overcome the division within our international movement.

I don't want to polemicize nor to make factional propaganda publicly over these questions.

What appears to me more serious, more urgent, more conforming to the real interest of our international movement is first to have a discussion, an explanation; frankly, directly, person-to-person, with one of you—yourself or another responsible member of your leadership, or even a delegation of your leadership.

I expect soon to be in Cuba and I will try on that occasion to pass through Mexico, and visit Natalia among others.

I propose to be able to contact you either in Cuba or in Mexico.

The time presses and none of us have any interest in devoting ourselves to public factional propaganda. It is necessary that we discuss seriously with the aim of re-establishing the unity of our international movement.

In case you agree to such a meeting, which may remain discreet and unofficial, I beg you let me know by writing to the following address:

Boite Postale 1318

Amsterdam

With my fraternal greetings,

M. Pablo

P.S. I wish to apologize for the delay in my reply. It was caused by the fact that urgent interests of our movement during the last several weeks compelled me to frequently change residence and to engage in an extremely absorbing work in North Africa.

9. "At issue is your failure to support the British Trotskyists against the witch-hunt": letter from Joseph Hansen to Michel Pablo (March 25, 1960)

New York, N.Y.

Dear Comrade Pablo,

I received your letters of February 29 and March 23. I must offer my apologies for the delay in replying. We have been very busy trying to keep up with the opportunities which have been opening up for us in connection with the presidential campaign.

We found your letter disappointing since it offers nothing concrete that could help heal the breach now existing between the factions in the Fourth International. In the *Militant* we raised publicly the question of the advisability of a change of policy on your part toward the British Trotskyists; i.e., of your joining in supporting them against the witch-hunt. You evade this. Instead of indicating agreement with our suggestion that you change your policy, you propose that we drop public discussion of the matter and meet with you in private to discuss—something else.

You tell us again about your concern to achieve unification of the Fourth International. As you know, the Voorhis law in this country prevents us from adhering to the Fourth International or any grouping of it. But we have a deep fraternal interest in its welfare. The unification of the International was one of our main considerations in raising the question of your policy in Britain which seems to stand in the way of unification.

You say in your letter that you have much to discuss about the policy of the British Trotskyists. We do not deny your right to disagree with them, or to ask for a general

discussion of their policy. That's your democratic right as it is of any other member of the world Trotskyist movement. No doubt the British Trotskyists would welcome a fraternal discussion of their experiences and problems. But that is not what is in dispute. At issue is your failure to support the British Trotskyists against the witch-hunt. Instead you have been conducting factional maneuvers, the main consequence of which is to put your own faction in an ambiguous position on a most elementary issue—class solidarity in face of a reactionary attack.

Naturally, we are not against talks if these will facilitate unification of the Fourth International on a healthy basis. We can hardly be accused of a negative attitude on this in view of the initiative which Comrade Cannon took to propose unification of the Fourth International on a parity basis, a suggested solution which you rejected. In the case of the talk which you now propose, however, we fail to see what useful purpose it could serve in the absence of a change in policy toward the British Trotskyists.

I would like to emphasize how puzzled we are by your course in Britain. We do not see anything in the public political positions of your faction that should prevent you from solidarizing with the British Trotskyists. You find no difficulty in supporting dissident Stalinists when they are attacked by the Kremlin; you find no difficulty in supporting nationalists, as in Algeria, under the attack of imperialism; why can't you support the British Trotskyists when they face a combination of witch-hunters that includes right-wing bureaucrats of the Labor party, centrists of the ILP stripe, assorted neurotics, professional red-baiters and the prostituted capitalist press?

Fraternaly yours,
Joseph Hansen

Airmail

10. "The Witch-Hunt in Britain": editorial in the April 4, 1960, issue of the Militant

A wide section of the British Labor party membership has vigorously protested the attempt of right-wing officials to proscribe and ban the Socialist Labor League and its newspaper, the Newsletter. Because of this, the one-year-old drive to expel the revolutionary socialists from the Labor Party and the unions has not gained much ground.

Unfortunately, however, a number of groups and individuals who call themselves socialists—including the leaders of the British Communist party—fell in with the witch-hunters. They violated the first principle of socialism which demands solidarity when the capitalist class or its labor henchmen attack any section of the workers' movement.

A particularly odious example of the violation of the solidarity principle was provided by the paper of the British Independent Labor party, the Socialist Leader. The ILP has made it a principle to stay out of the Labor party, which is the mass political organization of the workers and is based on the unions. But the ILP leaders have found no difficulty in combining their sectarian purity with the performance of dirty chores for the bureaucrats.

In an editorial March 7, 1959, the Socialist Leader declared: "We have never disguised our opposition to the Labor party. But if Transport House decides that it has had enough of the Newsletter group and kicks its members out of the front door or, for that matter, the back door, we shall not utter a word of criticism."

The Socialist Leader not only kept its word not to criticize the hounding of militant workers out of the factories, unions and party, it opened a campaign of slander on its own against the SLL and its leadership.

When Peter Fryer, one of the founders of the SLL, suffered a breakdown in the face of the witch-hunt, became disoriented and walked out of the organization, then turned up in the capitalist press making vague and unspecified accusations against the SLL leaders, the ILP solidarized itself with him—and with the boss-class press which eagerly exploited Fryer's "charges." The Socialist Leader printed article after article presenting matters as if the main problem facing the British socialists was not the

witch-hunt against the SLL but some alleged "Stalinist methods" of Gerry Healy, the SLL secretary.

Now, the witch-hunt in Britain is not the exclusive concern of British socialists, it is also of great importance to revolutionary socialists throughout the world. In such a situation it is customary—and in fact obligatory—that Trotskyists in other countries take their stand on the side of the victims of the witch-hunt, even if they have no organizational ties with the latter or are in disagreement with them over certain aspects of policy.

Unfortunately, again, this hasn't been the case in the current witch-hunt against the SLL. As we have indicated before in the Militant, a Trotskyist group in Europe headed by Michel Pablo came dangerously close to aligning itself with the witch-hunters, when it apologized for the conduct of a grouping in the Liverpool unit of the Labor party, which had formed a bloc with right-wingers to bar support for the SLL. The motion the Liverpool group advanced protested bars and proscriptions in general—but without offering to defend the specific victims of the right-wing's drive to strangle party democracy.

We repeat what we have said before: we think it is Pablo's duty to defend the SLL against the witch-hunters despite any disagreement he may have with the SLL's policies. This, it appears to us, is elementary.

We think that in this instance Pablo might well follow the example of a group in the U.S. which has even greater differences with the SLL than he has. In the Feb. 15 issue of its paper, the Workers World party says:

"We feel that Comrade Michel Pablo and his co-thinkers made an unfortunate error in appealing to Fryer and his collaborators against the SLL. In our opinion the SLL leaders were on firm ground (despite their own wrong position on Hungary, etc.) in their recent conduct with the Fryer grouping. It goes without saying that we unconditionally support the SLL against the present witch-hunt of the Labor Party bureaucrats."

Certainly, Pablo, who claims far greater political agreement with the British Trotskyists than the Workers World people, can do no less than take a clear stand for the SLL in its fight against the witch-hunters. So far we have not seen a trace of such solidarity in any publication influenced by Pablo.

11. "The Left Wing should not play [Gaitskell's] game by walking out": letter from James P. Cannon to Gerry Healy (July 13, 1960)

Gerry Healy,
London, England
Dear Gerry:

If I understand the situation in England correctly, the death of Bevan will shake up the Labour Party as it has never been shaken since the MacDonald fiasco. In any case, the crisis of the Labour Party is bound to be enormously aggravated, and almost anything can happen.

Gaitskell may now push for a quick split to get rid of the left wing before it is prepared to put up a real battle to win the majority. The left wing should not play his game by

walking out. On the contrary, they should make Gaitskell's split program another count in the indictment against him in the struggle to win a majority for the socialist program.

The League's most pressing task is to identify itself as a part of the broad left wing in the Labour Party, and to establish close working relations with the other tendencies in the coalition; stand for the unity of the left wing in the fight against Gaitskell; and convince everybody that you mean it.

In the event the right wing forces things to a split, we must make sure that this does not bring about another split between the revolutionary Marxists and the broad left wing. We must take a firm stand against fragmentation of the Labour Party in a number of unprepared splits. The most important thing is to hold the left wing coalition

together in opposition to Gaitskell and Co., in preparation for all possible eventualities.

In the present conjuncture, when everything is up in the air, if the League's policy appears to be clear and reasonable, definite and firm, its influence should rapidly expand.

The League is fortunate that its recent Conference rejected the proposal to launch a separate independent party on paper. The British Trotskyists would certainly be in a sad position today if they had decided to turn away from the Labour Party at the moment when the greatest opportunities for revolutionary work within it are opening up.

But their position would scarcely be any better if they had accepted the Pabloite revelation and agreed to give up their own press and liquidate their organization at the command of the Right Wing gang. Genuine Trotskyists join the political mass movement of the workers, not to play dead there but to popularize their ideas, to establish contact and working relations with other left-moving tendencies, and to build and educate revolutionary cadres in the process.

For this they require their own tendency organization

and their own press. Only in the most exceptional circumstances can these rights be suspended; and then only temporarily. This costly and risky experiment is already behind you. It's a good thing that you don't have to start from the beginning now; that the preliminary work along these lines has already been done.

These lessons should be hammered home in the post-Conference internal discussion to solidify the ranks for the new opportunities and new tasks.

* * *

I think an exchange of opinions on the new developments between your national leadership and the comrades in New York would be most timely now. Everything depends on thinking out the policy and getting it right. I am sending a copy of this letter to New York with the suggestion that the comrades there send on their comments to you.

Fraternally,
James P. Cannon

JPC:jh

SECTION XVII: AN INDIAN TROTSKYIST ASSESSES THE DIFFERENCES

In 1960 the movement for the reunification of the two public factions of the Fourth International, the International Committee (IC) and the International Secretariat (IS), began to pick up steam. Demands and practical actions directed toward unity occurred in many quarters. In India, the Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers Party had fused with the Revolutionary Communist Party. Inspired by this success, leading Indian Trotskyists began to press for unity of Trotskyists on a world scale, challenging the stance taken by the International Secretariat under Pablo's direction.

In the beginning of 1960, the Indian Trotskyists began to challenge Pablo's conceptions on several important issues. Their own disastrous experience with entryism in the Indian Socialist Party led them to oppose him on this.

A leading Indian Trotskyist, R.N. Arya, outlined the views that were developing in this sector of the IS in three articles that were submitted to the International Secretariat. One evaluated the differences over Stalinism that had emerged in 1953 and found, in general, that the criticisms of the IC had been well taken. A second challenged Pablo's conception of entryism, expressing support for the entryist tactic as applied by the SLL. A third article challenged the practice under Pablo of issuing commands to sections on tactical issues like entry. It argued that Pablo's practice of organizing secret factions, resulting in splits, in sections that did not follow his commands had proven to be highly destructive.

In a letter to Ernest Germain, Arya said flatly, "I do not

condemn the splitters of 1953. Organizational factors left no choice."

Thus, some of Pablo's political and organizational concepts began to be openly challenged inside the IS. This certainly reduced the likelihood of a successful repetition of the highhanded measures that Pablo had taken in 1951-3 to exclude oppositionists.

Healy had begun in 1958 to advocate "reorganization" of the Fourth International. While Healy was vague—it now appears that he was deliberately vague—about what this meant, it often seemed to be somewhat contradictory to the SWP's support for principled reunification, a perspective that had been endorsed by the IC as a whole. According to Healy's schema—periodically raised and then withdrawn whenever the SWP interposed its objections—groups in the IS that favored unity would be required to break with the IS and join a considerably broadened version of the International Committee. Healy defended this on the tactical grounds that Pablo would block any other form of reunification.

The unrealistic character of this proposal was indicated by the reaction of R.N. Arya. While agreeing with the International Committee on many points, he opposed this proposal as leading to the creation of two competing internationals. As he stated in his letter to Germain, "the differences by themselves were not so deep in 1953 nor are they today that co-existence within a single organization is impossible."

1. "Organizational factors left no choice": letter from R.N. Arya to Ernest Germain (excerpt—January 2, 1960)

Dear Walter [Ernest]:

You have asked my comments on the dispute over SLL tactics and over certain other things like Chinese Com-munes. I am sure you can pretty well guess where I stand with these articles of mine on the Rise and Decline and on the International structure. However, if it is needed that I should clarify my views on each specific issue, I shall have no objection in doing it.

To your main questions I reply as follows:

1) The differences are of a fundamental nature. Just as the differences between the CPs and the Trotskyists over the attitude to the ruling group in the workers' state is fundamental—one holding their role as revolutionary and the other as brake on the onward march of revolution, in the same way, the present middle position of the FI that a part is likely to split and become revolutionary is also fundamentally different from ours. However, since I do not find any objective basis of this difference except a petty-bourgeois impressionism from the growing strengths of Soviets and the Chinese, I hold that a free discussion and further unfolding of events will lead to our clarification when the two views will fuse and while we take the best from the new "Realities," we do stay at our fundamental premise as before.

2) I hold that the differences by themselves were not so deep in 1953 nor are they today that co-existence within a single organization is impossible.

3) However, in spite of my reply as above, I do not condemn the splitters of 1953. Organizational factors left

no choice. I am not sure if our own organization, if we had one at the time as a section would have acted differently. It is not easy for a party with a mass base to risk about tactical line.

4) I hold that the split was very very unfortunate and damaging to the International movement. Both sides should concede. Apprehensions should be removed from the minds of the present International minority. Free political discussions should be arranged without a prior condition of acceptance of this or that line. Let the posterity not blame the FI leaders that but for this or that unyieldingness (intransigence) unity could have been possible.

Stalinists have so constantly blurred over the class lines and based their politics on the struggle within the camp of bourgeoisie with a hope to win a section of this hostile class to the aid of the limited tasks that any blurring of the class lines and pinning hope on winning sections of bureaucracy or of the national bourgeoisie in the name of colonial revolutionary leadership simulates itself with Stalinism. Your unstinted support to the policies of the FLN without class analysis, and your preference of Labour Left to the Conference of the Industrial ranks is, to me, a blurring of the class lines. That is what I call pro-Stalinism there. For the present I leave further explanation which I shall take up only when required.

Kindly send my warmest greetings for the Chilean Trotskyists for achieving the unity of organization and for erasing the six-year old split at least from national scale. With warmest greetings,

Yours,
Raj Narain Arya,
Kampus, India

2. "A Political Estimate of the Split in the FI," by R.N. Arya (January 25, 1960)

(An examination of the basic document "Rise and Decline of Stalinism—Section I")

(If this document is circulated amongst friends, it has to be made clear that the RWPI-RCPI to which I belong has not taken any decision on this point and the present estimate represents my own individual view. R.N. Arya)

In December 1953 or thereabouts, the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International passed a document—"Rise and Decline of Stalinism." This created a big controversy in the International movement and a section of it split. The 4th World Congress assembled in 1954 and passed the document without the participation of the splitters. The split has continued and the 5th World Congress has further amplified this document by adding to it "Decline and Fall of Stalinism." The 6th World Congress is to be held this year. The other group forming the International Committee are also slated to call a Reorganization Congress. Since this split has persisted for quite a long time and different policies are being advocated by the two wings, it is necessary that we make a political estimate of the split-document so that we may have a correct attitude towards the problem.

The difference is in the attitude towards Stalinism and

as Stalinism dominates the political events of the world today, the difference engulfs everything. In the context of Indian events we have our own difference with the political estimates made by the FI: with the IS resolution on Tibet, with Pablo's article on the Sino-Indian border dispute and with the FI directive on Kerala agitation. Again and again we find the FI unreasonably inclined towards Stalinist positions. Com. Pablo's article can be cited as an instance in which he seems to swallow every word of the Chinese version, takes pains in quoting very unimportant texts of Chinese Foreign Embassy but dismisses the Indian account altogether. It seems he is ready to back up the Chinese to a war on this question. We do not intend to support the Indian claim but we are also not interested in supporting the Chinese claim. The interest of the international movement is more important to us than the truth of the border question.

The essence of the FI attitude to Stalinism and Stalinist bureaucracy is contained in the paragraphs 16 to 20 of the said document "Rise and Decline." It consists in making a distinction within the Stalinists and within the Stalinist bureaucracy. The process started when the FI leaders studied the development of the Yugoslav and the Chinese CPs. Justification for this attitude to Stalinism is sought from Trotskyism itself. Thus, in paragraph 15 it is stated: "Traditionally the historically transitional and passing character of the Bonapartist dictatorship in the USSR was

correctly analysed in the sense that this dictatorship could lead to two opposed paths of social development: either . . . or thanks to . . . the aid brought by the world proletariat to the Soviet proletariat and (thanks) to the *left tendency of the bureaucracy which will rally to the side of the proletariat* for the defense of the social bases of the USSR, the overthrow of the Bonapartist dictatorship and the re-establishment of Soviet democracy." (Emphasis added.)

Com. Ernest Germain follows it up in his report to the 5th World Congress. In it he differentiates different sections of the bureaucracy and assigns different roles to them.

My reading and understanding of Trotskyism has not enabled me ever to find such a differentiation made in orthodox or traditional Trotskyism in sections of Soviet bureaucracy; no left tendency ever thought of and no such revolutionary role assigned to it. I am yet ready to be corrected with specific quotations and explanations.

The document "Rise and Decline" is very specific and very emphatic about this differentiation. It details its points in paragraph 17. Paragraph 18 adds to it its political effects. At first glance we find only facts enumerated in the paragraph and we are most likely to ignore this irrelevant portion until we consider its significance. The details of different social origins and of political powers of different sections of the bureaucracy have been given to elicit supposedly different roles of these sections—different not in *rhythm* but in its *very basic character*. It is now held, as the above quotation shows, that the lower rungs of the bureaucracy, the left tendency if you so choose to call it, shall ally itself with the proletariat against the upper rungs of the bureaucracy. This hope goes further when in paragraph 21, subparagraph 3, it states:

"It is not accidental that at the 19th Congress Malenkov. . . referred to the activity of 'deviationist, anti-Leninist' groups in the Communist party in the Soviet Union, on which the *victory of the political revolution depends*." (Emphasis mine.)

In line with this thinking, fundamentally different from traditional Trotskyism, the document notes "the process of differentiation within the party and its party circles" (paragraph 20). The "regroupment of the revolutionary forces" in the Soviet Union, mentioned again and again (paragraph 19 end, 21 subparagraph 3 end), in this context, stands for an expected split in the bureaucracy and the CP of the Soviet Union. A section is expected to support the proletariat against the other section. This seems to be the main plank of the FI activity, in the hope that this regroupment will provide the main leadership, ideological as well as physical, of the political revolution.

One is inclined to ask whether it is because of this hope that the present policies of the FI are being adjusted to win the sympathies of this would-be leadership and its counterpart in the CPs of the world. There seems to be no other explanation for this allotment of revolutionary role to CP and different sections of the bureaucracies—revolutionary and not merely impulsive, and in general circumstances and not in special circumstances alone—for the irreversible process of the international revolution obtaining hereafter has made a drastic change. If there is any other explanation it is that there is a lack of faith in the capacity of the proletariat to throw up a leadership from its own ranks except through these mass parties, in

spite of the existence of the "irreversible" revolutionary process and in spite of the fact that this same irreversible revolutionary process is considered to be capable of producing rifts and splits in the CPs and the Soviet bureaucracy. Fondly we hope that the capacity of the Soviet bureaucracy is "greatly limited for counterrevolutionary maneuvers with imperialists at the expense of the revolution" (paragraph 9).

The Nature of the Heterogeneity of the Soviet Bureaucracy

The heterogeneity of the bureaucracy is of the same order as that of the bourgeoisie and not as that of the peasantry or the middle class of the city. In the cases of the peasantry and the urban middle class, the interests of the different sections clash so much and so strongly that these different sections go to hostile camps. Thus, while the rich peasantry almost invariably follows the bourgeois, the poor peasants follow the proletariat. The same is the case with the urban middle class. Not so with the bourgeoisie. The liberal and the smaller bourgeoisie always clash with the monopolists and the colonial bourgeoisie with the imperialists, yet there is never going over by any one of them to the camp of the hostile working class. They have no locus standi, no independent economic interest apart from the imperialists, the monopolists and the financiers. They are upholders of the capitalist framework and relationship and they are all united against the working class. We have seen enough of this seemingly all-important conflict between the colonial bourgeoisie and the imperialists, and between the liberal bourgeoisie and the monopolists which conflicts were always magnified out of proportion by the Stalinists and which always led them to support one section of the bourgeoisie against the other. This new-found love for any section of the bourgeoisie resulted invariably in the precaution that these friends may not be scared and thus in the suppression—consciously as well as unconsciously—of the workers' movement and revolution. We never denied the difference within the bourgeoisie but we always shunned the politics of playing one section against the other. Differences within the bureaucracy are of this order.

To imagine differences in the mentality of the old and young bureaucracy is day-dreaming (paragraph 11 c). Human nature cannot be changed and unless socialism comes about, the very desire to show off as having a higher standard of living creates needs. The Soviet bureaucrats are not yet as rich as the billionaires of America and they have yet too many desires. Their sons and daughters are young bureaucrats (of the lower rungs? The contradiction and conflict between the lower and the higher rungs would be interesting if the fathers and sons were arraigned on opposing sides in a revolution). They are no less fond of vodka and fun.

The Soviet bureaucracy can also be fruitfully compared with a capitalist bureaucracy. The interests of different sections of bureaucracy no doubt clash and you can always hear the lower rungs talk of the injustices and arbitrariness of the higher rungs. Yet when the popular outburst threatens the privileges of the bureaucracy as a whole, the bureaucracy acts as a whole. The only difference is that the capitalist bureaucracy has a master but the Soviet bureaucracy has no master.

Whether the Bureaucracy Can Be Won to the People?

One can always refresh himself on this score by reading Lenin's *State and Revolution*—that the bureaucracy arises from the people but its interests are so opposed to the interests of the people that it can never go with the people. No factor has yet appeared to show that the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy are not such. The very fact that the bureaucracy enjoys the privileges which the proletariat has to wipe out once it enters the arena assigns a counterrevolutionary role to the bureaucracy. If the events of the Hungarian revolution are grasped clearly we know that the final crushing by the Soviets came when the workers' soviets refused to disband their own elected factory soviets. If it is understood why did the factory workers leave the question of state power, affiliation with the Soviet Union, stationing of its army, democratization of the State apparatus and of the Communist party to the Kadar regime and insisted only on one thing—the replacement of the appointed factory committee by the one elected by themselves—it becomes clear that the popular hostility to the immediate bureaucrats is very, very great. We know how the people hate the police constables and the peons, etc. The lower rungs directly oppress the people and suck [their blood]. It is impossible for the people to accept their lead or for them to lead the people.

The conduct of a haphazard section of the bureaucracy in the early part of the Hungarian revolution cannot make a rule. Trotsky narrates how a police officer in the interior of Russia heard about the Bolshevik power in Leningrad and Moscow and he himself took the red flag and marched in the streets calling for a Bolshevik power. The conduct of that police officer did not set us thinking that a section of the police or the capitalist bureaucracy would lead the revolution. Such things are always possible in a revolution when the class issues are not clear but as soon as they become clear the mistaken roles of individuals here and there are corrected.

The document pictures the upper circles as satisfied with the level of consumption and portrays them as not interested in the further growth of economy. It is a day-dreaming without factual basis in its support. One who has read novels like *Vorkuta* can understand that the human nature of the Soviet bureaucrats is not different. When we find that the Five Year Plans are still being executed by them, under the direction of the upper bureaucracy who are amassing ever more privileges for themselves, it is really infantile to suggest (paragraph 13b) that, "having attained for themselves a high level of privileges as consumers, the top circles of bureaucracy no longer have a major interest in the maximum expansion of production."

The imagined brake that the upper bureaucrats are supposed to apply to production and to the ambition of the lower bureaucrats for more power and more privileges—supposedly compelling the latter to lead a revolt against the former and ally with the proletariat does not exist. The proletariat is not going to help any section to have more privileges but it has to snatch all privileges. The supposed revolt will degenerate into an impotent rumor and later into a full-fledged cooperation with the upper rungs in suppressing the workers' demand for the removal of all privileges.

If we care to recall what Trotsky said in his *Revolution Betrayed*, we shall find that he envisaged the bureaucracy

as a whole to act as a relative brake for some time and then the whole of it to become an absolute brake. This change is not because of any "loss of interest" among the upper layers of the bureaucrats, but solely due to the fact that in spite of their best interest in increasing the production, the increase was possible only if a freedom of intellect is allowed and technology improved. Intelligent men not only talk science, technology, engineering and medicine, but also philosophy and politics and some of them cannot be corrupted by privileges. In a free atmosphere it becomes impossible to eliminate them and hence it will be that the upper and lower rungs of the bureaucracy alike will welcome a limitation on production rather than a trimming away of their privileges. The privileges of the lower rungs of the bureaucracy will also find protection only in the hands of bigger bureaucrats.

If the coming revolutionary rise in the USSR is defeated or if for any other reason a reaction threatens USSR through the bureaucracy, there will be yet no distinction between the lower and the upper rungs. A vertical cleavage may develop between those who are likely to share power and those who are likely to be left out as there developed between Kerensky and Kornilov in July 1917, but there will yet be no left tendency and no rift between the upper and lower sections. The lower rungs will get their share in the case of restoration and they will be quite happy with it. Sentiments for the defense of the Soviet system, if there are such of them in existence, will go down in favor of more privileges.

The same things may occur if the "irreversible" revolutionary rise forces the imperialists and the Soviet bureaucrats—now the Chinese are also likely to get their share—to strike a compromise and not only withdraw their hand of interference from the affairs of the other but also extend a helping hand in crushing the Soviet revolutions. This possibility always exists and it is well to include it in paragraph 22 after the 25th line, page 44, col. 1.

The Meaning of the Events after Stalin

If the role of the bureaucracy is understood correctly, the events after Stalin's death as well as the events after the war can be understood clearly and appear in a different light. There will be no need to be so hypnotized by the Soviet and the Chinese bureaucrats as to support Nasser when the Soviets support him and to support Kassem when the Soviets support him.

Stalin represented unity not amongst the lower and the upper rungs of the bureaucracy—the lower bureaucrats had no say—but amongst the higher ones. He was the chief of every section of the bureaucracy. After his death, each section pressed for its domination, for it feared its own decimation in case the other won. It is well known that dictators, including Stalinist dictators, never allow equals and rivals to exist. The emergence of a dictator could not be prevented, whether or not there was a mass pressure. There was a mass pressure even before Stalin's death but he continued to rule by purges. His removal left every section diffident about its strength in dealing with it and its own survival led it to try to win and utilize this pressure for itself. The police bureaucracy could not do it. Hence the rest of them acted quick. The army had to step forward to deal with the law problem or with the opponents. Hence came Zhukov and Bulganin. But the new mass pressure strengthened the hands of the party bureaucracy which made itself felt even within the army.

The army bureaucracy was overthrown. Khrushchev made a correct estimate of the extent of this mass pressure and he has turned his attention on the agriculture to fill the party from bureaucrats from there. His foreign policy is designed to have more trade not only to relieve Soviet economy from the pressure of isolation but also to enable the "leaders of economy" to reap advantages. There is no molecular process of disintegration of Stalinism here but only a change from Stalinism to Khrushchevism, from a rule through terror to a rule through party bureaucracy and to a real and effective compromise with the world imperialism. There is no question of its moves being now in defense of the revolution. It defends only as long as its own fate is uncertain. If the imperialists can guarantee its power, which they are likely to do now, the bureaucrats will move themselves against the revolution.

Paragraphs 16, 17 and 18 should be scrapped from the said document, "Rise and Decline" and other paragraphs rectified accordingly. The significance of victory in Yugoslavia and China has to be understood in this context and every idea that the CPs can be revolutionary has to be

expunged from the mind. It is not only the physical link and direct instructions which matter but also ideological handicaps. The special atomization of the bourgeoisie in the two countries did not place a real class war before them in spite of the Chinese military fight. The possibility of their turning revolutionary has not yet been tested. Nor is the possible atomization of a national bourgeoisie in this period of its internationalization to be counted much. In any event, a distinction has to be made between revolutionary role and eclectic seizure of power. The CP is capable of the latter but not of the former. It cannot prepare for a revolution.

Seeing different roles of sections of Stalinist bureaucracies of the workers' states and of the CPs is a fundamental break with Trotskyism and the steps must be hastily retraced if the revolutionary potentialities of the FI are to be rescued. In this era of Soviet and Chinese successes, growth of a Stalinoid movement is likely to be very swift and we cannot take growth as the absolute proof of the correctness of policies.

January 25, 1960

3. *Democratic Centralism on the International Scale,* by R.N. Arya (February 1, 1960)

The split of 1953 in the FI took place on political grounds, but in the attempt to condemn this split as a revolt against the central authority (IS) without justification by the one and as a measure of self-defense against a "bureaucratic central apparatus" by the other, one more controversy was added to it: What is democratic centralism on an international scale? The allegations of bureaucratic malpractices made by the splitters against Pablo and the IS as controlled by him, and the current topic in the FI and the flash of bureaucratic malpractices of the national leaders of the groups of the International Committee are only secondary. They lead us nowhere, except to the necessity of a control commission, independent of the authorities. However, the allegations of bureaucratic malpractices sometimes boil down to alleging prevention of free discussion by the leadership. This can be remedied

1) by the appearance of a regular internal discussion bulletin where it does not appear, 2) by taking less drastic and disciplinary measures than expulsion even if it appears a member has been expressing to the "outside" his contrary views and, 3) by discussing again and again important and controversial views and even 4) taking referendum or decision in special conventions if fundamentals are concerned.

In the present article I shall confine myself to an estimate of two conceptions, called by their opponents as "letter-box-internationalism" and "bureaucratic centralism." Since this difference evidently revolves around relationship between the international leadership and the national section, I shall put forward my own views about it.

In trying to reject the authority of the centralized international leadership of the FI, the International Committee (IC) states as follows: (In Defense of Trotskyism, p. 39, Labour Review—July-August 1959):

"The international will not be built by a group of

impressionistic 'world strategists' handing down the tactical line to each country; nor by commentators charting an 'irreversible process.' An international movement will be built by helping national movements to reach a thorough understanding of the realities of struggle in their own countries and of their tasks."

and again,

... nationally and internationally alike the authority of leaders can be based on confidence born out of experience in their ability and the correctness of the practical and theoretical help they give to the revolutionaries participating in the class struggle.

The IC, therefore, proposes "to call an International Conference open to *all* (emphasis mine) revolutionary parties and groupings that are seeking to build Marxist movements in their countries." The Trotskyist character of the IC and the SLL excludes the possibility of the participation of any other grouping but the conditions for invitation are that the parties and the groups should stand for independent working-class parties and they should clearly understand that Stalinists and Social Democracy cannot be transformed into revolutionary forces. There is no mention of a prior acceptance of the Transitional Program or of the minimum political program they must accept. Presumably centrist organizations are also welcome.

In the absence of political cohesion, this International shall be really only a letter-box international. "The building of the International is 'no doubt' a more complicated process than the building of a national party," but "nationally and internationally alike" the organization has to begin on a clear political understanding and cohesion, much before confidence in the leadership is born out of experience. A revulsion from an international handing down the *tactical* line to various national sections cannot justify insistence on the acceptance of the rival *tactical* line of building open and independent working class parties with the exclusion of political cohesion. The tacti-

cal difference can always be discussed and decided in a single organization and this way of resolving differences is much better and practical than the complicated and impossible building of an international through politically heterogeneous conglomeration of parties.

Perhaps the IC only proposes to reorganize orthodox Trotskyists and none else.

FI's International Democratic Centralism

The FI (No. 7, Autumn 1959) replies to this concept in its Open Letter to the SLL—a recall to order (pp. 64-66). It notes down the accusation of the IC on p. 65 and replies by stating that the handing down of the line has never been of the Stalinist type. It is also stated that Burns [Healy], in reality, wanted much more centralism and speedy “intervention” by the International when he was on the International Executive Committee (IEC).

This may be a reply to Burns and the Labour Review but it does not prove its justification. It is no argument that it should be done.

The FI holds that by handing down the tactical line the national movements are helped to reach a thorough understanding of the realities of the struggle in their own countries and of their tasks.

This would be so, if the International, in handing down the line, only gives its opinion to the national sections and leaves it to the national sections to decide the issue on their own, freely, without direct or indirect pressure. The following extract shows that it is not so:

As long as he was a member of the International majority he (Burns) pushed the International leadership, again and again, to intervene in the British section in order to “speed” up the solution of the crisis, to intervene in many other sections with the same goal, to “expel,” “crush” and “eliminate” all kinds of tendencies with whom he had tactical differences. Happily, the International never followed this kind of advice, and always *discussed for many years* (emphasis in original) tactical problems of sections, before taking any definite decision. What Burns really means, therefore is this: as long as I am with the majority, I want the right to *apply strictly the rules of democratic centralism on an international scale*. . . .

In short the “expulsion,” “elimination,” and the “intervention” that Burns advocated was and is, to the FI, nothing but a strict application of the rules of democratic centralism for the resolution of tactical differences within the national leadership or of the national leadership with the “much-discussed and coolly decided” decision of the International on the tactics to be applied by a section.

Statutes of the FI

Since “the national sections are formed on the platform and in accordance with the organizational structure defined and established by the Founding Congress of the Fourth International (Sept. 1938)” and since in its platform as well as the organizational structure the FI concentrated the international experience of the revolutionary Marxist movement and assimilated and based itself upon all of humanity’s progressive social experiences, we shall look to the International Statutes adopted in 1938 for our interpretation of democratic centralism on an international scale. Any addition in later Congresses is valid only in so far as it amplifies it not where it is in conflict with it, unless special national conventions or a sort of referendum has preceded the international decision and the amend-

ment is thoroughly discussed, understood, its merits and demerits weighed coolly by an overwhelming majority of Trotskyists.

The Statute:

All the proletarian and revolutionary militants in the world who accept and apply the principles and the program of the Fourth International are joined in a single world organization, under a centralized international leadership and a single discipline. (Statute 1.)

The qualification is the acceptance and application of the principles and program of the FI. No mention is made of the acceptance of the tactical line also.

The international leadership is explained as follows:

The Supreme body of the FI on the world scale is the *International Conference*, which determines the policy of the International and of its sections in *all important political questions, adopts resolutions and decides in the last resort organizational questions and international conflicts*. (Statute VII.)

Not even all political questions? No mention of tactical questions and not all organizational questions. The Statutes only define the sphere of activity of the centralized international leadership and hence it must be presumed that less important political questions, like what should be our attitude to the Kerala agitation and election should be left over to the national sections concerned. In the same way even the tactical questions and the organizational questions in the first instance are to be left over to the national sections.

The IEC and the IS only do what the International Conference can do as is clear from the following:

During the intervals between the international conferences, the international leadership is entrusted to the IEC. (Statute VIII.)

The IEC is responsible before the entire International for the carrying out of the decisions and the application of the political line adopted by the International Conference. (Statute VIII.)

The day-to-day administrative and political work, as well as the regular liaisons with the sections is ensured by an International Secretariat. (Statute X.)

If the authority of the International is confined only to important political questions and to organizational questions in the last resort and in the rest it adopts only a resolution, the expulsion and the elimination carried on by the FI even if with the vote of Burns must again be reviewed for obviously it was wrong. It was wrong for the FI to intervene in the “crisis” of the British or the French sections and force peace. It was the greatest sop to all the tactical opponents of the majority in their national sections to split and seek direct contact with the IS: a split which began on national scale in different sections and ended with an international split.

The Statutes defined the sphere of International leadership so accurately and expressly as to leave no doubt about the relationship between the national sections and the international leadership, between democracy and centralism, between decentralization and centralization and between nationalism and internationalism. Whatever has not been expressly reserved for the International is the domain of the national sections. Democracy is not a matter of convenience; it is the very essence of our life. This allocation of functions is really the best form of international democratic centralism.

* * *

National Sections Must Not Be Split

The Statutes declare:

There can be but *one* single section of the Fourth International, i.e., only one single organization in each country can be regularly affiliated with the F.I.

Since the national sections must have the final say in tactical matters, the point arises as to what should the International do in case of a conflict within the section over a tactical question or between the section and the International over the tactical question.

Within a national section the majority wins. The conflict therefore naturally and democratically resolves if the majority is clear even if it is against the International view. The majority must prevail. Even the International must bow to the will of the revolutionary militants of that nation as expressed in the national majority. The minority, even if it supports the International view and is 100 per cent convinced of the correctness, must abide by the majority decision and propagate its view—the International view—inside the section and prepare for the next conference.

If the majority in the national section is not clear over a tactical question and the minority is not ready to abide by the majority decision, the International leadership has to take this question up for decision not on the tactical question but on the organizational question. The International leadership has to see that in spite of the special situation and the tactical differences the two factions work in the same organizations. It is possible to relax some organizational provisions, to allow the two factions to work out their tactics separately and yet decide political questions under the framework of a single organization, so that the member who changes his view on tactical line switches himself to the other side without difficulty. This arrangement may last for some years till the national conferences squeeze out the one view and adopt the other view finally.

In this conflict over tactics within the national sections, the suggestions of the International leadership is always welcome and the supporters of the IS view may thus get their hands strengthened but ultimate decision must be with the national sections themselves. If the minority splits the FI must ask it to go back in the section instead of recognizing it as a separate section.

In the conflict between the national and international leadership over tactical line to be applied, the national section must have its way. Just as the national headquarters of a party cannot order how a particular day is to be celebrated by a local, whether by taking out processions or only by holding meetings, the International cannot order a national section how to implement a political decision. The International is within its rights to coolly discuss the line and *pass a resolution* whether this or that line would be correct but if the section decides to ignore the FI view, the FI view must be allowed to be ignored. I do not mean any insult to the International leadership nor wish to take it lightly but the final say must rest with the section. The IS shall no doubt try to convert the majority with the help of the then minority which supports the IS view. The discussion must go on till the next conference when the two views must again be put to vote. As long as the controversy remains within the section the same procedure may be followed. The national majority cannot be punished by expulsion for having failed to implement a tactical deci-

sion. Split as well as expulsion of national sections is unwise. National leaders individually also cannot be so expelled.

In the present era of decreasing importance of national barriers, of a very advanced integration of different national economies and supra-national political alliances, politics has become very much internationalized and conditions have become so general that similar tactical lines are to be devised and adopted. An international tactical line may be very, very desirable and even necessary. Yet the different circumstances of any particular country or different stage of development or even a different stage of development of the section and its leadership may necessitate a flexible approach. In such circumstances the line may be suggested but it should be sought to be implemented when the national majority has adopted the line after a thorough discussion by the members in a conference. Till this happens the FI has to remain content with passing a resolution.

If the majority does not act constitutionally and refuses to call the conference or the requisitioned conference, the IS may intervene organizationally and as a last resort only to call a national conference of that section and let the democratic decision be taken.

Many instances of Trotsky's interference are quoted over tactical questions. They were suggestions to the sections, articles. No IS order was given at any time. The decision was always made by the national majority whether in France or in America.

* * *

As a side comment, it may be stated here that for unity in the FI, for the split in which both share responsibility, such application of democratic centralism as so far carried by the FI must be expressly renounced and the past doings rectified so that the national minority is rid of its misapprehensions about using the lever of international leadership for splitting the sections and for forcing tactical lines from above. All the Trotskyists in those countries must get together, as we have done in India or our comrades have done in Chile. All the Trotskyists must abide by that decision whether that is the FI line or not. FI must also accept that verdict. I am sure with this express declaration a proper atmosphere will be there and unity between the two wings achieved. Otherwise, no amount of FI resolutions for unity can bring about unity.

* * *

National Autonomy: Why?

Michel Pablo, in his booklet, *Fourth International: What It Is; What It Aims At*, p. 23, sallies at the idea of "an organization which is above all, *national*, setting up only "fraternal" links with other national organizations. This, he explains, will make an International which is in reality only an arithmetical collection of separate national organizations which co-operate in this or that field. He holds that the argument of national independence in reality often covers up the existence of a national bureaucratic apparatus which does not much like international democratic control over it.

A national bureaucracy has to be controlled by enabling the ranks to exercise democracy so that (1) no bureaucracy is allowed to exist; (2) whatever bureaucracy has formed dissolves in democracy of the ranks. A control from above, by a higher International Committee, however democratic, is in itself bureaucratic. International democratic control, however democratic, is no alternative to a national bureaucracy. On the other hand, in order to avoid falling under the control of an international bureaucratic apparatus, we cannot reduce the international cohesion to a "fraternal" link only nor make the International an arithmetical collection of national organizations.

National peculiarities *have* to be taken into account. It is true, as Pablo states that "it is impossible to understand what is peculiar in a given national situation without setting it up against the background of a correct analysis and understanding of the international situation." It is also true that the particular is what it is only by way of comparison with the general. Yet it is also true that in spite of this age, as well as stage of imperialism, uneven national development is a fact. Internationalization of economy has not done away with the various forces and various levels of objective circumstances and subjective level of forces and line-up of various forces and such other factors which differ from nation to nation. The political cohesion and oneness of outlook resulting from acceptance of the platform of the FI and common decision on important political events and questions among all the revolutionary militants of the world under the banner of a single world organization ensures that general, international outlook which is so much emphasized by him. But understanding the general world situation does not ensure understanding by every revolutionary militant outside a country of the particular, specific, conditions obtaining in that country, simply because they do not have a direct impact of events on them and cannot, because of the limitations of human faculties, fully comprehend the importance or significance of national peculiarities or the possible reaction of the people of the nation among whom the national militant has to work. Hence, while all the world may come to the help of the militants of the national section and tell them where they are making national or nationalist mistakes, the decision must be entirely that of the national section.

Because of this autonomy in national political matters, tactical questions and certain organization matters, national sections do not become *above all national*, as long as they accept the discipline of the centralized international leadership and follow its political decision in all important political matters.

* * *

It is important for the International to allow national autonomy also because of its practical implications and consequences.

The prior acceptance of the platform of the FI excludes the possibility of vital, fundamental and irreversible differences on political questions. Although today's differences are both vital and fundamental yet they are [not] irreversible and even such occasions shall come rarely. The same is not true of the tactical differences.

The application of the platform of the FI or of the

decisions of the International Conferences in the tactical spheres is bound to result in serious differences from time to time. Important and original analyses or lines may create such big controversies that every section is torn within itself. The international majority may be on the one side and the national majority on the other. If the International majority imposes its own tactical line on the unwilling national majority a rift is sure to occur in spite of the sanity, democracy-mindedness and discipline-loving nature of the leadership of the national sections. The tactical difference with the French majority resulted in their expulsion and of the British FI section with the SLL results in a bitter controversy and in the continuation of the 1953 split.

Even for those, who say politics-first, tactical questions are very, very important. These are more important to those who are actually building a movement. Imposition of a tactical line from above is little relished. In such a situation, if there is a modicum of democracy, the situation can be saved and the split avoided. Our organizational principles cannot ever be such absolute and immutable truths that they cannot be changed or modified even if the situation demands a change for the benefit of the organization. If the Statutes of the International are not interpreted as above by some, it is wiser to flex them to suit the needs.

The Degeneration of the Internationals

The degeneration of the earlier internationals is also an argument which Pablo disposes of in his booklet as follows:

Now the 2nd International, if it ended badly, did so because it degenerated into a collection of separate national organizations, each dominated by its own bureaucratic apparatus.

As for the 3rd International, it degenerated only by falling under the control of the bureaucratic apparatus of a single party—that of the Soviet CP.

As if the objective conditions then obtaining were of no significance and had the villains of the piece not appeared on the scene everything would have been all right.

The objective conditions in general were in the main responsible for the degeneration and petrification of the Second and Third Internationals. The relative prosperity of capitalism in the late 19th Century created the well-paid union officials and well-paid skilled workers—workers' aristocracy and labor bureaucracy. Not only one but all the national sections degenerated. The degeneration did not come about because of national bureaucratic leaders but because of the changed outlook from top to bottom. The revolutionaries in those sections had been reduced to a small percentage and that is why in spite of the efforts of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg the ranks of the said section did not rally round the program of revolution.

The Third International also degenerated because of the objective circumstances. The victory of the Russian Revolution brought so many petty-bourgeois worshipers of power to the workers' movement that the degeneration of the Soviet Communist Party was automatically transferred to the other CPs. Lenin could save one section of the Second International because the objective conditions there permitted him to take the leadership. Trotsky tried his best and yet failed. Not because the Russian State Power was being used against him, and he could not freely

organize the people. That is true only in respect of the Soviet Union. But even the Communists of outside failed to rally round him. The strength, the aid, and the power of the Soviet Union seemed so decisive always that the petty bourgeoisie looked only to the Soviet Union and not to the working class of its own country.

If it were only the degeneration of one or two national sections and the other sections had had autonomy, or the national sense or a proper training in deciding tactics of their own, they would have been as strong to resist and escape degeneration as Lenin's Bolshevik Party was.

Even in the case of the Third International, simple and chance organizational separation and tactical independence, in their special circumstance of extreme incapacity of the bourgeoisie to fight, the YCP and the CCP seized power empirically. It was only their past tactical dependence on the Third International and their ideological inhibition that prevented them from becoming revolutionary parties and hence, after the seizure of power, they behaved just like one more satellite of the Soviets with all the bureaucratic deformation.

It was possible for other sections also to escape degeneration if a training in independent tactical decisions would have been given and if they had been mature enough to make their own political judgment and assessment. That would have made other national sections less blindly loyal to the Comintern and capable of either projecting their own correct leadership or capable of discerning the lead of Trotsky—the alternative centralized international leadership—and of following him.

The confused state of political thinking today, the confounding gap between the subjective political consciousness of the people and the high level of political sermons, the contradiction between our fond hope of finding revolutionary militants, tendencies and groups in the mass parties of today and the unforeseen and unnoticed withdrawal of the masses in some countries from all political parties or any such development nationally may cause not only the national sections to indulge in unrealistic tactics, but may also lead to the distant theoreticians of the International to foist unreal tactics on the section. With the power of expulsion and discipline on tactical questions such an International may cause irreparable damage. On the other hand, such eventualities can be faced successfully and the national sections or as much as possible of them can escape degeneration if national autonomy has trained and given the section capacity to judge independently, and has permitted the national sections to stand in opposition to the International line on tactics without being penalized or

split in the name of international loyalty.

The Split Can Be Healed

Taking this view of the matter it appears that the political differences over the movement's attitude toward the CPs and the bureaucracies of the Soviet states, although fundamental, were not irreversible and not important by themselves to cause a split. The dissenters, it seems, found themselves faced with a situation where the tactics flowing from the majority document reverberated in their midst and the prospect of the expulsion of majority and split by the minority made them forget all about the identity of bigger revolutionary principles and caused such a quick and strong reaction in them to withdraw before it was too late for the defense of their cadres. As the SWP put it, the defense of their cadres became their first principle.

Anybody else in that situation would have most likely reacted in that same way.

Even today this apprehension remains the main hurdle to unity. The qualification that the IC proposes for the participants in its International Conference shows that the tactical differences are the most important ones. If the two wings can leave it to the section concerned to work out its tactics, in Algeria, in Britain and in Canada to be decided by the majority—whether they work inside the MNA or FLN or in cooperation with one of them; in the Labour Party totally or through the SLL, etc.—this fear would end and a proper atmosphere for unity would develop.

Whatever remains of the differences can be buried in democratic discussions over a given period by treating the split as unfortunate and by enabling both the views to be published in the FI or the sectional periodicals as the majority and the minority view as a special case till the next Conference. In this connection I would point out to the traditions of the Indian Militant which published the IS resolution, with which it disagreed.

This can be done. The pursuit of unity by the Indian Trotskyists on a minimum acceptable program shows that for the sake of unity less important differences—those that can be settled within a single organization can be ignored and an acceptable formula or draft can be presented for unity. The unity of the Chilean Trotskyists shows that the Trotskyists themselves find it more necessary to present a united front within the country than quarrel over less important differences. If the present apprehensions are removed, the good political sense in the ranks of the organizations of both the wings shall push their leaderships to unity.

February 1, 1960

4. "The Struggle for the Leadership of the Proletariat," by R. N. Arya (March 3, 1960)

The *F.I.* in its August 1959 issue carried an Open Letter to the Socialist Labour League in which it presented its viewpoint on three important issues under discussion in the international Trotskyist movement. Of the three, the discussion on tactics was acclaimed as the most important.

The *F.I.* completely agreed with the *Labour Review* statement that the building of an alternative leadership of the proletariat is the main goal, but it was asked as to, "how we are going to attain these goals in practice." (p. 60)

The *F.I.* proudly announces:

"For the first time in its history, the Fourth International had tried to work out a rounded theory of the concrete way to build revolutionary mass parties in various parts of the world. To this, Burns [Healy] has nothing to oppose but slanderous invectives and empty phrases." (p. 62)

The material out of which this theory has been constructed is stated to be a "a huge body of experience in this matter." (p. 60) One of the experiences quoted is in respect of the British CP in the Third Period (1928-33) when in spite of quite courageous examples of militancy among the organized workers and the unemployed in the period of great economic crisis, the trial balance at the end showed that the Social Democratic Labour Party had grown stronger than the CP. It adds that similar experiences were gathered from many of the European countries and refers to the experiences of building mass CPs of Germany, Italy and France and of failure to build CPs of Great Britain, etc.

The conclusion drawn is that in countries with an old-established political mass movement to which the overwhelming majority of the workers give political allegiance no alternative leadership will be built up essentially through leading militant strike actions on the economic front.

This conclusion is emphasized further in the portion of the letter discussing the SLL turn and tracing the history of the left movement in Britain.

The result of the experiences is stated as follows:

If they act in an intelligent way, individual revolutionaries (like individual Stalinists) can win very strong positions in this way as shop stewards or even as union leaders on a regional or national scale. But this nowise means that the workers who follow them in a strike or a militant action against union bureaucrats are ready to follow them politically into a new party, group or league. And those who follow them there will not stay long, if they remain outside the organized mass of labor.

If we follow carefully the words "essentially militant strike actions on economic front" and if we remember the example of the Stalinist militancy in the Third Period, we have no disagreement with the conclusion drawn.

Militancy of the Stalinists

The militancy of the Stalinists in the Third Period—at other times they were more efficient class-collaborators than social democracy—is not an example of militancy but of adventurism. To base any conclusion on such facts is only to live in self-deception.

Examples of such militancy can be gathered in abundance even in India. Red-dressed CP militants of the Red AITUC [All India Trade Union Council] went on work in the factories with an air of a "great mission," ready to pick up a quarrel with the jobber or the supervisor on any count, ready to engineer a strike just on the pretext of some bad behavior of some officer. Tridib Chaudhury, in his book *Swing Back*, quotes circulars directing communists in a similar Randive Period in 1948-51 as to how quickly to "develop" struggles into strikes. In this period—Zhdanov Thesis was in force—Telengana peasants took arms under CP leadership and fought unsupported by the peasants in other parts of India. An all-India railway strike was to take place which was withdrawn by its reformist leader JP. The CP not only protested against the withdrawal, which was right militancy, but also gave a call to the railway workers to ignore the withdrawal and go on strike and the CP WORKERS DID GO ON STRIKE. The result was that other workers, though not satisfied with the withdrawal, could not understand this militancy and stood aloof. The dismissal of CP workers made them shrink and further isolated the CP.

In its zeal of militancy the CP split the TU movement

during such periods. In the Third Period it was in minority and hence it split off to form a Red AITUC and carry on its adventures. In the Randive Period it was in majority and practically excluded every other tendency undemocratically and pushed them out with its adventures. The four trade-union organizations centrally owe their existence because of this fact, also.

Examples of such militancy cannot be found wanting in Europe.

Such militancy cannot but isolate the petty-bourgeois idealists, cynics and hysterics, that the CP now is, from the sober-headed, slow-paced mass movement. The martyrdom of CP adventurists creates armchair devotees who relish the stories of adventures and rejoice in the singing of the British poem: "Into the valley of death, rode the six hundred." It cannot impress activists who seek to strengthen the movement and not their personal glory.

The FI movement has very emphatically denounced such militants—along with other sectarian and left adventurers—in the very first document: *Transitional Program*:

Sectarian attempts to build or preserve small revolutionary unions, as the second edition of the party, signify in actuality the renouncing of the struggle for the leadership of the working class. It is necessary to establish this firm rule: Self-isolation of the capitulationist variety from mass trade unions, which is tantamount to a betrayal of the revolution, is incompatible with the membership in the Fourth International.

The theory that the later FI leadership rounded out from the rich experiences of the past history of the building of CP somehow ignored what the Founding Congress of the FI had to say. The later leadership felt like making a history in making some observations "for the first time" from experiences which had already been before the Founding Congress. The Founding Congress in 1938 declared that the platform of the FI concentrated "the international experience of the revolutionary Marxist movement and bases itself upon all of humanity's progressive social experiences." This declaration was not empty, nor has any new situation arisen. The lesson drawn by the Founding Congress as above, was and is the only correct lesson drawn from the experiences.

Militancy on the Economic Front

The fact that militancy on the economic front alone cannot form a mass party is true not on the basis of the experience of the militancy of the Stalinist parties but on other grounds—ground which the Transitional Program took due notice of.

In the days of progressive capitalism, the Social Democracy could afford to divide its program into two parts: Maximum and Minimum. Its work in the unions limited itself to the minimum program, i.e., to reform within the framework of bourgeois society. Militancy paid rich dividends and firmness and stiffness of the leaders of the working class brought better terms. Workers liked and followed militant leaders—which usually came from the CPs in the twenties. The top leadership of the unions in that period developed powerful tendencies towards compromise with the bourgeois democratic regime. "In periods of acute class struggle the leading bodies of the trade unions aimed to become masters of the mass movement in order to render it harmless." Militancy against the com-

promisist top leadership won the adherence of ranks easily.

All this is gone now, for capitalism has entered its decadent stage. In this epoch of decaying capitalism, "there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and raising of the masses' living standard; . . . every serious demand of the proletariat and even every serious demand of the petty bourgeoisie inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state." (T.P.)

Militancy, now, only brings in its train more direct and open state intervention. Compromisists avoid struggle and have to bear the dissatisfaction of the masses. The militants, however, are, more often than not, defeated and disorganized and smashed today and the ranks are again thrown to the compromisists. The hold of the bureaucracy on the unions gets only strengthened.

Militancy on the economic front alone cannot help us now—just as it did not help the CPs in the late twenties or after. That is why the Transitional Program observes the futility of pursuing this path of Social Democracy and summed up all the failures of the CP by noting that "the Comintern has set out to follow the path of Social Democracy in an epoch of decaying capitalism." (ibid, p. 9)

Yet the TP did not decry the economic struggles. It cautions us not to minimize the importance of the daily work and observes:

However, the achievement of this strategic task—overthrow of capitalism—is unthinkable without the most considered attention to all, even small and partial questions of tactics. All sections of the proletariat, all its layers, occupations and groups, should be drawn into the revolutionary movement. The present epoch is distinguished not for the fact that it frees the revolutionary party from day-to-day work but that it permits this work to be carried on indissolubly with the actual tasks of the revolution. (*Transitional Program*)

In other words, the Fourth International was directed by the Founding Congress to combine this economic program with a political content—which was called the Transitional Program. It was the originality of the FI and it was supposed that we were not only going to carry on a hair-splitting discussion on what Marxism is but that we are going to leave the old methods of work which have been tried again and again by the Social Democracy and Stalinism and start out on a new path.

Henceforth, there was no question of economic militancy alone for us. In repeating this conclusion the FI leadership of today only shows that it has not grasped the significance of the observations of the Founding Congress.

Insofar as it was a new program, new method of work, new tactics, the task of the later congresses lay in analyzing the world situation with this view and define specifically the Transitional Program for each section for the period ahead. This has been ignored and new tactics substituted for it.

The Founding Conference thought it had paid its most considered attention to all, even small and partial questions of tactics but the later leadership found that it had ignored the rich experiences of party building since the end of the first world war.

Militancy on the Political Front

Parenthetically, it may be said that essentially by political militancy alone also it is not possible to build a working-class mass party.

The Transitional Program notes a "contradiction between the objective revolutionary conditions and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard" (p. 8-9) and took as its starting point "today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class."

This consciousness is not class consciousness but a petty-bourgeois idealism. The "confusion and disappointment of the older generation and the inexperience of the younger generation" which at first dimmed the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat has by now begun to take a clear-cut petty-bourgeois trend under the opportunist leadership of Social Democracy and Stalinism. All sorts of misconceptions rule the proletariat and recruit its cadres from the working class to petty-bourgeois political activity and spasmodic working-class actions also have lost their independent status. Seemingly bold and revolutionary political activity attracts devotees from the working class also, but it cannot win the mass of the working class unless it is related to their daily struggle. The urgency of weaving together of the maximum and minimum programs of old has made itself felt albeit in a different and more interesting and unforeseen way.

The predominantly economic nature of the struggle for existence has busied the working class now mainly with its own economic struggles. The disintegrating capitalism is shifting its burden of militarism, of crisis, of the disorganized monetary system on to the workers in the shape of automation and back-breaking work on the one hand and ever-decreasing share of real wages on the other. Its cadres, even advanced sections, are no longer interested in any maximum program or any ideological hair-splitting discussion, or any sacred or idealist struggle for socialism, peace, and progress unless they can see directly and clearly how these struggles are going to help them in their immediate survival. Gone are the days when the Sunday speeches on socialism could win adherents or the authority of the October Revolution and purity and sanctity of an ideology could draw militants to the ranks of a party irrespective of who controlled the union. The only slogans which can find echo in the widest sections of the working masses are economic which have to be indissolubly linked with the political perspective of revolution.

No revolutionary politics is thinkable now without being based on the Transitional Program.

We have had enough proof of this important fact in recent history. No party, no political tendency has had such jolts in its history as Stalinism has had. Exposure of Moscow Trials repelled intellectuals. The revelations of Stalin's terror, of Stalin's anti-Semitism and the political stench from the Soviet crushing of the political revolution in Hungary weakened Stalinist hold on the intellectuals. Many of them left the CP. These events shook the faith of the worker-militants also but they still stick to CP. Daniel Roberts has very aptly pointed out why it is so. It is so because, in spite of all political failures of the CP, the worker-militants of the CP find it still much more militant than the other parties. They did not find economics indissolubly linked with politics of the CP. They preferred economics and left politics to take its own course.

The compulsion of the advanced decay and disintegration of capitalism is that the Transitional Program is no longer discretionary; it is imperative.

This also proved from the FI observation that the workers prefer to stay in their mass political organizations.

The struggle for survival between the employers and the workers has become very acute and any militant, who strays and strolls singly away from the mass organizations of the working class is victimized by the employers easily. The workers cannot afford to be politically so militant as to lose the protection of the union leadership. If we have to win him politically, we have to surround him with a movement on economic grounds which can mobilize the widest possible layer of the working class and engulf him with this support on all sides. On the wave of this movement, he will always be ready to clash with the union bureaucrats.

No political militancy can succeed independent of economic militancy now.

I do not yet know the thinking behind the formation of the SLL but this is the only way to combine economic militancy with political militancy and envelop the militants with a political support sufficiently strong to defend them against their bureaucrats in the factories.

Entry Tactics

The Open Letter to the SLL draws a correct conclusion that in the present epoch, entry has to be an important tactic for our movement. It says:

In all countries with organized mass parties of the working class, to which the majority of the class gives allegiance, no mass revolutionary party will be built *mainly* by *individual recruitment* (winning over, through propaganda or the example of militant actions, individual members of the mass party, or groups of four, five, ten or twelve members at a time.)

It just means that the main strength of a mass revolutionary party in such countries will come from the former ranks of the older parties who desert the older parties and join the new party en bloc. In a period of crisis this does happen so and is the main source of our strength today. But whether the main activity of our national sections has to be the winning of such split-off sections from the organized mass movement of the working class—or else to seek for such splits—remains a very doubtful proposition, not necessarily following the first premise. This main strength of the national section may come suddenly and in a short time without giving any indication at all from beforehand how is it to come and hence the main activity of the section, i.e., most of the time of a section has to be devoted to individual recruitment.

That was the principle of the application of entry tactics in Social Democratic parties in the thirties when Trotsky was alive. That was why and how the French section first and then the American section entered the SP. They were mainly built in this process and yet it was a very short time affair. The respective national section decided to enter when the rift in these parties had become quite acute and when it was possible for them to carry on a full propaganda of Trotskyist principles inside those parties. They went in for a short measure and did not stay to create more rifts and splits and draw away majority or significant minority with them.

Ever since the tactics of entry has remained the

watchword of our movement and organizational flexibility our main quality.

The present entry tactics of the FI leadership differs from the old in that it does not depend on any precondition. It is only by implication that we guess that the mass character of a reformist or a Stalinist party itself is a condition for entry. The rift is not to be there from beforehand. It is to be created, developed and organized so that the majority or a strong minority is in it. It is a matter for a guess for anyone whether the decision to set up independent national sections in these countries was a mistake in 1938 or is a mistake now.

The FI says:

Revolutionary mass parties will be built through splits inside the reformist (or Stalinist) mass parties. . . splits which draw away the majority (or a very strong minority) of all the politically conscious members of these parties.

This is one of the possibilities, no doubt, and if it does occur the revolutionary parties will draw their main strength from such splits. In case such an eventuality presents itself and the conditions for entry are ripe, no national section can hesitate to enter the parties and draw away whatever is possible. But if somebody tells us it must happen so, we beg to differ with all respects due to the genius of the man or the authority of the organization. Yet this is what the present leadership of the FI says. Their argument for this-must-happen-so attitude is so slippery and scanty that they have to beat about the bush and call for the assistance of all historical experiences which prove nothing but which confuse the lesser guys quite strongly.

A split is likely only when a crisis suddenly threatens a country, or a very serious crisis develops. Before it so happens, its slow march will cause a slower or a faster disintegration of the established mass political organizations also. This may result in a slower or a faster growth of an independent organization or else in political apathy of the working people. Fascists and Stalinists are the two open centers of attention in a polarizing society—one based on intense nationalism bordering on fanaticism and the other based on the spell of the strength of the workers' state. (The recent growth of the American CP and of the Italian CP shows that the CP has adjusted itself and new sections of power-worshipping petty bourgeoisie are filling them now.) The Stalinists—rather Khrushchevites—will carry on the impossible game of introducing socialism through parliament until either a structural assimilation takes place or else they are overthrown. If that happens so, seriousness of the crisis will only expedite this process. The presence of revolutionaries by the side of such militants who keep on whispering "world revolution" will not alter this process a whit for it can neither resist fanatic nationalism nor the spell of the workers' state. Only a strong working-class movement will do it.

Entrism *sui generis*, by a publication of the proposed Trotskyist organ, cannot provide that alternative. It will be just one of the already too many such groupings then in existence in that country. The situation can change only when all the Trotskyist forces, or at least their main strength, carry on independent activity and on the basis of a movement or transitional program has drawn the attention of the working-class movement and of the petty bourgeoisie. Entrism *sui generis* keeps only a token force independent and that too to help the forces inside. Full

independent activity may keep token factions inside other parties and that too to carry on the propaganda of the transitional program being already carried outside.

We have seen slow transformation of parties—of SP in India into PSP and of the SDP of Germany into a similar left face of the bourgeoisie. A slow disintegration of the militants from the party may also end the party as that and then we shall have the same balance before us that the British CP had—the right has gained more than the left.

This cocksure prophecy about the inevitable split towards the left is based on conceptions of irreversible march of world revolution. It is admitted that this irreversibility is only general and taken for a whole period. But when the FI leadership begins to calculate on the irreversibility it takes it as absolute with no possibility of reversibility for a shorter or a longer period in this or that country. And then the strength and the speed of this march is also taken to be irresistible so that nothing but what the FI charts must happen. Consequently the FI holds that the left tendency must win and it must cut right across the bureaucratic leadership who can do nothing except gaze on helplessly. It is perhaps presumed that they cannot strike back and smash the revolutionary militants who enter the party.

We have had the Indian experience. Our leaders well realized that an incautious step may well destroy us in the party we have entered. Gossips about rifts and dissension continued but we were always too cautious to attract the notice of the dissidents. When we split last we found that all our leaders had become worthless for our movement and lost faith in it. Ranks disintegrated. Those who came back can only chant the poem "Charge of the Light Brigade" and say "Into the Valley of death, Rode the six hundred."

In cases of long entry the pressure of the petty-bourgeois milieu of the other party is one factor which is to be counted and it is to be remembered that even the Trotskyists are men of flesh and blood and are likely to succumb to this pressure.

It is, therefore, much better to wait until a rift develops and all the conditions for entry are fulfilled.

Engineering Splits from Within

Because many mass CPs were built from splits, the FI has set itself the task of engineering splits from within the established mass political parties of the working class. But the splits which have provided this inspiration to the FI do not shed any light on whether splits can be engineered from within or not.

The splits which helped in the building of mass CPs in Italy, Germany, France and Czechoslovakia resulted from crises in the SD parties in the situation of grave social crisis without asking. The progress of the split-away section towards revolutionary path depended on the capacity and halo of the Communist International and the authority of the October revolution. Both these things had a powerful influence on the minds of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie in the twenties and worked from outside the SD parties. If a political revolution does occur in any country under CP rule, this attraction can once again be felt and splits sparked off in the direction of Marxism. All this proves the necessity of keeping the outside magnet sufficiently strong but proves nothing about whether the

splits can be created, developed and organized from within in the absence of such outside magnets.

The only experience that we have had of engineering splits from within has been that of the BLP [Bolshevik Leninist Party] in India which must be discussed whether it was a failure or not.

We could not do it in India. Our failure was not due to the failure of our leaders but due to the objective situation existing in the host party and in the country. We lost whatever we had in the final analysis although like the FI we also had reported success in the initial stages in getting ourselves integrated in the mass movement, but when it came to the development of a broad left current it failed. Whatever splits sparked off during our existence inside the host party ignored us completely, even though in the most recent splits—SP of Lohia from PSP and of the Raju group from the Lohia's SP—our former leaders were in the leading staff.

The FI record does not present a different picture. Pablo's report to the 5th World Congress informs us that during the period between 1953-57, the first stage of entry has been carried out and our cadres occupy a place in the mass movement. This is yet no political work, which is to come in the second stage when a broad left current is to be stimulated, and partly led, by our nuclei. Yet that is the real work of entry. The FI leadership plunged in this work without thinking what new problems could arise and how we had to tackle them. The solution suggested is that of sui generis entry, i.e., an entry which combines independent activity with entry properly so-called by publication of 100 percent Trotskyist literature, alongside an internal press for the expression of the left tendency. Struggle again tends to develop between the glare of the strength of the workers states whose spokesman CPs remain and our small skeleton of 100 percent Trotskyist press or the FI and there is little doubt as to which glare will prove stronger. As to the internal press, it is sufficient to state that the militants who begin to be dissatisfied shall have all their own presses and those who are disgusted with a party shall not feel necessarily bound by one of its oppositional left press.

Here too the experience of the BLP of India participating in the split of Aruna's group is significant. As for the split of Sheila's group in 1954, it is important to note that in spite of an organ, *Socialist Appeal*, in the early stages we failed to retain whatever non-Trotskyist element broke with us.

In this stage the discreetness necessarily imposed on us makes our role appear secondary and we are unable to control the centrifugal tendencies that begin to appear in this left current. We also ignore slower or faster disintegration that goes on in the attempt to get the bigger fish and slowly the whole party is so transformed—as happened in the case of conversion of SP into PSP in India—that the hope of the bigger fish itself is lost.

All this uncertainty can be avoided and could be avoided if we believed a little less in the absolute irreversibility of the march of revolution and waited from outside, sympathetically dealing with the internal ranks from outside, until a rift actually developed and the condition for our entry matured.

As for numerical growth inside the host party, we have others' experience in India. We found that the socialist faction of the Congress made its exit in 1947 only depleted in strength and deflated in spirits and many of its

stalwarts preferred to remain in the Congress. The same thing was repeated in our case and the stay of our renowned Ajit Roy in the PSP is an example. It will be unfortunate if our militants in the host party prefer to remain there at the time of the split so that they retain the integration with the mass movement achieved with so much personal work. We know from our own experience and also from the report of Pablo that this winning of positions was not made possible because of political influence. It was possible due to personal hard work in some cases, by clever maneuvering between erstwhile leaders and groups, in other cases.

Return to the Transitional Program

There is no alternative except to return to the path outlined by the Founding Congress of the Fourth International in the Transitional Program, which we have unfortunately forgotten in our attempt to strike out a new path. The highest development of Trotskyism lies there. The ideological clarity that Trotsky gave in the theory of the permanent revolution and in the analysis of the phenomena of Stalinism and fascism outlined certain tasks for us. The Transitional Program told us how to weave all these ideological contributions and tasks and carry them through. This is the mightiest glare that we possess and the mightiest weapon that we have to guide and build the working-class movement with. The workers confused by social democracy and Stalinism can be mobilized and led on the path of revolution only through movements organized on the basis of those demands.

In our own times, we have seen CPs gathering strength by building a peace movement based on feelings emanating from human mind in its present state of consciousness. They did it on a non-class basis which we cannot do. But we have plenty of class movements in which we can throw all our energy and resources and build them. The movement for a 40-hour week in Britain is just this movement and it is gratifying that our British Trotskyists have thrown in all their resources and energy in building it through the Socialist Labour League—a bigger organizational framework which can include all the shades of political opinion. When this movement gathers momentum, all other shades of opinion will get absorbed in it without the Socialist Labour League becoming Trotskyist or taking political functions, in a free play and democratic discussion. With the growth of this movement and with the prospect of its clash with the present socio-economic setup, all other parties will drop out leaving only the Trotskyists to champion this cause. It is this movement which will fascinate the working class and put Trotskyism in the forefront. It will be thus that the leadership of the proletariat will be won.

A short-term entry did not put us out of our main work for long and because of the seriousness of the crisis with which our host party is busy, our activities of such kind

are necessarily freer. A long term entry which takes years in our integration in the mass movement confines us to economic militancy alone in the first years. When we attempt to set a broad left current going, we graft on it political militancy separated from the economic work in the style of the Social Democracy and Stalinism (like championing of the colonial revolution by the metropolitan workers). We depend on the intellectual assimilation of our program by the workers and the petty-bourgeois idealists. As in Britain, our entrust faction will delight in participating in discussion with the left intellectuals in the party but will not dare to goad the labor bureaucracy by its participation in the movement based on transitional programs in opposition to the bureaucracy. The Transitional Program thus lies buried all the time by a movement which was created in 1938 only to implement it.

Propaganda of what Trotsky said is as ineffective as the other Sunday preachings on socialism are now. We cannot build an alternative leadership unless we initiate movements on the basis of the Transitional Program in combination with all those workers, ranks and leaders of different parties and organizations which can support it. A political propaganda, now, has effect only when it is backed in action and based on daily struggle. In abstract political discussion we cater to the intellectuals who look upon the working class only skeptically. In concrete political actions based on the Transitional Program, we may not attract the intellectuals due to its colorlessness, but we can definitely build a workers movement and win their leadership.

The long-term entry ignores the Transitional Program completely. On the other side, it is possible to follow the developments inside a party through fraction work, while building a movement on the basis of the Transitional Program. No one prevents us from having as strong a faction inside the "host" party as possible or as required by the circumstances, while our main work of building movements around the Transitional Program goes on outside. Here our main attention is outside and our inside or entrust activity is geared to our independent work. In sui generis our main work is internal and our outside press only helps in the carrying out of this tactic. (It is no wonder why our present FI propaganda makes concessions to Stalinist opinions and to the claims of and versions of workers bureaucracy and adapts its interpretation of Marxism to the Chinese CP practical method of "fight, guerrilla, fight.") A whole attitude differs in independent activity and basing movements on the Transitional Program.

By the combination of independent work in normal and relatively peaceful times when internal conflict in a party is still very obscure, with a short-term entry—a dive-in and-come-out-affair—we can strengthen our independent movement.

The struggle for the leadership of the proletariat demands a return to the Transitional Program.

SECTION XVIII: REUNIFICATION IN JAPAN

The reunification of the Japanese Committee of the Fourth International, affiliated to the International Secretariat, with the Japanese Revolutionary Communist League, an affiliate of the International Committee, was a further spur to international unity efforts. The unified group aligned itself with the International Committee while pressing for immediate reunification. An added factor was that the strongest supporter of Pablo in the Japanese Committee of the Fourth International, Ota, bitterly opposed the unification, perhaps reflecting Pablo's views on this. Thus, the successful unification and the isolation of Ota were further blows to Pablo's position.

A unification had also taken place in Chile between the IC group and a major sector of IS supporters. The latter had become disillusioned with Pablo's entryist formula. A report on the process by which unification took place here

appears in Section XXV of this volume.

Thus, reunification was no longer mere sentiment. On the rank-and-file level, it was becoming a *fact*, as sections went ahead with fusions imperiously dictated by the broad range of political agreement between the factions.

The remaining theoretical differences over Stalinism had narrowed to the point where both factions adopted political positions on events in the Soviet Union and other workers states that were essentially identical. Although the IS central leadership still defended the strategy of long-term entryism and favored a high degree of organizational centralism in the international, these were becoming issues in dispute within the IS. Thus, the political lines of separation between the IS and the IC continued to dissolve.

1. "Bring into the IS Congress the theory and policies of the IC": letter from Kyoji Nishi to Tom Kerry (received December 19, 1960)

Dear Comrade Kerry,

We want to report to you on the unity of Japanese Revolutionary Communist League and Japanese Committee Of The Fourth International, and our opinion towards the coming Congress of the IS.

1. On the unity of JRCL and JCFI.

JCFI was formed by Ryu Ota who left JRCL in an utterly unprincipled way in 1958. Ota followed wholly the Pabloite's revisionism, used dirty organizational maneuvers, never stopping irresponsible slanders on JRCL, always wavering between utterly unrealistic ultra-left lines (calling for an armed insurrection during the struggles against the Security Treaty) and opportunism, arousing distrust and misunderstanding towards Trotskyism and 4th International among the radical workers. But young members of Ota's group, who realized the mistakes of Ota's lines and correctness of the policies of JRCL, keeping contact with the latter, fought with his faction. On June 23, they expelled Ota from JCFI and openly decided to unite with JRCL. JRCL naturally welcomed this call, and has continued political discussion with them. As the result, these 30 members of JCFI completely agreed to accept the policies of JRCL and formally joined the latter. In Ota's faction, now no more than 10 members are left. This shows the complete bankruptcy and defeat of Pabloism and the victory of real Trotskyism in Japan. The enclosed statement on the unity was drafted by JRCL and unanimously accepted by both organizations. We are sure that this unification has created one of the conditions which will make favorable the perspective of the struggle by the International Faction against the present IS.

2. On the coming world congress of the IS.

The new development of revolutions in Cuba and other

backward countries, clear signs of new upsurge in some advanced countries, wavering within Social Democracies and Stalinism—these are creating very favorable conditions for a rapid development of Trotskyism. It is more and more clear that unless the 4th International recovers as quickly as possible its function of unified leadership, throws out the Pabloites from its leadership, the 4th International will fatally lag behind the situations.

In view of this fundamental appraisal, and the fact that at present Pablo is excluded from any activities, that the bankruptcy of Pabloism has been made clear by the objective situations, and lastly, that in Japan the unity of Trotskyist movements has been achieved as the direct result of overcoming the Pabloism—in view of these facts, JRCL considers it necessary to bring into the IS congress the theory and policies of the IC, and to strengthen the contacts with the Trotskyists in the world. Livio wrote to JCFI to come to Europe by December 25. We want to propose as follows:

1. The representatives of the IC sections should meet in Europe before the IS congress;

2. And there work out the conditions for the unification of IS and IC, and our program against the program of the IS;

3. Should present our joint proposal before the IS, to participate in the congress if the necessary agreement is reached.

We want to know your opinion on this question. JRCL is preparing its programs which criticise the draft program of the IS. We consider it proper for JRCL to regard the coming congress as the congress of the IS fraction (not as the one of the 4th International), and to participate in it even if the IC as a whole cannot participate in it.

Please let us know your opinion.

Yours fraternally,

Kyoji Nishi

National Chairman of JRCL

2. "Statement on the Unification of the JRCL and JCFI" (received in New York December 19, 1960)

Japanese Revolutionary Communist League and Japanese Committee of the Fourth International, both of which succeeding to the revolutionary tradition of Marxism-Leninism-Trotskyism, have been fighting under the banner of the Fourth International, declare that the two organizations have been fused into a single party.

Hereafter, the two organizations will struggle for a socialist revolution, for building up a revolutionary party under the name of JRCL and upon the base of the program of former JRCL.

The biggest factor that has brought about this unification of the Japanese Trotskyist movement which had split in August 1958, when Ota clique split away from JRCL, is the fact that the whole process of class struggles during these two years, especially the struggles against Japan-US Security Pact and against the rationalization of industries, tested the policies and abilities of every political group. The actual class struggles mercilessly proved the complete bankruptcy of the revisionist policy of Ota, who blindly

accepted the Pabloite lines of ISFI. It also proved the correctness of the fundamental policy of JRCL.

The internal polemics in JCFI led to the victory of the revolutionary faction, overwhelming majority of the organization and the expulsion of Ota from JCFI.

The petty-bourgeois, individualistic concept on the party, which was the direct cause of the split, has been overcome by the relentless inner struggles intensified by the objective situations in Japan favorable for the Trotskyist movement, that is, the general leftward tendencies, increasing distrust toward the traditional leaderships, among the rank and file masses.

The individualistic and petty-bourgeois concept on the party, which had possessed the still too young organization, became one of the greatest obstacles for the organization to develop from a small circle toward a proletarian party. The pressure of the general objective situations greatly helped both parties to overcome these internal obstacles. The victory of the correct political and theoretical stand and the recovery of the proletarian party discipline were the direct factors that realized this unification.

But if we had not stood on the common principle to base

ourselves upon Trotskyism and the 4th International, we would not have been able to achieve this unification.

In this sense, the fusion of JRCL and JCFI forms a striking contrast to the hopeless confusion within the centrist Communist League, which, having played a sensational leading role during the recent mass demonstration against the Security Pact, now is going through an agonizing disintegration, into pieces, having lost its *raison d'être* after the decline of the petty-bourgeois upheaval.

This contrast comes from the difference between those who firmly maintain their standpoint as the successor to the historical lessons and revolutionary traditions of class struggle, that is to say, the Trotskyism, and those who, in spite of the increasing distrust among the masses towards the traditional leaderships, cannot stand on the genuine revolutionary principle nor come out of their centrist position.

Today, before our very eyes, a broad, favorable perspective is opening up for the world Trotskyist Movement.

The rationalization of industries which has been persistently carried out these several years bring about the higher stage of State monopoly capitalism, the deepening crisis of world capitalist economy rapidly proceeding predicting the first post-war turning point of business cycle, the radicalization of rank and file masses who have recruited their fighting spirits mainly from their economic struggles in the boom—these factors are exposing the inefficiency of the official leaderships more and more clearly, accelerating the corruption of Social Democrat and Stalinist forces and compelling them to reorganizing themselves.

In the Socialist Democratic forces, right wingers such as Gaitskell faction of British LP or Godesberg gentlemen of West German SDP, officially confessed that their only way to survive is to betray the working class more nakedly than ever, and to bring their policies of the notorious Second International nearer to those of the capitalists. The rather sharp polemics between Moscow and Peking, spreading the influence of Togliatti's theory which is nothing but the up-to-the-minute reformism in the van of the state monopoly era, these all show the process of the forced disintegration and reorganization of Stalinism. These are the typical the attempt of signs of traditional leaderships' crises. Their programs have become utterly old fashioned in the rapidly developing objective situations of today. The most remarkable fact for us is that Social Democrats and Stalinists are losing their real influence among the masses, and that a new fresh revolutionary initiatives of rank and file militants are increasing strength in all the countries of the world. The advance of the left against Gaitskell's right wing faction at the recent British LP's convention, New Left movement, mainly among the intelligentsia in England and France, the growth of Cuban Revolution, disillusion of the masses

towards the policies of Big Business shown at the Presidential election in U.S.—these are some examples of the new tendencies mentioned above.

In Japan, the situation is quite the same, or in a certain sense, these new trends are manifesting clearer than any other capitalist country.

Thus, the Fourth International, the only possible international leadership for a socialist revolution, has been given more favorable objective conditions than ever to strengthen its influence on the actual mass struggles and to recruit its forces full of fighting energy.

At the same time, we must say that the fact that despite of their growing distrust towards their leaders, millions of workers, students and intelligentsia are still unable to decide to liberate themselves from their influence, never going beyond forming centrist or "independent left" groups, is the direct result of the weakness on the part of the Fourth International, its political and organizational incapacity to mobilize these leftward tendencies under the banner of Trotskyism.

One of these left-centrist groups in Japan, Communist League was formed in 1958, immediately after Ota's Split from JRCL. At that time, a great majority of student members of CP became violently critical and distrust towards their official leaders, revolted against them. But owing to the weakness of JRCL in practical activities and the individualistic maneuvers of Ota which led to his split, JRCL could not become an axis of this radicalization of student cadres, helping them toward Trotskyism and the Fourth International. Thus a large number of the radical students stopped on their way and have remained as left centrists.

From this lesson, we can say that whether the present favorable situation can lead to the strengthening of the Japanese section of the Fourth International depends on the activities of us Trotskyists. Our unification will be a first step towards the accomplishment of this great task. At the same time, we consider it our important task, our most urgent task, to endeavor for a revolutionary unification of the Fourth International as an actually functioning international headquarters for the world revolution.

JRCL will strengthen itself qualitatively with Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist principles, quantitatively with fresh class energy, and will advance toward our final goal, the world socialist revolution.

We, the members of JRCL, appeal to all the advanced workers, students and intelligentsia, to every left oppositional groups in SP and CP, to cooperate with us in the genuine revolution work of Leninism and Trotskyism, of the Fourth International.

Long live the unification of JRCL and JCFI!

Long live the triumphant advance of the Fourth International!

Workers of the World, unite under the banner of the Fourth International!

3. *"We suggest they consult comrades Burns and Peng": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Kyoji Nishi (December 27, 1960)*

New York, N.Y.

Japan

Dear Comrade Nishi,

We have your letter reporting unification of the Japanese Revolutionary Communist League and most of the former Pabloite group—a fusion based upon acceptance of the policies of the JRCL. We welcome this news and share your view that it marks a significant new step in the already promising advance of the Japanese Trotskyist movement.

Concerning your proposals about the general Pabloite gathering, several factors make it impossible for us to consider sending an observer. Should you send a delega-

tion abroad for that purpose we suggest they make special efforts to consult Comrades Burns [Healy] and Peng. If the delegation could return in our direction, perhaps to the north of us, we would welcome a chance for a talk with them.

The whole subject of the world movement will be up for discussion at a mid-January plenum of our National Committee. Our thinking will probably run along lines similar to your evaluation of the improved political opportunities for Trotskyism throughout the world and the need to resolve the present leadership problems.

You will hear more extensively from us after the plenum and in the meantime we hope to receive further expression of your views.

Fraternally,
Farrell Dobbs

FD:ra
Airmail

SECTION XIX: THE MOVEMENT FOR UNITY BUILDS UP

The objective developments favoring unity produced new exchanges of views between supporters of the two factions. The SWP hailed every step toward unity, while stressing the importance of solidarity with the SLL in its fight against the Labour bureaucrats' witch-hunt.

A sign of the growing sentiment for unity was the statement by S. B. Kolpe, a leading Indian Trotskyist, in a letter to Joseph Hansen, that the Indian section sympathized with the SLL in its conflict with the IS over entryism.

In the aftermath of the arrest and imprisonment of Michel Pablo and Sal Santen in 1960 for providing material support to the Algerian revolution, changes occurred in the composition and attitudes of the IS leadership. Ernest Germain, Pierre Frank, and Livio Maitan now became more open in their support for unity. While adhering to a concept of democratic centralism that excluded a parity leadership, Germain began to indicate readiness to support firm guarantees for democracy in a unified international leadership.

The ready support given by the SWP to the defense of Pablo and Santen strengthened reunification sentiments. After some hesitation, the SLL also began to demand the release of the two IS leaders.

The degeneration of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International, was a complicating factor. This party offered critical support to a bourgeois government headed by Sirimavo Bandaranaike.

The LSSP had been critical of Pablo's political views and organizational methods. It had always advocated

reunification. Its degeneration in a bourgeois nationalist direction was facilitated by the split which prevented the two factions from pooling their resources to combat the LSSP's political drift. Leaders and supporters of both factions publicly criticized the LSSP's actions.

Healy tended to attribute all the problems of the world movement, including those of the LSSP, to the pervasive influence of "Pabloism." In response, Dobbs proposed a more materialist explanation, pointing to "contradictions arising from the class-struggle lag in the imperialist countries and the steady advance of the colonial revolution."

At the end of 1960, Healy opposed any organizational approaches or steps towards a discussion of unity. He said that such efforts were solely "designed to split the SWP from the Socialist Labour League." It is now evident that Healy had already decided on a break with the SWP, but he chose to pin the blame in advance on the growing demand for unity.

Healy's letters showed little appreciation or concern for the actual developments in the international: the political evolution of the Indian section and its views on the struggle in Britain; the reunification in Japan and the Japanese Trotskyists' demand for unity on an international scale; and the unification that had taken place in Chile.

The SWP's reaction to this complicated situation was to seek consultation with all the sectors of the IC, with a view to achieving a common approach to the new situation. Before such a meeting could be held, however, Healy launched his factional war against the SWP.

1. "Merger of Socialists in India," editorial in the Militant (February 29, 1960)

The Revolutionary Workers party of India has announced that it is merging with the Revolutionary Communist party. The announcement appeared in the Feb. 5 issue of their official newspaper, "The Militant". (By choosing this name, the Indian comrades indicated their adherence to the revolutionary-socialist tradition which we have sought to maintain through the years.)

The united organization, to be called the Revolutionary Communist party of India, has four main points in its program: (1) support of the struggle of the masses against foreign imperialism and native capitalism. (2) "Unconditional defense of the Soviet Union, China, and other workers' states against any capitalist attack." (3) Support of the struggle of the working people to end "bureaucratic privileges in the Soviet camp countries." (4) Subordination of all partial and sectional interests of the working people to "the world socialist revolution."

In a document jointly adopted by the central committees of the two parties, the basis of the merger is stated to be the acceptance of the "fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism" and rejection of "all doctrines of class peace and revisionism."

"Capitalism as a world system is doomed," the document declares, "Its signs are unmistakably evident today. We are already living in an epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism."

"World capitalism can be finally vanquished only through the struggle and victory of the international proletariat, subject to the laws of the uneven development of capitalism."

The fate of Indian capitalism, as part of world capitalism, is held to be sealed. The Indian masses can solve their fundamental problems only through a "socialist social order and organization of a democratic workers' state based on the leadership of the working class in alliance with the rural masses and urban petty bourgeoisie."

In a series of planks, the nationalization of basic industry is advocated together with a state monopoly of foreign trade. Transitional measures are advanced such as workers' control of production and a sliding scale of wages and hours. Stress is placed on the struggle for complete

equality and defense of democratic rights.

Specifying their attitude toward the main operating forces in the radical movement, they call for "Relentless struggle, ideological or political, against the pro-imperialist policies of the social-democratic parties as well as against the class-collaborationist, opportunist and revisionist policies of the Communist parties."

In a statement accompanying the joint platform, "The Militant" declares that discussions on the differences that separated the two parties were held between leading members for the past 18 months. The joint platform is essentially the same as the one proposed in the first issue of "The Militant" (March 20, 1959) as a "minimum basis" for Marxist unification in India.

The RCPI has already ratified the agreement to merge; the RWPI is holding district conferences to consider ratification. It is expected that the membership will approve the proposed step. A merger conference is scheduled for April.

We hope that this unification of Marxist forces in India will serve to hearten and inspire revolutionary socialists throughout the world. To strengthen the Marxist movement in India is to strengthen its counterpart in the centers of imperialist power, particularly in Britain.

The unification in India will increase the political weight of the Socialist Labor League, the Marxist wing of the British Labor party. This is especially timely, for the Socialist Labor League has been the object of a savage witch-hunt, visited upon the tendency, in part, because of their firm support of socialist and anti-imperialist movements in India and other colonial areas.

We can think of no more auspicious first step which the new Revolutionary Communist party of India might take than to express the international side of its program by issuing a strong declaration of support to the Socialist Labor League against the witch-hunting capitalist press, right-wing Labor party and trade-union bureaucrats, and assorted centrists who seek to destroy this promising tendency.

To come to the aid of the beleaguered British socialists may seem no more than an elementary expression of international solidarity. But it has a reciprocal effect. It strengthens those who take such action. That's one of the ways the world socialist revolution moves ahead.

2. "Our sympathies are still with the SLL": letter from S.B. Kolpe to Joseph Hansen (excerpt—April 21, 1960)

Dear Comrade Hansen:

I am sorry I could not reply to your letter earlier. We are all greatly encouraged by the support you have extended to us in our activities in India. We have read with pleasure the editorial written in the Militant welcoming the merger of the RWPI and RCPI. We are reproducing the same editorial in the next issue of our journal, the Militant which has been adopted as the organ of the united RCPI.

I am receiving an air-mail copy of your Militant regularly. We are also posting to you copies of our journal by air-mail. We have been somewhat irregular in publishing our journal for obvious difficulties of finance. We are trying to overcome these difficulties and bring out the

journal regularly hereafter.

Although the United RCPI is not formally known as a Trotskyist Party, the merger has taken place as you are aware on the basis of a near-Trotskyist program. The Stalinists and others have already begun to call the new party as Trotskyist. Some of the old RCP comrades have some objection to be known as Trotskyists. Since we have full freedom to advocate full-fledge Trotskyist program within the party and through signed articles in the party journals, we are confident of overcoming this feeling through friendly discussions.

The formal merger conference of two parties is scheduled to take place next month in Calcutta. We shall write to you about it later.

We have been following with interest the controversy between the International Committee and the F.I. Secretariat. I do not propose to discuss all the points of

differences at this stage. I strongly feel that these differences are not such as to justify the existence of two international centers of the Trotskyist movement. The present split has undermined the faith of the Marxists all over the world in the F.I. movement. It has also come in the way of our consolidating the anti-Stalinist Marxists into a single movement in India.

We strongly feel that the attempt to organize two rival World Congresses of the F.I. should be discouraged and some method should be devised to convene a single world congress. This is possible if the SWP adopts a positive attitude on the question of unification. The assumption either by the I.C. or the F.I. secretariat that the national sections of our movement will be swayed by factional considerations is wrong, if not insulting to those comrades who have devoted their lives to the cause of revolutionary Marxism. A representative world congress of Trotskyists should be able to thrash out all differences of strategy and tactics in our movement.

In this connection I do not see why the suggestion of a parity committee (made by Pablo and his colleagues) for convening a world congress should not be accepted by the I.C. We are told by Com. Livio Maitan of Italy who visited India recently that Pablo is prepared to keep out of any key position in the new set-up for the sake of unity. We cannot understand why we as serious Marxists should insist upon the exclusion of Pablo or any other individual for that matter as a condition for unity between the two sections.

Through the columns of our journal we have always publicized the activities of the Socialist Labour League of G.B. without entering into its controversy with the F.I. group. Our sympathies are still with the S.L.L. although the situation in G.B. is not very clear to us. We have also written to Com. Germain and others disapproving certain tactics of the F.I. group in Britain in the factional struggle against the S.L.L.

But do you approve of the editorial written in the "Labour Review" early last year launching a broadside against Pablo and his colleagues? What was the earthly use of washing our dirty linen in the public in such a manner—whatever be the provocation. Our movement has suffered not only in Britain but outside also as a result of such an attitude on the part of the S.L.L. leadership.

Personally speaking, I am not opposed to the tactics adopted by our English comrades to form the S.L.L. I don't share the view that the Trotskyists within the L.P. should remain in hiding forever in the futile hope of radicalizing the entire L.P. or a bulk of it. It is possible for Trotskyists to combine open work outside L.P. in Great Britain with entry tactics by retaining those who are not exposed within the L.P. According to us the main emphasis should

be on outside open work to which the entry tactics as a whole should be subordinated. This is our criticism of entry tactics of the F.I. in countries like France, Italy, etc.

We are aware that the SWP was also a party to the entry tactics adopted by the F.I. in 1948. It has had disastrous consequences in India at any rate. Our forces were almost completely decimated within the old S.P. (thanks, of course, due to the infection of Shachtmanism). But we will not make this tactical difference as a point of split with the F.I. or the I.C. for that matter. It appears that the S.L.L. has made this question of entrism a point of serious difference with Pablo although according to my reports Com. Burns [Healy] had all along supported entry tactics.

I do not know much about the S.L.L. leadership. Even the Ceylonese comrades were complaining about the uncompromising attitude of Com. Burns on the question of unification. We are sure that the S.L.L. comrades can play an important role in unifying the world Trotskyist movement, provided they forget their local differences. We think that you comrades of the SWP should use your relationship with the S.L.L. comrades to persuade it to adopt a more realistic attitude on this question. If we are of any help we shall certainly do our best.

We are happy to see some friendly correspondence exchanged between the I.C. and the F.I.S. as published in the Militant. We earnestly request you to follow this up with concrete organizational steps of joint meetings, etc. We can achieve a great deal once we are united. When we are trying to unite all the non-Stalinist Marxist forces (if ours is any example) how can we afford to have a split in the World Trotskyist movement?

I have to write to you on other problems which I shall do later. We have great possibilities in India. The electoral debacle of the LSSP in Ceylon is unfortunate but to most of us here it was not quite surprising. Our Ceylonese comrades had an exaggerated concept of their political influence. We have our own criticism of their over-emphasis on the "parliamentary" form of struggle. About this later.

We should be able to set up an Asian center of the Trotskyist movement if the LSSP takes the initiative. What do you think of the latest position adopted by the Chinese CP on imperialist wars, peaceful coexistence, etc. (vide Red Flag article of April 1)? It blasts the traditional Stalinist (Khrushchev) concept of peaceful coexistence and the Chinese Stalinists are resuscitating Marxism although on a limited scale to fight Khrushchev. . . .

With comradely greetings,

Yours comradely,
s/S.B. Kolpe

3. "A blot on the record of the Trotskyist movement":
letter from Joseph Hansen to S.B. Kolpe (excerpt—June 2,
1960)

New York, N.Y.

India

Dear Comrade Kolpe,

I am sorry about the delay in answering your letter of April 21. The trip to Cuba, which Farrell Dobbs and I made was most useful in bringing us up to date on the situation there, but it certainly interfered with other very important matters, including answering your letter promptly.

We appreciated what you said about the situation in the International. Frank expressions of comradely opinions such as you voiced are most certainly best calculated to help re-establish the disrupted ties. I shall try, in the same spirit, to answer the important questions which you raise.

First, on the problem of unification. From some of the things you say it occurs to me that you might not be aware of the details of the major effort that was already made to reach a viable solution. Could it be that you were not informed of the developments at the time? Just to make sure, I am enclosing copies of the five principal documents that establish the record. I will also offer some comment on these.

The first item is a letter from Comrade Cannon to Comrade Goonewardene. This was intended to note the apparent narrowing of political differences between the positions of the International Secretariat and the International Committee and to acknowledge that in principle this narrowing called for a similar narrowing of organizational differences; that is, steps toward unification. Comrade Cannon suggested that the chief obstacle appeared to be strong differences of opinion and even suspicions on organizational matters and that the first step to take in removing them is to recognize their existence. Existence of suspicions does not provide justification, of course, for continuation of the split, but they do call for special practical measures. What is needed specifically is an organizational bridge that can provide a basis for common work and activity in the course of which the old attitudes and perhaps unjustified suspicions could have the best chance of being resolved. He proposed a "sweeping organizational compromise."

Comrade Goonewardene forwarded the letter to the International Secretariat. What his recommendations were I do not know. The IS sent a comrade, Patrick O'D. [Sherry Mangan], to discuss the question more concretely with Comrade Cannon, who was quite willing to place his experience at the disposal of the international movement in a consultative way.

He outlined his suggestions in the form of an eight-point memorandum dated April 27, 1957. The key suggestion was a proposed joint agreement between the IS and the IC to recommend to the coming World Congress that the incoming International Executive Committee be elected on a parity basis; that is, with equal representation from the two international factions. Comrade Cannon explained the reasons for his proposal as follows:

First, it was made on the assumption that both sides were genuinely seeking unification. If this condition did not exist, then, of course, the proposal would not work and

indeed would most likely prove unacceptable. The proposal would therefore constitute a way of testing the sincerity of both sides on the very serious question of unification.

The second assumption was that besides a genuine desire for unification, a good deal of mutual suspicion also existed. An executive committee elected on the basis of parity would accomplish two aims. (1) It would remove any fear of organizational reprisals or abuses. (2) with the removal of this fear, the best possible atmosphere would be established for the two factions to engage in common work and activity. Under these new conditions, with good will on both sides, it could be expected that the old differences would recede and, as new political problems arose, the International could confidently count on former alignments dying out.

In conversations, Comrade Cannon adduced a number of examples where in his own experience parity of this kind had not only proved highly successful but, as a matter of fact, had turned out to be the only practical means of achieving a unification. He recalled instances where this means was used even where one side obviously had the preponderant majority. Parity proved to be a most effective means of demonstrating to the minority that its rights were really guaranteed. Later, in the normal course of comradely activity and by common agreement, the arrangement was transcended.

The next document enclosed is a copy of the counterproposal made by the IS representative. This included "two exceptional measures." (1) "An exceptionally large representation, in the sense of voting rights . . . of the parties that left the International in 1953 . . . at the Fifth World Congress . . . and a strong recommendation to the Congress that it give similar exceptionally large representation in the IEC that it elects." (2) "A temporary revision of the powers of the IEC . . . and of the IS . . . in the sense of a much lesser delegation of powers than has been the practice since the Second World Congress . . ."

This counterproposal was taken as a rejection by the IS of the proposal for parity. Since the intent of the parity proposal might possibly have been misinterpreted, Comrade Cannon specified in more detail in his letter of April 29 ways in which the parity proposal could operate in the immediate situation and also how it could be applied in places where factional differences were particularly tense.

This was taken up by the IS and they replied in their letter of May 7, 1957. The essence of their reply was again to reject the parity proposal.

* * *

You mentioned that Comrade Livio Maitan of Italy told you during his visit to India that Comrade Pablo is "prepared to keep out of any key position on the new setup for the sake of unity." As you can see from the documents enclosed, this was not even mentioned as a condition for unification. Under the parity proposal such a proposal would be excluded. The comrades who accept Pablo's leadership would naturally be entitled to elect him to represent them on the executive committee if they should so choose. Those in the opposing faction would, of course, elect leaders in whom they place the most confidence. Unfortunately the parity proposal proved unacceptable to Comrade Pablo.

In the three years since then, it is my personal opinion that the political positions have tended to converge still further. To read the press of the two factions of the main world issues, no difference exists justifying the continuation of the split. Yet the split has continued and has even become more bitter. Naturally every leading Trotskyist in the world must feel deeply concerned about this and wish that it were otherwise. To make it otherwise, however, we must seek, as a beginning at least, to attempt to explain the continued existence of the split.

The focal points are obviously Britain and France where the sharpest differences have centered. Of the two places, Britain is at the moment of the greatest interest since the comrades there have registered the most impressive successes in the recent period whereas the movement in France appears, at best, to be marking time.

Our British comrades have given considerable attention to the reasons for the continued factionalism. They are quite puzzled. This puzzlement is not at all a factional pose; it is quite genuine.

Whether they are right or wrong about it, here is how the situation appears to them: Of all the sections of the Fourth International they have had the good fortune to move ahead the most rapidly in recent years. They have achieved such national weight and importance that they have become the target for considerable harassment from the side of reaction; in fact, they have been and still are the object of a witch-hunting campaign.

The witch-hunt does not exist in their imagination. It is an objective fact known to everyone in Britain interested in politics and to all those of similar interest outside Britain who follow the British press. The Militant has done its best to give an objective report of the facts.

Against this witch-hunt and in defense of Trotskyism, the British comrades have waged the best struggle they possibly could, not budging an inch.

Now what are the duties of Trotskyists in other lands in a situation like this? The most elementary requirement of international solidarity is to defend them, is it not? This would hold true even if they were not Trotskyists, if they were only any kind of socialists, any kind of workers' tendency, or Stalinists or simply bourgeois democrats.

Yet take a look at the Trotskyist periodicals under the influence of the IS and what is the record? Do they defend comrades with whom they say they have such political agreement that unification is called for? On the contrary, they display the most shameful silence! (I say "shameful" as about the mildest word that can be applied here. It would probably be more accurate to say that it is a blot on the record of the Trotskyist movement. How the British Trotskyists feel about it I leave to your imagination.)

But something happened in addition to that. The IS utilized the situation to seek factional advantages. Comrade Pablo himself personally took time to visit individuals who buckled under the witch-hunting pressure.

The British Trotskyists measured this kind of activity against the norm of international solidarity and were very unfavorably impressed. They could not help feeling that if the IS were really interested in unification that it would have done everything possible to demonstrate international solidarity with the British Trotskyists in their difficult situation. The IS would have done this, the British comrades felt, no matter what the tactical differences it might hold in regard to their course.

To the British comrades the IS actions were only the

culmination of a policy followed toward them since 1953. In view of this policy they were suspicious of the genuineness of the unity proposals in 1957. They felt that their suspicions were justified by the IS's rejection of the parity proposal and still further confirmed by the factionalism of the IS in Britain since then. Nevertheless, like Trotskyists elsewhere they were faced with the necessity of finding an objective explanation for the continued existence of the split.

They tried to find it in political differences, since it seemed to them that such sharp organizational differences as they were up against constantly could only be explained in the light of warring political concepts. This I think was the reason for the article which you mention as "launching a broadside against Pablo and his colleagues." Personally I would agree with you that this article was not well conceived. Nevertheless, how are we to account for the continued split?

Another explanation I have heard voiced by the British in private conversations is that the IS some ten years ago or thereabouts foresaw an early third world war. The war would leave the various workers' organizations, especially those dominated by Stalinism, no choice but to move toward the left. Since the time was too short for us to win a big following before the outbreak of war, we had to find our way into these various organizations and await developments—in other words practice "deep entry." The overall perspective proved completely erroneous. Instead of recognizing this, however, the IS persisted in the tactical prescription, converting it into a kind of principle. The British comrades are of the firm opinion that the consequences of this proved devastating in a number of countries. It did not have similar consequences for them, they believe, because they resisted its application.

(Since you mention the question of the entry tactic and our attitude toward it, let me say at this point, that we never agreed with "deep" entry. To us it looks like a suicidal tactic. We do not have as rich an experience in this as the British comrades, but I think our approach is fundamentally the same. When we entered the Socialist party in 1935, it was not an entry into the SP as such, but a simple move to meet the leftward moving currents which had appeared in the SP at the time. After fusing with them, the possibility of our becoming a majority in the SP opened up—we did constitute the majority of activists—but the right wing in charge of the party machinery cut off this possibility by expelling us. We could have stayed only by changing our tactic of entry into "deep" entry; that is, remaining silent about such issues as the Spanish Revolution. We, of course, refused to remain silent. The whole tactical operation took only fourteen months. It should be added that Trotsky was worried that even this was too long!)

Another possible explanation of the continued split in the Fourth International, which I have heard expressed by some leading American comrades, is that two different organizational concepts animate the two sides and that these are strong enough in the circumstances to cut across the common political positions. The IS holds to the concept of a highly centralized world party. The opposing position is that this is unrealistic at present. Comrade Cannon has noted in relation to this that among other reasons the poverty of the various sections makes it impossible for the key leaders in even the main countries to get together frequently, much less operate from a common center. Yet it

is the national leaderships that constitute the real international leadership of the world Trotskyist movement; it cannot be otherwise and any attempt to substitute for this real leadership inevitably tends to become a caricature. In the light of this reality, it is best not to attempt extreme organizational centralism. It is sufficient for the time to rely on common political agreement, to seek to further this, to seek common actions that can foster closer fraternal relations and better organizational coordination; above all, not to attempt to dominate the organizational life of each section from an international center that under existing conditions must inevitably limp on the democratic side of democratic centralism.

For myself I have reached no definitive explanation for the continued existence of the split. I am quite open to consideration of other explanations. The only point I would stick fast to, is that the opinions of the British and French comrades, who are in better position, possibly, than any others to observe the IS at close hand and to experience its methods and its organizational policies, are

very weighty, and that it would be a serious error to dismiss their views as simply "factional."

* * *

Now on some of the specific points you raise. I am under the impression that the IC is postponing its Congress although I have seen no official communication as to this.

We have been following the position of the Chinese CP on peaceful coexistence with a great deal of interest, having reported it in the Militant as you have no doubt noted since you wrote your letter. . . .

We are very much interested in your opinion about the electoral and parliamentary course of the Ceylonese comrades. We have written them that we feel disturbed but we have not yet received a reply to explain their reasons for offering to support a bourgeois government. Do you have any information about this?

With comradely greetings,
Joseph Hansen

4. "About the unity of the family": letter from Ernest Germain to Trent Hutter, an SWP member (October 24, 1960)

[salutations missing from this copy]

I was certain that you would react in an adequate way to the regrettable accident which happened [the arrest of Pablo and Santen]. It is difficult for me to give you more details in writing. But in an Italian newspaper which is very close to me and which you certainly receive there are most of the facts that can be published about it for the moment.

Moreover, you will soon receive a special bulletin published by several British members of Parliament and containing many public protests of parliamentarians and leftist intellectuals of numerous countries. We believe it would be very good if you too could organize in your country some public protest movements of this kind (letters to the Netherlands Embassy, copies of same to be sent to the committee of British members of Parliament). The protest of the Chilean senators or that of the British parliamentarians or that of Jean-Paul Sartre are excellent models to adopt.

Confidentially, we are somewhat surprised about a letter we received on this matter from the IC. Burns [Healy] had come to see my friend in Paris, very friendly, in order to offer support and ask for information. That was very well. Afterwards, the IC wrote a letter in which, under pretext of a better (?) defense, it proposes that a mixed "commission of inquiry" be established first in order to judge the case. It is obvious that we cannot submit such activities to the "control" of a "commission" composed of persons who are not members of our organization. And we find it strange that these comrades do not seem to be ready to defend the arrested friends before "judging" them first, while numerous labor leaders of several countries who are not even our friends have defended them immediately without first asking to inquire about their activities!

I hope you understand the good reasons for this position

and that you will succeed in doing something in your country. It is this political "aid" that is most precious to our friends.

We have followed the evolution of the LSSP with a certain anxiety since last May. We have intervened repeatedly in their discussions by means of detailed political letters. We have sent there one of our men a few weeks ago. By the way, he has seen the letter that you sent then and which, on the whole, is in the same sense as our intervention. We endeavor to avoid that the majority of the party, and especially the great majority of the old Trotskyist cadres, adopt an opportunistic position. We believe we can succeed. But the discussion is only beginning. We shall send you our documents on this.

Now about the unity of the family. I believe the essential problem is twofold. First to recognize frankly that the former quarrels have been bypassed largely by the events and that the new differences (particularly in connection with the Algerian question) have also been decided by life. Then this question must be faced without distrust or suspicions, while understanding the motives of both sides.

I understand very well what is at the bottom of your demand for parity. You want the two branches of the family to have the time to readapt themselves to each other in daily and practical collaboration before certain rights of a central organism can be rigorously applied against one or the other branch or its parties. I believe this demand can be easily satisfied, for example by exceptionally reserving certain rights of intervention to the family feast (world Congress) only, without the possibility to delegate these powers, and by setting the date for the first family feast at three years after the moment of the reestablishment of unity.

However, I ask you to understand on your side that the proposition of parity cannot be accepted. For us this is a point of principle that is an integral part of our dearest principles. The family exists, without interruption of its continuity, with its precise organic functions, according to the norms established by the principles. Intermediary solutions are possible for the branches of the family, where one may even, in transition, admit a certain duality; but

never for the family itself.

The family replaces in our movement the material power of the apparatus which assures the cohesion of the Reformists and the Stalinists. This is the only cohesive force that we have got, intended to avoid a crumbling or a periodical rupture of the movement. To scuttle directly or to corner the principle of the family structure, for which our Old Man fought throughout the entire last part of his life, means scuttling a fundamental point of the program. That would be contrary to the interests of the family, the entire family. You must understand that this is contrary to your own interests to the extent that you are sincerely attached to these principles, which I hardly doubt.

Besides, in principle (and if one accepts a proposition of the kind I formulated above) the task of the center is not, above all, to "wage war" or to discipline" in the organizational field, but rather to formulate a political line as to the new events. A "parity" center, that is, a potentially paralyzed one, risks to be unable to do this work without which the family ceases to exist structurally. Nobody can predict what the alignment of forces might be in a new democratically elected center. If there is a majority of one or the other branch, it appears unlikely that the alignment would for long remain the same as before unity. It is more probable that there will be all kinds of realignments. But in any case, the organ will be capable of functioning and of taking decisions, except for disciplinary interventions in the branches, as I explained above.

If you insist upon the formal aspect of your proposal, we remain at a dead end. If, on the other hand, you insist upon its real contents (which can be satisfied under other forms as the parity form), then I believe it would be easy to reach an agreement; for I am convinced that on both sides there exists a genuine desire for unity.

The same remark applies to the name of our meeting. To be realistic is one thing; to abandon principles is another.

The family's continuity is an imperious duty, transmitted to us by the Old Man and his generation which we must maintain at any price. Only in case of the most serious political crimes does one have the right to interrupt this continuity: 1914 and 1933 are the only two examples to this effect. One does not have the right to play with the public existence of the family. First it exists; then it ceases to exist under pretext of a separation; then it reappears suddenly, to disappear again the day after tomorrow under pretext of a new separation. I very sincerely believe that in your inner self, with the organizational tradition that you are embodying, you understand that we could not accept such an attitude.

We gave a determinate name to our meetings of 1954 and 1957, maintaining continuity at any price in bad moments. To suppress it in 1960, when our branch alone is numerically stronger than the two united branches in 1953, when the family could "jump ahead" on a world scale (and for this, unification would undoubtedly be one of the main impulsions) would be irresponsible and unprincipled. To insist on this formal demand is to make unity impossible once more.

But if I have well understood what is at the bottom of your objection, you want us to recognize publicly that we do not represent the entire family. I believe a declaration in this sense, which would merely reflect the truth, would be easy to obtain, especially if it can be made in a constructive spirit, in the framework of a motion or a step that would make it possible to accelerate reunification. If you have any suggestions or propositions to make in this sense in order to facilitate unity, I am sure we can examine them and discuss them with you, inspired by a common desire to reach an agreement.

Frankly, I do not understand why the name of the meeting could be an obstacle to the presence of an *observer*. If it were a question of a delegate of a framework of official negotiations, the objection would be valid. But it seems to me that you can without any difficulties send an observer to a meeting whose name you dislike but whose contents interest you—since you have sent observers to congresses in Cuba or in Tokyo whose name and contents are, after all, less close to you than those of the meeting in question.

I believe that the presence of this observer will be particularly useful to you for two reasons: first, to know what we say and discuss; then, to realize what we represent today. In the two fields, but particularly in the second one, there exists on your side an obvious lack of information that lets you arrive at many incomplete or erroneous conclusions. You know Marx's fine quip: "Ignorance has never helped anybody." . . .

I believe that for a great number of reasons there exists at present a conjuncture favorable to unity. Most of the reasons for the split have disappeared. A climate of trust can easily be established. We have missed the past occasion of 1956-1957, and the movement has paid dearly for it, especially in France and Great Britain. This must not happen again today. A genuine negotiation *on the essence* must be entered into. One must not attach one's self to the form of the proposals which risk to block again for a long time a process which everybody actually desires and demands.

5. "LSSP Policy in Ceylon," editorial in the *Militant* (October 5, 1960)

The July general elections in Ceylon swept into office the Sri Lanka Freedom party headed by Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, widow of the former prime minister, who was assassinated by a Buddhist monk a year ago. The voting gave the SLFP 75 of the 157 House seats, the United Nationalists 30, the Tamil Nationalists 12, the Lanka Sama Samaja party (Trotskyist) 12, the Communist party 5. Independents and lesser parties took 19 seats.

The victory of the SLFP was facilitated by its tripartisan electoral bloc with the Lanka Sama Samaja and the Communist parties, though the new government formed by Mrs. Bandaranaike does not include representatives from either of these two parties.

The support accorded the Bandaranaike party by the Ceylonese Trotskyists, and their entry into an electoral alliance with it, constituted a complete reversal of previous policy. In the national elections last March the LSSP, the most influential working-class party in Ceylon, campaigned against the SLFP and all other parties on a program of revolutionary socialism under the slogan of

"Elect a Sama Samaja Government." The line of independent working class political action received an impressive ten per cent of the popular vote.

At that time N.M. Perera, chairman of the LSSP, wrote, "A capitalist government whether of the UNP or SLFP brand will bring endless trouble and disaster to the country." The LSSP had consistently condemned the policy of backing one group of rival capitalist politicians like the SLFP against another, explaining that such a policy deceives the masses. It counterposed to collaboration with capitalist parties or governments the objective of putting an anticapitalist workers' and farmers' government in power. Yet in July, it reversed its electoral policy of March.

This new political course not only overturned the past position of the LSSP but is at variance with the traditional socialist principles of the Trotskyist movement which has opposed collaboration with capitalist parties as injurious to working-class interests. It follows the pattern of "Popular Front" combinations in many countries whereby working-class parties have been lined up with disastrous results behind a section of the capitalist rulers.

After the elections the Secretary of the LSSP, Leslie Goonewardene, issued a statement, published in the Aug. 4 *Ceylon News*, which read in part:

"The LSSP will co-operate with the SLFP Government as an independent party in every activity which carries

the country forward along progressive lines. The LSSP will assist the SLFP Government to defeat and overcome any and every saboteur effort of Big Capital and the foreign imperialists. The LSSP will particularly assist the SLFP Government in every anticapitalist step it takes. The LSSP will resist to the utmost any effort from any quarter to throw the masses back in their struggle to go forward to a socialist society.

"In accordance with the above the LSSP Parliamentary Group will not join the Opposition but will function as an independent group in Parliament."

It appears from this statement, which contained no criticism of the capitalist SLFP or warning to the people against the consequences of its actions, that the LSSP leadership is continuing its false policy of political support to the SLFP.

The LSSP has correctly maintained in the past that abandonment of independent working class politics and trailing behind capitalist politicians can only bear evil fruits. Further developments of the class struggle within the setting of the ascending revolution in Asia must also soon make this manifest in the present situation in Ceylon.

As the damaging results of their new course become clearer, the majority of the LSSP will, we trust, reassert their adherence to the tested principles of Marxism and return to the revolutionary positions which gave the party such merited prestige among the Ceylonese masses.

6. "On Ceylon," declaration of the "Sixth World Congress" of the International Secretariat (reprinted from the Winter 1960-61 issue of 4th International)

The Sixth World Congress, after having discussed the situation in Ceylon, states that it disapproves the political line adopted by the Lanka Sama Samaja Party following on the election defeat of March 1960.

The Congress condemns more especially the vote of parliamentary support expressed on the occasion of the Speech from the Throne, and the adoption of the budget by the party's MPs.

The Fourth International does not exclude support for the adoption of progressive measures, even by a national

bourgeois or petty-bourgeois government in a colonial or semi-colonial country. But the social nature, composition, and general programme of the Bandaranaike government does not justify the support which was accorded it.

The World Congress appeals to the Lanka Sama Samaja Party for a radical change in its political course in the direction indicated by the document of the leadership of the International.

The Congress is confident that the next National Conference of the LSSP, in whose political preparation the whole International must participate, will know how to adopt all the political and organizational decisions necessary to overcome the crisis which was revealed following on the results of the March 1960 election campaign.

7. "Trial of Trotskyists in Holland," editorial in the *Militant* (October 26, 1960)

The world famous French author Jean-Paul Sartre has issued a statement, also signed by writers Simone de Beauvoir and Jorge Amado, protesting the arrest in Holland of Michel Raptis (Pablo) and Sal Santen, Trotskyist leaders in Europe, for aiding the cause of the Algerian revolution.

Their prosecution is part of the repressions against supporters of the Algerian freedom fighters highlighted in France today by the trial of Professor Jeanson's "network" and the indictment and blacklisting of the signers of the

declaration of the 121 French artists and intellectuals who uphold conscientious objection to serving in the armed forces.

Says Sartre: "Once more colonialism has struck at militants fighting for freedom of the Algerian people. This time the Red Hand, a fascist organization, in the service of the 'ultras' and connected with the main political policy of the Western world, has organized a Machiavellian provocation in order to bring about the arrest of Sal Santen and Michel Raptis, leaders of the Fourth International, who were developing in Holland an intensive campaign of solidarity with free Algeria.

"Free men in the world must protest against such attempts which involve a danger to the freedom of all.

These men, true to their revolutionary beliefs, are now paying by losing their freedom and the right and duty to struggle incessantly against colonialism.

"In spite of differences with the political conceptions of these militants and with their organization, *i.e.* The Trotskyist Fourth International, what is at stake is the safeguarding of human dignity, of the right of men to struggle for their ideals, of the right of the Algerian people to count on active help by all Left militants.

"Therefore we appeal to intellectuals, to workers' leaders, and to students to organize a great wave of protest addressed to the Dutch leaders and to unmask fully this infamous colonialist provocation."

8. *"Sincere, comradely thanks": letter from Pierre Frank for the International Secretariat to the SWP (December 6, 1960)*

Dear Comrades

We have read with much appreciation the excellent editorial in *The Militant* on the subject of our imprisoned Comrades Raptis and Santen. And though none of us has seen the text of the letter, one comrade who did assures us that your protest to the Dutch Minister of Justice was a fine one: strong in tone and solid in content.

9. *"The IS warmly salutes the electoral campaign of the SWP": letter from Pierre Frank for the International Secretariat to the SWP (December 12, 1960)*

To the Socialist Workers Party
New York

Dear Comrades:

At its last meeting, the International Secretariat of the Fourth International, after having discussed the interna-

10. *"Contradictions arising from the class-struggle lag": letter from Farrell Dobbs to Gerry Healy (excerpt—December 12, 1960)*

England

Dear Gerry:

. . . During the short time I have been back in the office, I have been able to give only partial consideration to views about the world movement expressed in your recent letters to Jim and Tom, so I can undertake only a few preliminary comments on the subject at this time.

It does seem that a new crisis may be maturing among the Pabloites as you have observed and that Germain's letter to Trent Hutter manifests some aspects of this crisis within the framework of his attempt to gloss over and confuse basic political questions involved in the split in

The trial of Comrades Raptis and Santen will be held in Holland within the next several weeks. Noted individuals and progressive organizations in this country are being asked to join Sartre, Claude Bourdet, British Labour M.P. John Baird and many other socialist and labor leaders in Europe, Latin America and Asia who have already protested this act of injustice. SWP presidential candidate Farrell Dobbs this week sent a telegram of protest to the judge in the Santen-Raptis case.

Protests should be sent to the lawyer for the defense: Mr. Brans, Weteringhans 90, Amsterdam, Holland, for transmission to the judge.

We wish to send you our sincere comradely thanks for these fraternal actions of yours on behalf of our victimized comrades, and to express the hope that further collaboration on this case will be possible.

With best Bolshevik-Leninist greetings,

THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
P.F.

National Committee
Socialist Workers Party
116 University Place
New York City

tional situation and more particularly the recent presidential elections in the United States, adopted the following resolution:

The International Secretariat of the Fourth International warmly salutes the electoral campaign of the SWP and in particular its internationalist and courageous attitude of support to the Cuban revolution, in the very fortress of imperialism.

With international communist salutations.

For the S.I.,
Pierre Frank

the world movement. We need to think about this situation, along with other factors, in deciding what we should do next.

Another trend within the world movement requiring serious attention, as you have pointed out, is the deviation from Trotskyist principles manifested in both Argentina and Ceylon; each indicating a specific form of class collaborationism and liquidationism which must be combatted politically.

Pabloite ideas have without doubt contributed to such deviations from correct principles but the full explanation may well require closer analysis of the contradictions arising from the class-struggle lag in the imperialist countries and the steady advance of the colonial revolution. Insofar as this may be the case, there are some favorable developments of a modest nature which should be weighed carefully and used to maximum purpose in

dealing with the basic political problems of the world movement.

Although a mass radicalization of the kind becoming more general in the colonial movement has not occurred within the advanced capitalist countries, there are increasing manifestations of this kind taking place at varying tempos within the vanguard of the working class and to some extent in the mass movement. Your political gains and increased leadership potential within the British labor movement is a cogent example. Another case reasonably comparable in magnitude is that of Japan where a growing Trotskyist cadre has emerged under conditions of deepening class-struggle potential within the country.

In Canada the official union decision to launch a labor party opens some important new prospects for our Trotskyist cadre there and even in the United States, although the signs of coming change are as yet far less perceptible, new political opportunities for our tendency are appearing.

In each of these countries the Trotskyist tendency, including the Japanese as I reported to you in detail last August, has polarized in a decisive way around correct Trotskyist principles as distinguished from Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism. In numerical terms alone it seems that these forces far outweigh the Pabloite group, but even more important is the fact that they represent growing cadres in advanced capitalist countries where for a whole series of historical reasons there is an above average percentage of seasoned cadre members who can play a special role in promoting theoretical clarity throughout the world movement.

If I may use an effort of ours as an example, our work in support of the Cuban revolution from within the fortress of American imperialism helps open the way to win people to Trotskyism within Cuba and lends greater substance to

our efforts in the direction of fraternal collaboration with Latin American Trotskyists generally. If the Japanese follow through similarly with respect to the Asian groups, as they agreed to do in the conversations with them, they can acquire similar results. Your own potential along this line has already been illustrated, especially in the case of Africa.

Central to all such efforts of course must be the introduction of theoretical clarity and meaningful political analysis in the world movement. In this connection we are glad to hear that the British comrades are preparing a draft resolution on international perspectives as a contribution in that direction. We shall look forward to receiving copies of your draft when it is completed.

Another meeting at the North should be considered without unnecessary delay so that the problems of the world movement can be discussed in terms of the present situation. The Japanese indicated they would be prepared to participate. It also seems advisable to probe the Latin American situation to see what they might be able to do with respect to such a meeting. In my opinion a bit of time is required for adequate preparation and such an informal conference could not be scheduled before about March. What do you think? Meantime we will be holding a plenum of our National Committee during the middle of January and will have the question of the world movement on the plenum agenda. Between now and then we would like to hear further from you on the subject of the world movement in particular and on other matters in general.

Comradely,
Farrell Dobbs

FD:ra
cc: Jim
Ross
Airmail

11. *"This is all part of the new unity offensive": letter from Gerry Healy to Farrell Dobbs (December 22, 1960)*

COPY TO JAMES P. CANNON

Dear Farrell,

I received your letter this morning with a copy of the letter you have received from Pierre Frank.

This is all part of the new unity offensive, designed to split the SWP from the Socialist Labour League. Consider the treatment given you and that retained for us. We have carried on a fair amount of activity in relation to Pablo and Santen of which they are aware, yet they carefully omit any mention of it from their write-up in the last issue of their journal Fourth International, although they gave

prominence to your contribution in this respect. We are not objecting to this because we understand the political position of these gentlemen.

Nothing will be achieved in any kind of organizational moves at this stage. We must elaborate a political position on the international questions and your plenum should take a decision to help with this work.

If it is possible to invite a comrade from South America to the North we would like you to do so.

The Japanese situation is interesting, but here again we will not be able to make progress on the Pablo question until the political issues are straightened out amongst our own people.

Best wishes,

VM/H

G. HEALY

12. "An informal consultation among IC supporters":
letter from Farrell Dobbs to James P. Cannon (December
29, 1960)

New York, N.Y.

Los Angeles

Dear Jim:

Enclosed are copies of several letters about the world movement which require thought in connection with the report to be presented to the plenum on this question.

Objectively several factors are operating in favor of Trotskyism in the steady, though contradictory, advance of the world revolution. In the colonial sphere the conflict against imperialism continues to broaden and deepen. Within the imperialist countries themselves there are varying signs of upturn in the class struggle. The growing strength of the workers states and the shrinking ring of imperialist encirclement implies greater opposition to bureaucratic rule. Internal conflicts are sharpening within the Stalinist and social-democratic tendencies across the world. New centrist formations susceptible to revolutionary-socialist influence are emerging.

At the same time there appears to be new prospects of resolving the internal crisis of the world Trotskyist movement and thereby gaining maximum potential for intervention in the favorable objective situation. Events have refuted the Pabloite ideology responsible for the world split. The Pablo-Santen affair has shaken the Pabloite ranks and brought about a marked change in the functioning leadership.

Members of the IS, especially Germain, are raising anew the question of reunification. True to form they continue to gloss over important political questions. They reject the parity proposals on a "point of principle." But they nevertheless indicate a more flexible approach to organizational compromise, thus reflecting the pressures of their internal difficulties.

On the International Committee side the Japanese are pressing hard for speedy action to create a unified world leadership on a principled basis. You will note their proposals about direct intervention at the congress of the Pabloite faction. Although a somewhat impatient approach organizationally, it reflects no conciliatory attitude toward Pabloite ideology. They evaluate the recent unification in Japan as the direct result of overcoming

Pabloism. They project from that experience a world solution of the split by throwing the Pabloites out of the unified world leadership they hope to attain.

The British, on the other hand, say they are perturbed by what they consider a reluctance to come to grips with the theoretical problems of Pabloism. They think there can be no real progress toward reunification until this is done. They report they are now preparing a draft resolution on international perspectives to help get things moving in this direction.

On the organizational side of the unity question the British appear reluctant to move while the Japanese show an eagerness for intervention. Yet they manifest similar approaches to the political side of the question, as indicated by the Japanese report that they, too, are preparing their own draft program criticizing the Pabloite program.

At the root of the matter there seems to be concern about a clear expression of fundamental political line as the first step toward reunification on whatever organizational basis. Further apprehension no doubt arises over the relative political weights within a functioning unified leadership as determined by the actual component parts of such a leadership. These concerns probably become sharpened by remarks such as Germain's statement that parity would paralyze the central leadership politically.

In considering what to do next, it seems the first order of business should be to arrange an informal consultation among International Committee supporters. The British have agreed with the suggestion that a March gathering be held at the North. What can be arranged with the Japanese will depend on whether they have actually sent a delegation to the Pabloite congress. (Note our suggestion to them if this should be the case.) Whether or not there can be any participation from Latin America at this time will have to be determined by a probe of the situation there.

Meantime these factors seem to require main attention on our part: Participation in the discussion being initiated by the British and Japanese draft resolutions. Advancement of the general line of the parity proposals. Determination of what activities we might be able to undertake with respect to the leadership problem.

Comradely,
/s/Farrell Dobbs

FD:ra
cc:Jerry
Ross

HIST OF 4 TH INT PRT 7 VOL4 P1
0873487206

